From the Director…

Welcome to the third edition of the Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau Newsletter “Pathways to Success.” As always we welcome and encourage the submittal of articles, commentary, research and editorials from our readers. Please send your submittals to Sherry Beree at sberee@tulsacounty.org.

Criminal Justice professors and researchers from the University of Central Oklahoma have been contracted to perform a two phase assessment and evaluation of our Intake Unit process and Community Intervention Center (CIC) assessment process. Since the Bureau (Family Justice Center) assumed the operations of the CIC on July 1st 2015, it is paramount that we assess the contiguousness of the CIC and our Intake Unit. Phase one will be to assess all processes in both operations and phase two will be to do a comparison analysis to best practice research, a gap analysis and recommendations to improved connections between the units.

Our first ever comprehensive recidivism study initiates the last part of March. The contracted researchers have been and are currently connected to the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) and have vast experience in juvenile justice research and operations. The principle of the team is Carl Wicklund, who was the executive director of APPA for approximately 20 years. This research comes in three phases and will be protracted. Phase one will be gathering basic data for initial recidivism rates to include those who recidivated while juveniles and also those that recidivated as adults. Arrest rates will also be examined although we will not be using arrest rates as part of the recidivism definition. Potential predictors will be identified utilizing a Cox Regression and Survival Analysis.

Phase two will involve bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis to determine if associations exist between independent variables and recidivism. A focus on specific programs and their outcomes will be a major part of Phase three. The aforementioned phases are provided in brief as they are more comprehensive in detail than can be included in this writing.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Oklahoma team that included Judge David Lewis from the Court of Criminal Appeals, Senator A.J. Griffin, Janelle Bretten, Chief of Programs for OJA and myself, now have an opportunity to continue this endeavor. Oklahoma was one of eight states chosen to host a site visit by the Council of State Government’s Justice Center (CSGJC). The site visit by the CSGJC will consist of meetings with legislators, judges, prosecutors and juvenile justice practitioners to explore strengths and opportunities for improvement within the Oklahoma juvenile justice system. CSGJC will be selecting two or three states from their reviews to receive technical assistance for future Second Chance grant funding. (See related article starting on Page 9.)

The Bureau’s alternative school Phoenix Rising (PR) is now engaged with the Tulsa Community Foundation (TCF) whereas PR and the Tulsa County Juvenile Justice Trust Authority have a designated fund agreement with TCF to eventually establish a Phoenix Rising Foundation. This foundation will be to provide scholarships, basic life needs and other appropriate resources to assist our students in reducing pathways that would increase the likelihood of future criminal justice involvement. One of the many benefits with the TCF partnership is that it allows for fundraising whereby donations are tax deductible. (See related article on Page 6.)

Due to the Tulsa mayor disagreeing with our proposed purchase of land involving the Airport Trust Authority, we are now looking once again at other potential sites for the new Family Justice Center.

As you can ascertain, the Bureau is engaged in numerous projects since our last newsletter…all in an effort to comply with our mission statement and be a bellwether entity with advancing positive change in juvenile justice. Best wishes to all.

Justin Jones, Director
Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau
Meet Lindsay Goldfarb!  
New Administrator of Phoenix Rising  
(Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau’s Alternative School)

Lindsay has a masters degree in Educational Leadership with Principle Endorsement and a masters in Social Work. She also has a certification in Advanced Placement in Schools. With Lindsay’s experience and education attainment; she will certainly lead Phoenix Rising to the next level of evolution for a Bureau operated alternative school.

Ms. Goldfarb is the newest addition to the Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau (Family Justice Center). She started on March 1st as the Administrator of Phoenix Rising Alternative School. She is originally from Tulsa but has been employed in Chicago for the past decade working with the Chicago Public School system. She was employed as their Coordinator of Student Services/Social Worker and implemented programs for alternative schools. She has also been their Director of Student Services.

Note: In relation to this graph, please read the enclosed article “The Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative et al”, starting on Page 9.
News from...
the Juvenile Detention Home

“Achieving Balance in Detention”

It has been said that “the key to life is balance”. Anyone who has ever tried yoga knows balance isn’t always easy. Thankfully for the residents of Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Home, Sarah Thomas of the Attic Conversations Foundation understands this as well. Sarah’s organization was awarded a Tulsa Area United Way Social Innovation Grant to train detention residents in the art of yoga. She and her co-facilitator, Brent Sloan, seek to teach more than a series of poses. They seek to teach self-discipline and mindfulness as a path to life’s balance. But some still want to know what place yoga has in the secure environment of a detention center.

The path to detention is not easy. This path to detention for residents is filled with histories of trauma, depression and an array of other criminogenic issues. Many know the numbers. Children in detention are more likely to have experienced violent trauma, sexual abuse and socioeconomic deficits. Add to that, a higher propensity for significant range mental health issues including depression, oppositional defiant disorder, attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. It is not hard to see that detention kids can get lost in an alphabet soup of pathology. Fortunately, some research has been conducted to inform the behavioral and programming practices in detention facilities.

