

Mission Statement

The Agency provides education, training, and treatment designed to encourage positive changes and meet the rehabilitative needs of offenders. We are committed to enhancing public safety through the utilization of evidence-based practices to reduce the rate of recidivism while promoting efficiency and economy in the delivery of correctional services. We are dedicated to improving quality of life and public safety by being professional and non-judgmental with respect to individual needs; being proactive through accountability, empathy and encouragement to support offenders; and creating awareness to empower individuals to make positive changes resulting in an alternative lifestyle to live productively and lawfully.

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Spotlight: Donald Williamson

Donald Williamson began working as the Program Manager for Riverside Criminal Justice Agency on March 16, 2016. Prior to joining the agency, Donald worked as a Probation Officer at Chesterfield Community Corrections for the past 12 years. He started his career in 2001 at Piedmont Court Services in Farmville, Virginia. Donald interned at Piedmont Court Services beginning in October 2001 and was then hired as a full time employee in

February 2002 while completing his internship. He is a graduate of Longwood College with a major in Sociology.



"The task of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there."

~John Buchan~

In addition, Donald graduated from Skyline College (currently ECPI) with an Associate's Degree in Network Security and Administration.

Donald resides in Amelia County with his wife (Anita) and three daughters (Emily, Addison and Annika). When not working, he enjoys spending time with his family, fishing, and many other outdoor activities. We are excited to have Donald aboard!

Cleaning up Prince George County

After noticing a lot of litter, and in an effort to help keep Prince George County beautiful, RCJA organized community service work days to help clean up Jefferson Park Road. This is the second time that the "litter pick up" was performed on both sides of Jefferson Park Road. Director



Coghill started a competition between staff and clients to see who could pick up the most trash! Remember, don't be a litter bug!



Second Annual Job Fair



On April 8, 2016, Riverside Criminal Justice Agency held its Second Annual Job Fair at the Hopewell Community Center. After the success of the first Job Fair in 2015, RCJA wanted to continue with this endeavor to assist our clients and community members in gaining access to employment opportunities. Many of the clients we serve in the criminal justice system have struggles attempting to enter or reenter the workforce. However, we recognized that they are not alone. In the current job market, many people in our local area still toil at finding vocational and educational opportunities as a whole.

Staff members, Vern Phelps and Tracy Adams contacted many companies and agencies as well as the Virginia Employment Commission in order to secure vendors for the event. Public Radio even did an advertisement for staff free of charge! Last year, we were excited to have ten vendors participate in the event with over 150 participants. This year it was amazing to have 21 vendors and more than 250 participants at the Job Fair. We always are uncertain as to the success of such an event in our area with no public transportation and our lack of any experience in doing something like this before!



Social media was utilized to spread the word about the event, and was the source most identified for hearing about the Job Fair.

With the following employers and educational institutions willing to participate, the event was a great success: Goodwill, John Tyler Community College, Integrity Staffing (Amazon), Food Lion Distribution, Service Center Metals, Allen Corporation, FAREVA, MGC Advanced Polymers, Teleperformance, Walmart Distribution, Surge Staffing, Perdue, Best Buy, Sussex II, Southside Programs for Adult Continuing Education,

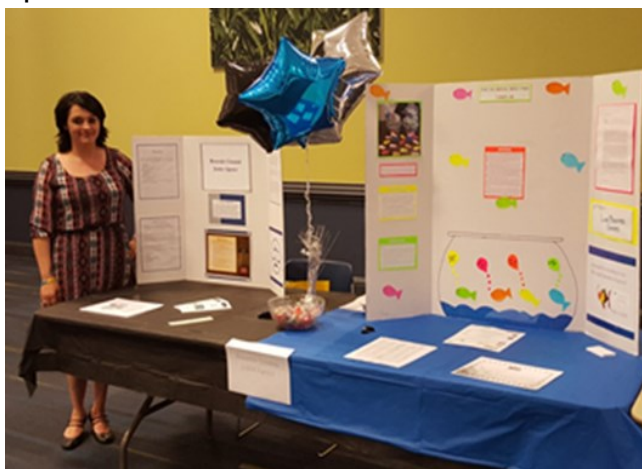
Crater Regional Workforce Development Group, Community College Workforce Alliance, Central Virginia Health Services, Employment Center of CCHDSS, and Hopewell DSS. The vendors were impressed with the professionalism, resumes, and number of individuals in attendance. They voiced the desire to partner with RCJA again to repeat the event next year.



It felt amazing to assist in fostering potential opportunities for those in our community. We are looking forward to an even more successful event next year.

John Tyler's Human Services Appreciation Day

Shannon Hamlett is an intern at RCJA. She is currently studying Human Services at John Tyler Community College with a concentration in Criminal Justice. Ms. Hamlett has been helping RCJA implement the Fishbowl Incentive Program for probation and pretrial clients. The Fish Bowl Incentive Program is a positive way to recognize clients that are making beneficial changes in their lives. When clients engage in positive behaviors, like attending counseling groups, obtaining their driver's license, or giving drug-free urine tests, they get opportunities to be entered into the fishbowl. At the end of each month, a client's name is pulled from the bowl and they receive a prize! If clients demon-



strate certain negative behaviors, all entries are pulled from the fish bowl. In March, Probation Officer, Lauren Bingham, and Intern Shannon Hamlett attended the John Tyler's Human Services Appreciation Day Fair and provided an RCJA table with information on Drug Court as well as Local Probation and Pretrial Services. Ms. Hamlett made a display about the Fish Bowl Incentive program and other techniques that RCJA uses to help motivate and encourage clients. In addition, Shannon made several gift baskets that will be used as monthly prizes. She also elicited donations from over forty local businesses for our incentive program. Shannon has been a true delightful and creative individual to work with. We will miss her when she leaves us in April.

RCJA on Facebook

Smart phones, the internet, tweeting and blogging - we have accepted all of these innovations, and many more, as part of our working lives, helping us to work more flexibly, stay in touch for longer and respond to each other quicker. In March, Riverside Criminal Justice Agency joined the world of social media as one of our Six-Month goals. The Facebook page "Riverside Criminal Justice Agency" will keep its followers up-to-date on local job



Like us on
Facebook



fairs, employers who are currently hiring, information to include cancellations of our in-house Substance Abuse and Anger Management classes, interesting news articles, as well as Hopewell, Prince George, and Surry events. The page was developed because in the age of technology and social media, this is the main way to stay electronically connected! So, please spread the word today and "LIKE" us on Facebook! The 100th person to "LIKE" us on Facebook will receive an RCJA Grab Bag of goodies.

CORRECTION CONNECTION

Negativity in the Workplace

Negativity in the workplace takes on many forms including lying, slander, deceit, selfishness and pessimism. When a negative workplace is allowed to persist, it can begin to affect everyone in the agency. You need to learn to identify the effects of negativity in the workplace so that you can take the steps necessary to combat it if it crops up in your workplace. A persistent negative attitude in the workplace stifles creativity. When negativity takes over, people tend to stay with proven methods for fear that something new may not be effective. A negative atmosphere counteracts the feeling of innovation that can help an agency to create new services or develop more efficient ways of doing business. When the workplace becomes antagonistic in nature, people do not feel the need to share ideas with each other. New ideas are not circulated, and the agency does not move forward. Communication breaks down in an unenthusiastic workplace. Staff members have either had run-ins with each other over issues involving negative communication and no longer speak to each other, or the air of negativity causes employees to no longer trust the information that others provide. Arrogance can be part of a negative work environment, and that can lead people to believe that their answer is the only correct one. They disregard all other input as valid, and communication throughout the entire agency erodes. These arrogant personalities are perhaps the most difficult types of people to deal with. The most important thing about the person who thinks they know everything is that they lack humility. Knowing that is the key to learning how to deal with these people. Negativity in the workplace can cause experienced employees to look down on new hires and refuse to offer any assistance in employee development. Gossip and misinformation can permeate a negative workplace and cause the team to fracture into smaller groups that are not able to provide the results the company needs. Research is conclusive--emotions are contagious, especially in group settings. Negative Emotions are more contagious than positive ones.

 *Quit fighting the symptoms, go for the cause!* 

Positive energy can spread just as quickly as negative energy. You just need to start the ball rolling. People get trapped in the victim mode and feel that there's nothing they can do. If they start to see that changes can happen, they may be more willing to come up with their own solutions to add to yours. The majority of people want to be positive, but they just don't know how. A good way to start is to come up with solutions to solve some of the problems you see occurring. It's really important for you to try to find the root cause of the situation and not get caught up in fighting just the symptoms. Whether you love your job or hate it, it is really going to depend on how you view it and what you're willing to do about it. You have much more power than you may think. Instead of feeling like it's hopeless, view it as a challenge to actually make a real difference in your workplace. You'll appreciate the results as will your co-workers. You definitely have the power to change a negative environment into a positive, fun place to be. You can do it!