

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS **VOLUNTEER NEWS BRIEF**

VOLUME 21



▶ EPIPHANY VOLUNTEERS IGNITE
HOPE DURING INTERSESSION

▶ TEN YOUTH GRADUATE FROM
IRON SHARPENS IRON



HARVEY J. REED
DIRECTOR

November 2016

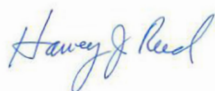
Dear Volunteers,

President Obama has chosen October 2016 as “National Youth Justice Awareness Month.” I want you to know that the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) wants to see all youth in our care succeed. We are committed to providing the support and opportunities youth need to get on a steady path and become successful adults. Consider the following:

- In our facilities, we are emphasizing youth accountability and restorative justice projects to help youth understand the impact of their behavior and make amends when necessary.
- We are working to finalize a new partnership with two career centers to offer youth in facilities more job training opportunities.
- Greater attention is being given to the development of life skills youth need when released, and new classes are beginning.
- Our parole staff are creatively engaging youth in education and employment.
- We now are able to offer older youth, returning to Hamilton and Cuyahoga Counties, permanent, supportive housing. The program, known as Reset for Success, is a partnership with Corporation for Supportive Housing, FrontLine Service, and Lighthouse Service, and Lighthouse Youth Service.

Volunteers, your service provides needed support to youth and leaves lasting impressions on young lives. You provide hope for youth, and they know that you care. You can help by continuing to share your hobbies, talents, skills, time, and energy. Thank you for building meaningful relationships that give youth a new outlook and direction in life. In these ways, you support youths’ successful reentry.

Yours truly,



Harvey J. Reed
Director, Ohio Department of Youth Services

Epiphany Volunteers Ignite Hope During Intersession

Youth at Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (CHJCF) and Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (CJCF) participated in Epiphany weekend during this past intersession period. Twenty-five youth at CHJCF and thirty-three youth at CJCF participated in the three-day weekend program. Twenty-five volunteers at CHJCF gave 663 volunteer hours over the course of the entire weekend. Twenty-five volunteers at CJCF gave 924 volunteer hours over the course of the entire weekend. Chaplain Bell, Brian Morrison, and Pam Winkler worked collaboratively to organize the weekend at CHJCF.



Youth are divided into family table groups. Each group has a different name and is named after one of the fruits of the spirit, such as love, joy, or peace. As youth are in their family groups, they pray, eat, study, and share with their family. Chaplain Kershaw said, "For some youth this is a new concept. This is the first time that they have even had a meal with family. For some of these young men, to sit and have a meal with family is abnormal. What we consider normal is very abnormal for some of the youth. We can't underestimate what this experience brings to the youth." As youth are at the table, they are led by a star guide (volunteer) who directs them to talk about unresolved hurt, pain, and frustrations in a safe and intimate setting of family. The star guide leads them to ultimately take their concerns to God, similar to how the wise men were led by the star in the birth of Jesus story.



Another highlight of the weekend was when youth identified people that they wanted to forgive or things of which they were seeking God's forgiveness. Chaplain Kershaw explained, "The youth wrote things on a sticky note that they wanted God to forgive them of or things that they needed to forgive someone for. They placed the sticky notes on the cross symbolizing 'nailing it to the cross.' After this release, they had a talk about forgiveness and the importance of it.

This led up to the burning ceremony the next day. The youth gathered outside in a circle, took their items off the cross, and placed them in a wok and burned those things. This symbolized them offering their challenges up to God. Afterwards, youth gave a talk about forgiveness, a purging conversation about the things that hurt them, and things they did to hurt others. This gave them an epiphany or awakening at the root of their lives to arrive at a new place beyond their past offense."

Youth after youth at both facilities spoke about how grateful they were to the volunteers who came. One youth at CHJCF said, "They don't know me from a box of rocks. I can't believe how much they care about people they don't know." Another youth at CJCF echoed this same sentiment of disbelief.