Many mental health professionals agree that promoting exercise, activity and a positive outlook are among the best approaches for working with kids in detentions. Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Home has long accepted these concepts as best practices in working with kids; however, it was not an easy proposition for some to recognize yoga as a useful practice. Some research also revealed that practicing yoga had positive effects on mental and physical well-being, which was good, but even more impressive was the evidence suggesting it could have positive effects concerning a wide range of mental health disorders: particularly depression.

When Sarah suggested adding yoga as a regular part of our program, it was easy to say yes but not so easy to acquire the funding to support the yoga program. While the needs were not extensive, yoga for kids in detention was not a funding priority for those that would donate. Sarah was undaunted. She sought out funding and was granted assistance from the Tulsa Area United Way. For the next year, the girls and boys on Unit A will have professional instructors engaging them in efforts to know themselves, improve their mental well-being and a greater since of balance in their lives. As a measure, an assessment tool is being designed to help children define their experience with yoga in detention. We hope to demonstrate the long-term viability and positive effects of yoga in detention for future support.

Both Sarah and Brent are committed to helping others find peace and balance through a commitment to yoga. Each of them has spent years studying and practicing the poses and breathing techniques that are so beneficial to those who regularly participate in this ancient art of yoga. Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Home is truly fortunate to have Sarah and Brent working with our kids and we deeply appreciate them and the Tulsa Area United Way for supporting the Yoga Program in the Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Home.

Continued on Page 4
Juvenile Detention Home

News continues...

“IT All Started on a Bus”

Many students around the country took time during the month of February to remember important figures in Afro-American history. Thanks to Ms. Kim Ellis (Tulsa Public School Teacher assigned to work with female residents in the Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Home) the students, staff and special visitors were all treated to a special program on February 29, 2016.

The presentation was held on Unit A and was open to employees of the Juvenile Bureau. The setting was a bus in 1960’s Georgia where Rosa Parks made her stand, or took her seat, for racial equality. The presentation included the a cappella song “Lift Every Voice and Sing” stirringly performed by one of detention’s most talented residents. Original spoken word creations were also recited that challenged the notion that today’s youth are apathetic and unconcerned about the world around them. The presentation was the culmination of a month’s worth of activities coordinated by Ms. Kim and was supported by TPS and Detention staff who worked with the kids to create the background setting. Special thanks to Detention Counselor Ermelinda Thomas for her support and artistic vision.

The facility would also like to thank our visitors from other departments and let them know how much the kids enjoyed performing for them. The “It All Started on a Bus” presentation was just the beginning in our efforts to let the world know that kids in our facility may have some issues, but they have even more potential. It all may have started on a bus, but the end for our kids is nowhere in sight!

“Superintendent Stressed by Sooner Lows”

In December of 2015, it was clear the Oklahoma Sooners would have an uphill battle in facing the Clemson Tigers in the first round of the NCAA Football Playoffs. Superintendent Alondo Edwards, being a proud Alumni of the Human Relations Graduate Program, had no problem rising to the challenge when an unnamed staff member challenged him to a small wager. Not money or even shaved beards were on the table as has been done on such occasions in the past. No. The loser had to wear the T-shirt of the winner’s university for an entire day!

Many already know the results of the game. A 37 to 17 whooping was suffered by the beloved Sooner faithful, Superintendent Edwards included. So on February 22 of 2016, a fateful reckoning came to pass. Being a man of his word, the Superintendent had no choice but to purchase and wear a gaudy, purple and white T-shirt with the words “Straight out of Clemson” printed in embarrassingly large letters. When asked how it felt by one administrator, he stated “IT Burns...IT Burns”.

The T-shirt in question has not been seen since and rumors abound that it was cut into pieces and burned at an undisclosed location. At this time it is unclear if the staff member who made the wager is still an employee, but he hasn’t been seen since either, leading some to believe he shared the same fate as the T-shirt.

Asked for a response the Superintendent had no comment except....

Submitted by Alondo D. Edwards, Superintendent
Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau/Detention Home
More from... the Juvenile Detention Home

Congratulations to our recent EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH recipients!

December 2015

Michael Tottress, Lead Detention Counselor

January 2016

Levar Smith, Detention Counselor

February 2016

Anthony Taylor, Training Coordinator

Detention Employees of the Month receive a personalized plaque, which is presented at the monthly All Staff Meeting, and a designated parking space for the month on the Juvenile Bureau parking lot!

