

SUMMER 2023

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

FAMILY MATTERS

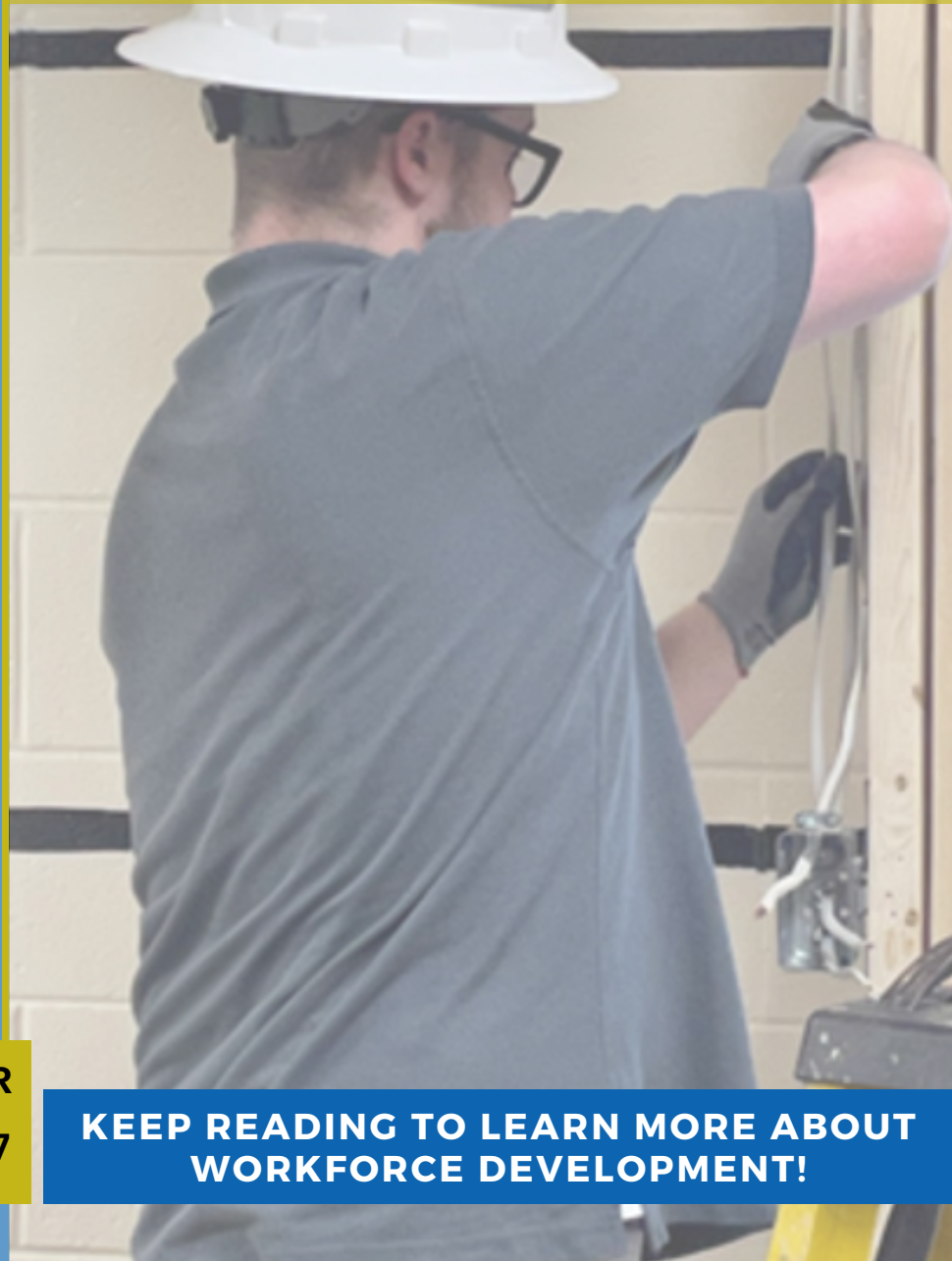


WORKING TOGETHER

The Workforce Development Program at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center opened in January 2023. The mission of the program is to provide youth with the training, skills and professional experience that will allow them to “complete conceptual tasks with measurable success.” The goal is to ensure that youth leaving the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice are going to be productive by enhancing their ability to secure employment.

BAJCC SCHOOL CALENDAR
Classes will resume on July 17

“Choose to be happy.”