Valerie Handy, a new volunteer at CJCF said, "They really just want to know someone cares about them. They want to be cared for. It was a pleasure to witness firsthand the Epiphany celebration and hear the testimonies of those who were participating - very touching stories."



One youth, giving his closing message, said to his peers, "We just had a great impactful weekend. When you go back over to the other side," (speaking of the units), "that's when you are going to be tested. They are going to see if you really changed. You have an opportunity to show them how you were changed by how you behave." Chaplain Kershaw said, "This weekend was very impactful. The youth that participated were so moved by the weekend that they went back to the units and talked about what happened with their peers. Their testimony on the units has ignited hope in the lives of other youth on the unit. As a result of this past weekend, youth are requesting to start their own bible study on the units. Epiphany has ignited a fire of revival at CJCF similar to the revival at the Angola Prison."

Addiction Prevention Program Making a Difference on Units

Nathan Long, a faith-based volunteer from Children of Our Lord Ministries in Chardon, Ohio, offered an Addiction Prevention Program to youth at CHJCF. The purpose of this program is to provide youth with practical life skills necessary to make better decisions and to avoid drugs and alcohol. The program is administered in a group format utilizing a life skills workbook and worksheets. Each youth has a folder to maintain his assignments that were completed in the group. It is offered every Wednesday from 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm on Unit Geauga and every Monday from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm on Unit Franklin. Mr. Long began serving as a volunteer at CHJCF with the Full Throttle Program, administered by First Baptist Church of Streetsboro.



One youth on Unit Geauga stated, “The Addiction Prevention Program is good because it provides information that can help youth when they are released. The program helps us prepare for employment and teaches the right things to do. The only improvement would be to make the program available for all youth in DYS. The volunteer (Nathan Long) is serious about the program. He is committed and continues to persevere regardless of negative responses from some youth. He gives his all for us.”

Guyvontee Fitzpatrick, Unit Manager for Unit Huron said, “The Addiction Prevention Program is beneficial for those who participate.” Chaplain Erin Bell said, “I feel the program is good because it is well structured. Mr. Long is very articulate and well organized. The program seems to focus on helping youth break negative thinking patterns in order to make better decisions. Overall, I think it is an excellent program.”



Ten Youth from CHJCF Graduate from Iron Sharpens Iron Program

Dale Richardson, Elder at Bethesda Church of Cleveland and longtime volunteer at CHJCF, along with twelve other volunteers, offered the Iron Sharpens Iron program to youth. Chaplain Bell said, “This program is designed to foster character development and prevent future incarceration of youth offenders.” The program utilizes a group format and lasts six weeks. Elder Richardson, Iron Sharpens Iron program leader, speaking about the youth involvement, said, “Most of the youth did not know what

to expect when they came to the program. Initially, their motivation for

participating was not based on the right reasons, but after coming to the group for two sessions, they began to think differently because they saw their fellow students getting involved and felt compelled to stay and complete the program. The ones who said they didn’t think they could complete it, began to think differently because they saw their fellow students getting involved. They felt compelled to stay and finish.”

During the program, youth participated in various group activities and “real talk” discussions. The first session of the program included introductions and group bonding exercises. Some of the discussion topics were as follows:

1. Choices: Good and bad choices and how to make choices.
2. Anger: What it is and how it affects you.
3. Forgiveness: What it is and why it is important.
4. Faith: What it is and how to use it as a tool.

The program helped youth understand what faith is, how it relates to them, and how to use it as a tool. Mr. Richardson said, “We helped youth understand that they don’t need to have all of the answers, but they can exercise their faith by trusting God to teach them and give them the right answers. They learned that getting angry is not bad, and they learned what to do when you get angry. We taught them to find mechanisms to control their anger. We talked about real life situations that they dealt with in the past so that they could learn to make better, wiser choices in the future and have a more fulfilling, crime-free life. These are some of the tools that we want them to learn how to use.”

Ten youth started and completed the program. Elder Richardson said, “The program requires all youth to commit to the full six-week cycle. They can’t participate if they don’t make this commitment. This teaches them a sense of responsibility, meaning you don’t start something and walk away from it.”