Detention Staff are also recognized with a MONTHLY BIRTHDAY CAKE! Here’s March’s cake, which also includes well wishes to CHARLENE CYPERT and WANDA DAVIS. They are both retiring at the end of March 2016 with many years of service to the Detention Home! Congrats to Charlene and Wanda!
The Tulsa County Juvenile Bureau is pleased to announce that the Tulsa County Juvenile Justice Trust Authority is partnering with the Tulsa Community Foundation on a Designated Fund Agreement in support of creating a foundation for the Phoenix Rising Alternative School. Starting this fund is the first step in a yearlong process to establish an independent, board-driven nonprofit organization, with a mission to directly support the youth and families involved with the school. Future activities of the foundation include: grant identification and management, community-based mentoring and job shadowing program, alumni association and a school-based legal clinic focusing on a variety of educational initiatives including domestic violence, access to healthcare and tenants’ rights.

Tax deductible donations can be made in support of these efforts. Please send your contribution to 7030 S. Yale Ave., Suite 600, Tulsa, OK. 74136 re: Phoenix Rising Alternative School Foundation.

From Lindsay...

You will never hear me say that any student lacks the capacity or ability to learn. I believe that not only can every student learn, but that every student desires to learn. Research indicates that there are a multitude of diverse learning styles within a school setting. These possible differences, gaps, or deficits may leave some students behind or allow them to slip through the hands of educators. These students may be seen as, or see themselves as, an “abnormal” youth, of which a “normal” society, or “normal” school does not accept. In my experience, this self-perception leads to low self-esteem, gradual disengagement in school, and over time, possibly dropping out. This is why alternative educational opportunities have become imperative for our society. It is crucial that we are able to offer students a place to learn where they may not be able to particularly thrive in a traditional school environment. Not only can every student learn, but every student deserves to learn.

By accepting the position at Phoenix Rising, my hope is to challenge any misconceptions within the students’ perceptions and also with the stakeholders. A mistake does not have to halt their potential in life, nor does being dealt a difficult childhood mean that you must remain stagnant. I want to create and support a positive change that benefits all students by helping them to recognize that they truly matter. All of our students should recognize and strongly identify with the name of our school—Phoenix Rising. They too, have the capacity to rise again from any adversity they may have faced stronger than before. These students have an opportunity to become something amazing, despite the fiery and horrific challenges they may have endured.

To some, Phoenix also represents hope. With many of the students we see, some are just hoping to survive. Some students just hope that while attending school or while being in their homes, that their environments are safe. Some wish to become someone that makes a difference. Our vision is for Phoenix Rising to work. For Phoenix Rising to work, we mean to help these students who are obviously driven to succeed and channel that drive into thoughtful and creatively constructed futures. We want them to not only understand that they do have a future, but allow them to generate healthy and productive lives within our society. By providing a dynamic, viable, and safe environment for students to learn, and feel they belong, is our plan and responsibility.

Lindsay Goldfarb
Administrator
Meet our Tulsa Area CIC Coordinators!

Aleksey

Alekseev (Aleks) initially came to the U.S. as an exchange student from Russia to pursue a Master’s Degree in Psychology and began working for the TACIC in the fall of 2012. Aleksey has experience as a special education teacher and counselor at the secondary level and has also served at Juvenile Detention. Aleksey enjoys working with adolescents and states, “I find it very rewarding to help them learn about the world and themselves and assist with accomplishing their goals and become happier persons”. Aleksey provides comprehensive assessments for clients and their families and supervises the 3pm-11pm shift.

Adam

Strange is the CIC Coordinator responsible for overseeing daily operations of the 11pm-7am shift. Adam was born and raised in Dallas, Texas and received a Bachelor Degree from OSU-Stillwater in 2011. During his time in Stillwater, Adam developed an aspiration to work with at-risk youth and families. Adam has been a member of the CIC team since April 2012 where he served as a 3pm-11pm Youth Specialist before assuming the 11pm-7am Coordinator position in March of 2014.

Shaylonda Henderson

Shaylonda is the 7am–3pm Shift Coordinator. Aside from supervision of the shift, Shaylonda also assists clients and their families by providing comprehensive assessment and utilizing community-based resource linkage. Shaylonda has the tedious task of statistical maintenance of the TACIC database and produces several statistical reports regarding TACIC operation alongside monitoring and coordinating staff training needs. Shaylonda is completing her Master’s Degree in Business Administration and hopes to expand her career in the future by working in the fiscal office or Human Resources.

Through the dedicated assistance and leadership from employees such as these, the TACIC strives to continue its support of the Juvenile Bureau’s mission statement. By providing general needs assessment, comprehensive assessment, child safety screening, CPS reporting and supports linkage, we believe we can aid clients/families in addressing the underlying issues which promote negative choices and behavior which sometimes lead to police/courts contact. TACIC provides “follow up” calls to discharged clients to further assess support needs.