**KEEP READING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT!**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Bernard Williams
Career/Workforce Coordinator

Career/Workforce Coordinator Bernard Williams provides instruction and ensures youth are prepared for college, trade courses and career opportunities. With over 20 years of experience in teaching, public schools and DJJ, Bernard has a wealth of knowledge to share with our youth. When he accepted his position with the workforce development program, he saw it as an opportunity to have a positive impact, seeing the need for trades and technical training. He got in on the ground floor of this initiative. He feels this is a great way to help our youth get into the job market at a higher level, with classroom and hands-on experience that employers are looking for.



Leo Akujuobi
Community Business
Engagement Coordinator

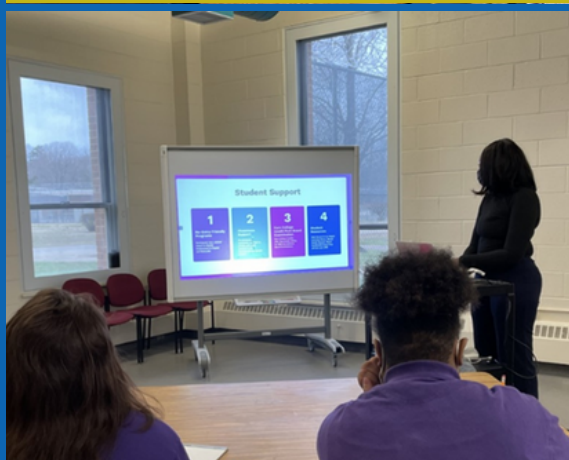
DJJ is also working on employment connections in communities to better assist the youth and support their success. Community Business Engagement Coordinator Leo Akujuobi is working to build relationships with community businesses and connect youth to career opportunities, collaborating with the Department of Education to design curriculums based on employer needs to develop guaranteed career pathway arrangements.



Resident Specialist II Franklin Wilkes, right, assists the electrical class with instruction and hands-on training.



Students work together on projects in the electrical class.



Future course offerings under consideration include healthcare skills and medical billing and coding.

Employers work with DJJ to offer support with employment opportunities, internships, and apprenticeships in the appropriate fields. The program is not just about completing training, but gaining practical knowledge and learning a trade that will enable our youth to pursue a career. Studies have shown that employment significantly reduces recidivism and criminal involvement in juveniles – a major goal for our young people. In the community, reentry advocates work to support the youth, monitor their progress, insure they have what they need to obtain employment, including identification, copies of their resume and other documents.

One side benefit of the program has been the fellowship and cohesion of the youth in the class. They learn to work together, cooperate, help each other and enjoy their time together, which makes a work environment positive and productive.



Practical experience is a component of the workforce development programs.

OUR TEAM

MEET

Kevin Jenkins CPP CASE MANAGER



Kevin Jenkins, a case manager at the Prince William County Community Placement Program, has been with DJJ for six years. He began his career as an intern with the probation division, and found he enjoyed working with the youth. Following his internship, he took a position as a probation officer. Five years later, he took on his current position. Kevin's job duties include helping youth move through treatment, monitoring their progress, helping the youth with goal setting, Aggression Replacement Therapy, and assisting with reentry planning so that their return home goes as well as possible. Kevin enjoys engaging with the youth, serving as a positive mentor. When asked what keeps him motivated, he said "seeing that 'aha' moment when youth get it," when they begin to see their options and choices. He also noted he works with a great team of co-workers in Prince William. His plans consist of continuing to work with youth for better outcomes, in whatever position or capacity he feels will fit him the best. A motivational quote Kevin uses often is "Get comfortable with being uncomfortable."



Martin Burch POST SECONDARY COORDINATOR

Post Secondary Coordinator Martin Burch has 30 years of experience with DJJ. He started in security before transferring to Education. His job involves meeting with youth to discuss course interests, enrolling them in classes, including at Reynolds Community College, maintaining a master schedule and supervising teaching staff. This includes the DOE teachers working in the Workforce Development Program. Post secondary courses include music, barbering, quilting, art, graphic design, OSHA, ServSafe and culinary arts, to name a few. Martin enjoys working with kids, especially when they realize what they are capable of, and that, with support and training, they can have a great future. He enjoys having the freedom to interact with the kids at all levels, and the teamwork other staff have developed to help and support the youth. When asked to provide a motivational quote, Martin replied, "When you wake up each morning, you can choose to be happy or choose to be sad. I choose to be happy."





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



**CHECK OUT THE
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE IN ACTION!**