The youth did a presentation during the final session. They picked a topic, created a poster about it, shared important highlights that they learned about the topic in the group discussion, and then answered questions. The highlight of the closing session was a graduation celebration that included the opportunity for family members to share in the youth’s personal achievement during a fellowship meal.



Dale Richardson said, “One thing that was unique about the program was that one youth was released before the program ended. He was so excited about the program, he wanted to come back and participate in the graduation ceremony so that he could make his presentation. We got permission to allow him to come back and participate in the graduation. His father brought him back to the facility to see him complete his presentation. That let us know that the program was impactful.”

Faith-Based Volunteers at CHJCF Reach Youth through Tutoring

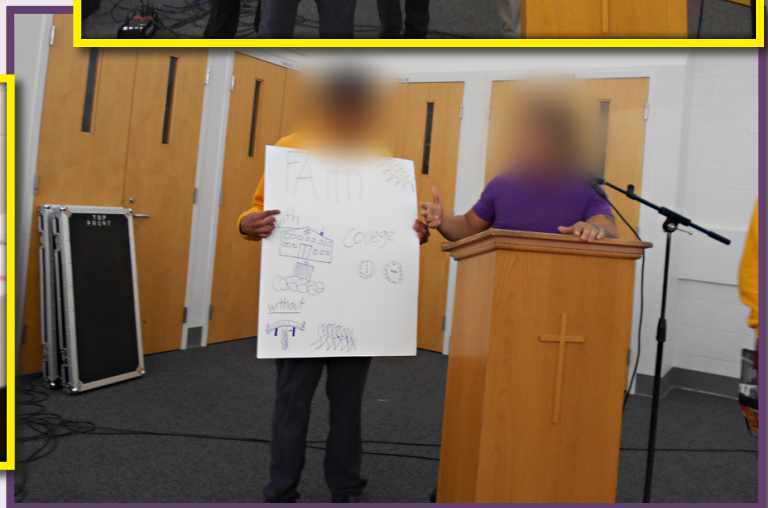
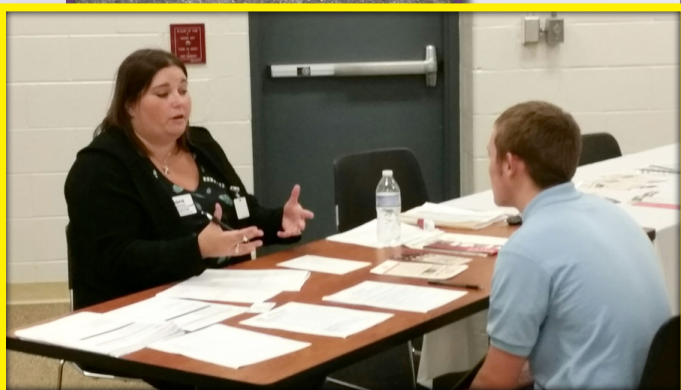
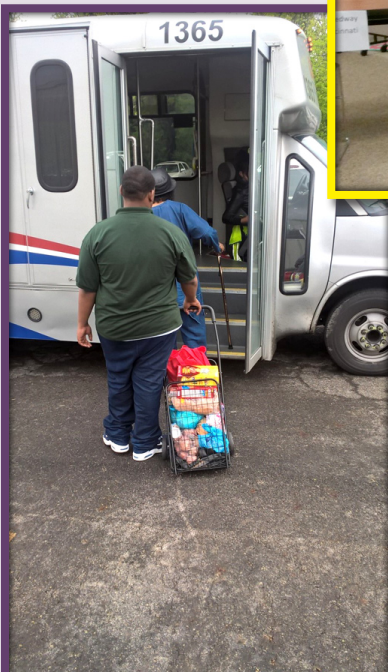
Bold faith, godly love, and simple service. That’s what three faith-based volunteers demonstrate when they come to CHJCF. Gail Bradshaw, Kim Boucherle, and Laura Davis, all volunteers from Christ Community Chapel, take the simple message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, wrap it godly love, and present it as a simple gift of service to youth through tutoring. One volunteer said, “It is true what Theodore Roosevelt said, ‘People don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care.’” Chaplain Bell said, “These volunteers serve at the Luther E. Ball High School. They generally come on Monday and Thursday morning. They come to provide additional assistance to the teaching staff for some of the youth who need extra help overcoming academic challenges in the areas of reading and math. The tutors work with youth in a one-on-one format to ensure youth get the attention that they need to succeed.”



Rev. Donald Bean, Administrator for the Office of Community Partnerships said, “When volunteers are tutoring, they are building relationships and establishing rapport with the youth. Ultimately this lets the youth know that they care about them and it establishes trust. Once that is accomplished, the youth are open and receptive to receiving advice from almost any volunteer. We have a goal of weaving volunteers into every aspect of our agency. Volunteers, faith based or non-faith based, can serve in many ways. The simple task of reading to youth and helping them recognize and pronounce words is something that any volunteer can do. Tutoring or helping with the reading program is a unique and wonderful opportunity for retired teachers or senior citizens to pour into the lives of youth! These volunteers are helping us reach that goal. We are thankful for their commitment and service.”

News Brief

Photo Gallery





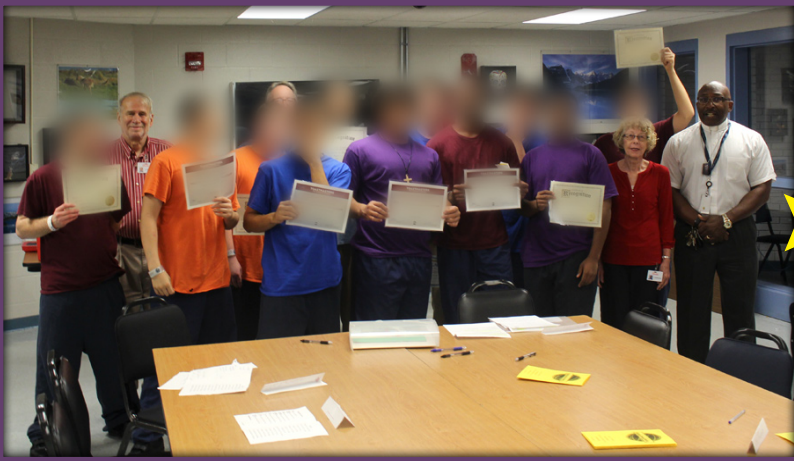
IRJCJ's First Toastmasters Leadership Class Certification

Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility (IRJCF) launched the Toastmasters International Program. Toastmasters is a communication and leadership development program that teaches youth basic skills to emerge and function as effective leaders in today's society. Youth learn to give speeches, receive feedback, lead teams, and guide other youth to achieve their goals in a supportive and positive environment. The program is supervised by retired Kent State instructor Sandy Muirfield.

A unique element of the program allows youth to function in a leadership capacity. Youth elect their leaders, including a Toastmasters President, Vice-President, and

Treasurer. The young men excelled in their roles. They demonstrated self-confidence, planned, lead, listened to each other's speeches, gave feedback, and journeyed together with other participants throughout the program. Each participant learned the core values of respect, integrity, service, and excellence. The entire Toastmaster group was excited to be part of the Toastmaster International Group.

Five youth completed the mandatory requirements of the Toastmasters Youth Leadership Program and received their certificate of recognition. Each youth completed several speeches of various lengths and topics.



Faith Ministry Engages Youth in Facility and "Super Saturday" Community Service

Faith Ministries of Columbus, Ohio has partnered with (CJCF) to reach youth using a two-pronged approach. The ministry sends multiple volunteers with diverse talents and skills into the facility and creates opportunity for youth to engage with them by doing community service projects. Some of the volunteers are Miceles Gover, Ryan Bailey, James Chaffin, Nakesha Moody, Nick Hughes, Carol Price, and Richard Boston. They use rap, motivational speaking, small group teaching, preaching, and community service to reach the youth. Chaplain Kershaw said, "Doing ministry in this fashion makes a great impact on the youth. They feel connected in a real way." One youth said,

"I love when they come. Brother Sal comes sometimes just to sit in service with us, he's family."

The youth is referring to Miceles Gover, the lead minister of the Prison Ministry at Faith Ministries. Chaplain Kershaw said, "Sal has been instrumental in rallying volunteers from his congregation to come in and make an impression on youth at CJCF. The varied group of volunteers include guest speakers, singers, rappers, basketball players, and group leaders that facilitate the G-Man small group study. G-Man is a group study that teaches the young men how to become "godly men" and how to be men of virtue and righteousness."



Kairos Touch Ignites Change in Youth

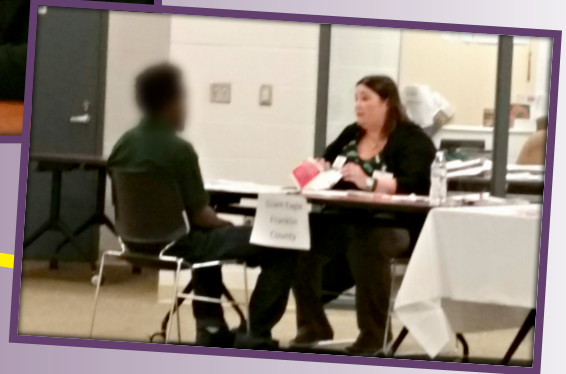
The Kairos Torch program, designed to break the cycle of crime and help youth make better life choices, came to CJCF and helped youth realize their God-given potential by stripping away the many masks that they hide behind. Three volunteers helped youth engage their reasoning skills and find balance for their lives. One youth said, "Torch is more than just a program; it's like a second family. Introducing us to Christ is one thing, but the love they bring into the room fulfills a spot inside that's been empty for a while now."

Chaplain Kershaw said, "Kairos Torch is one of



the programs that impacts the youth, even outside of the meetings. It is the start of forming a healthy conscience, and strengthens them both spiritually and mentally." Another youth said, "The volunteers came and brought a sincere passion. They were eager to help us, they even helped me with my American History homework!" Describing further his weekly Kairos Torch experience, he said, "I love Kairos Torch."

Volunteers Offer Job Fair and Teach Youth Interviewing and Job Readiness Skills



Six different employers volunteered their time to teach youth job readiness, interviewing skills, and resume writing as part of a job fair offered during intersession at CJCF. Participating employers were H.Y.P.E. from Lucas County (Helping Young People Excel) hiring for cleaning and construction jobs; Steven Best from Easter Seals aiding with transition; and Lithko Contracting, hiring for contract and construction work. Other employers included Speedway and Giant Eagle. Deandre Leu from Trinit-D in Cincinnati also attended and provided interview coaching skills and employment readiness.

Twenty-nine youth were selected and placed on the participation list if they were within six months from release. Ms. Alisha Bailey, CJCF Reentry Coordinator, said "The youth did a great job! They were very engaged and learned a lot from the process. It gave them hope. The interviews ran longer than anticipated because the interviewers did such a thorough job interviewing each youth. As a result, nineteen of the selected youth completed their interviews. The interviewers were very personable. They really got to know the youth. As youth responded, they gave them tips for dealing with nervousness and how to present themselves in an interview. They taught them how to identify and say their strengths and weaknesses and how to switch their weaknesses into a positive."

Chaplain Kershaw said, "The employers were very impressed with CJCF youth. There was one in particular that they wanted to hire on the spot! The team wants to increase the number of employers at the next job fair and allow more time for interviews so that all selected youth can participate."

The job fair is a reentry strategy designed to increase the youth's successful reentry into the community. The next job fair will be during intersession in December.



► OUR MISSION

**Improve Ohio's future by habilitating
youth and empowering families and communities**

► OUR VISION

A safer Ohio; one youth and one community at a time

► CORE VALUES

All people can change

Treat everyone the way you would like to be treated

Every life matters

We strive to provide youth everything they need to succeed

We want the best for youth, and we believe in families

We believe in being good role models