Continued on Page 8
Tulsa Area Community Intervention Center
(continued from Page 7)

Information is documented in client folders which may assist in the next level of treatment as the client progresses through the Juvenile Courts.

This fiscal year to date, the TACIC has served more than 870 youth. Of that number, approximately 48% were admitted and discharged from the facility, another 44% where processed/booked and transferred to Juvenile Bureau’s Detention Center and 8% were ineligible. Of the overall number, more than approximately 85% will not return to the TACIC based on previous year end results. However, we are able to ascertain that a large number of youth we come in contact with are heavily exposed to recent and early trauma factors. It is known that the more trauma related experiences a youth has, the greater the chance of repeated trauma, delinquency and poor life choices as denoted in the CDC’s ACE Study, http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/aces.html also http://www.acestudy.org. Most youth spend an average of 4.5 hours at our facility. This means that we have a very brief opportunity to affect change for some youth. The quality of contact with our center has to be of high standards and all staff are making efforts and adjustments to provide a quality service for the client, the community and the Bureau alike.

Submitted by Cortez Tunley
Program Administrator

More for your interest...

Supreme Court Ruling: Justice System Must Treat Youth Differently Than Adults

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that people sentenced as teenagers to life imprisonment must have a chance to argue for their release. The ruling came in Montgomery v. Louisiana and settled a question the court left open in 2012, when it banned mandatory life imprisonment for youth under the age of 18 in Miller v. Alabama. The new ruling affirms that Miller v. Alabama applies retroactively.
THE STATEWIDE JUVENILE JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE: Maximizing the Value of Investments in Supervision and Services

Over the past decade, nearly every state has experienced a sharp drop in its youth incarceration rate, in many cases declines of more than 50 percent. As the number of incarcerated youth has decreased, juvenile arrest rates have also fallen to historic lows. These are extraordinary developments that policymakers and advocates should celebrate. And as new research confirms that youth fare better closer to home, states are minimizing the use of expensive state-run correctional facilities, resulting in substantial savings at no cost to public safety.

For the first time, many states are now allocating the majority of their juvenile justice resources to community-based supervision and services. Rearrest rates for youth being supervised in the community are unacceptably high, however, and education and other outcomes for these youth continue to be poor.

New research confirms that youth fare better closer to home, and states are minimizing the use of expensive state-run correctional facilities.

And what about the smaller, higher-risk group of youth who remain incarcerated? These young people have especially high rates of reoffense, and often resources are not applied effectively to help them succeed when they return to their communities.

Funding for the Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative

The Council of State Governments Justice Center's Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative is a project of the National Reentry Resource Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, and conducted in partnership with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Technical assistance provided through this initiative typically lasts 9 to 12 months.

Policymakers in every state who want to improve supervision and services for youth in the juvenile justice system should be asking:

- How well do our resources, policies, and practices align with what the research says works to reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes?

- What recidivism and other outcome data does our state track for youth under the supervision of the juvenile justice system?

- To what extent are key leaders from the three branches of state government working together and in partnership with local governments to improve outcomes for youth under juvenile justice supervision?

Continued on Page 10
The Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative helps state policymakers work through these questions. Through the National Reentry Resource Center, The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center provides intensive technical assistance that includes these components:

1. **Analyzing quantitative data**

The CSG Justice Center conducts an in-depth analysis of juvenile justice system data, as well as relevant data from other service systems, to help policymakers better understand what supervision and services youth receive and what happens to youth once they return to their communities.

2. **Reviewing policy and practice**

Through focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, as well as a review of state laws and regulations, the CSG Justice Center examines the extent to which the state's juvenile justice policies, practices, and resource allocation align with what the research shows is effective in reducing recidivism.

3. **Presenting state-specific policy and practice recommendations**

The CSG Justice Center draws on this data analysis and stakeholder feedback to make customized recommendations to reduce recidivism and improve other outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system, and helps states develop plans to translate these recommendations into policy and practice.

### STATE SELECTION PROCESS

In April 2016, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention will select two or three states to receive intensive technical assistance through the initiative. To be considered, states must submit a letter stating their interest and commitment to the following:

- Establishing a bipartisan, interbranch task force to guide the effort

The task force must include representatives from the governor's office, state juvenile justice agency, state legislature, and judiciary, and work in partnership with local officials to advance juvenile justice policy and practice change.

- **Sharing available data from the juvenile justice and other service systems**

Available juvenile justice system data, as well as other relevant justice system data, including law enforcement, adult probation, and adult corrections data, must be provided to the CSG Justice Center in accordance with data-sharing and confidentiality protocol. Where appropriate, data from other youth-serving systems may be requested.

- **Improving policy and practice across the juvenile justice continuum, from diversion to reentry**

States should be prepared to advance comprehensive juvenile justice policy and practice changes to reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes.