

**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.

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

CCJB Appreciation Breakfast	2
Drug Court Graduation	3
Annual Recovery Night	4
Agency Teamwork	5



# Correction Connection

JANUARY 2019

## Spotlight: Mendel Smith-Harris

A big WELCOME goes out to Mendel Smith-Harris who just joined our team on January 1, 2019. Mendel is a Virginia native, and obtained his Bachelor's Degree in History from Ferrum College. Mendel previously worked as a Sheriff's Deputy, and prior to coming to RCJA, as a Local Probation Officer at Colonial Community Corrections. When not working, Mendel enjoys spending his time collecting memorabilia, and an interesting fact is he likes to collect board games! Mendel has lived in Wyoming and is an avid traveler in his free time he has visited over twenty states. Mendel's favorite quote is, "Talk less, smile more. Don't let them know what you're against or what you're for." We are thrilled to have him as part of our RCJA team!



## Special Events

This year, staff decided it was time to let the fine men and women in our respective Commonwealth's Attorney's Offices that they were appreciated. A catered breakfast was provided for them in their office, not on a court day! While the criminal justice field is most exciting, it can also be very draining on an individual. Prosecutors and their staff often come under fire and are not always respected for the hard decisions they must make on a daily basis. The RCJA staff wanted to say thank you for the great working relationship that has been built with these respective Offices. Picture below from left to right is Hopewell Commonwealth's Attorney, Rick Newman, and his staff and Prince George Commonwealth's Attorney, Susan Fierro, and her staff.



Hopewell Commonwealth's Attorney, Rick Newman, and his staff



## The CCJB 8th Community Appreciation Breakfast

THE RCCJB held its Annual Legislative Breakfast on November 9, 2018, at the Beacon Theatre in Hopewell VA this year. There were several guest speakers at this year's breakfast to present information on the priorities and initiatives of the Riverside CCJB, the Hopewell, Prince George, Surry Drug Court, and local Behavioral Health Services. The event was moderated by Mrs. Susan Fierro, CCJB Chairman. In addition, the Riverside CCJB hosted the Fifth Annual CIT Awards Ceremony. The event was well attended again this year, and those nominated were all recognized. Awards were given in four categories; First Responder of the Year, CIT Intervention of the Year, CIT Advocate of the Year, and CIT Dispatcher of the Year. Nominations were accepted from the months of September through October in 2018. There were no nominees for the CIT Dispatcher of the Year Award this year.



### **And the Winners are:**

- Kenny Perry of Crater Criminal Justice Academy received the CIT Advocate of the Year Award.
- Officer Anthony McCurry from the Hopewell Police Department received the First Responder of the Year Award.
- Pamala Gilley from Riverside Regional Jail received the CIT Intervention of the Year Award.

The Second Annual RCJA Staff Awards were given at this even as well. Two awards were presented by the Riverside CCJB. Nominations were accepted by constituents with whom staff work. The

members of the local judiciary, law enforcement agencies, treatment providers, clerks of court, etc. could all nominate staff. The first award is for an individual that positively influence others to build consensus in group, departmental or organizational settings; and manages and/or champions change effectively through formal or informal leadership. This person helps others develop by investing time and effort in coaching and/or mentoring; develops trust and credibility through open, respectful communication and demonstrating accountability; and provides a sense of purpose, vision and mission for their coworkers and/or staff.

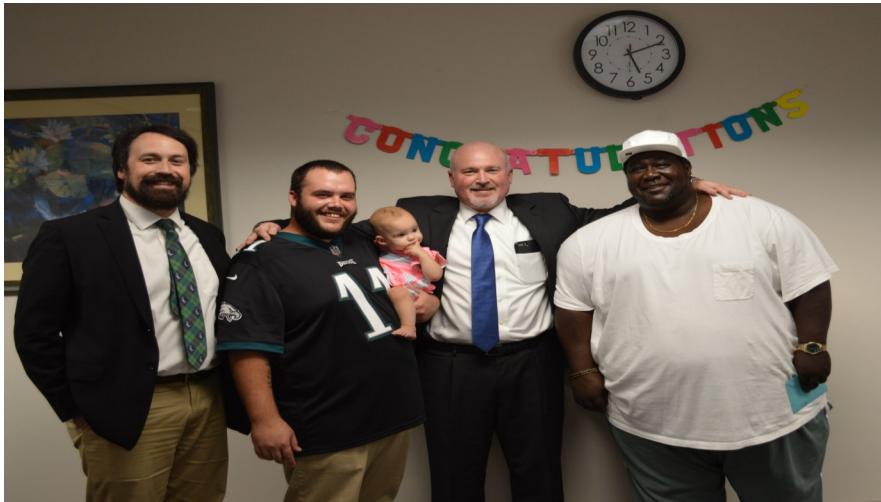
**Congratulations to Leigh Romero, Pretrial Officer who received the "Eye in the Calm of the Storm" Award.**

This second award goes to the employee that demonstrates innovation and proactive leadership utilizing highly effective practices to inspire and lead others to contribute constructively to the mission; proactively identifies and resolves challenges that interfere with department, divisional, unit activities to further the mission; develops and utilizes strong, constructive and productive relationships that enable the goals to be met in support of the mission; and improves department, division, unit morale through actions not related to job expectations. This person supports practices, procedures and policies; brings about significant positive change in support of the mission; and eliminates obstacles to achieving the mission; and demonstrates extraordinary service to the community by supporting the communities of Prince George, Hopewell, and Surry in ways that exceed expectations that result in unexpected positive outcomes that support the mission.

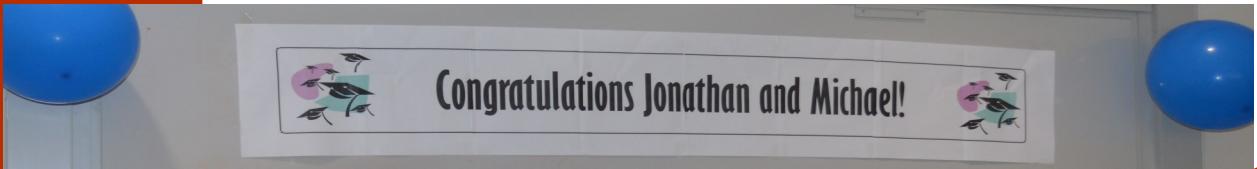
**Congratulations to Rachel Turner, Officer Manager, who received the "Exemplary Employee of the Year" Award.**



# 2018 Drug Court Graduation



On August 13, 2018, The Hopewell Prince George Surry Drug Court celebrated another Graduation. There were two graduates in this class; Jonathan Talbert and Michael Parker. The Drug Court programs in Virginia take a comprehensive approach to the blend of judicial intervention combined with treatment. Each participant attends a series of treatment groups and services that include but are not limited to substance abuse treatment, relapse prevention work, anger management, a clinical process group, a life skills group, Moral Reconation Therapy, budgeting, job seeking development as well as mental health evaluations and individual counseling. These participants receive rewards as well as sanctions throughout the program, and many times both are immediate and behavioral focused. Group cohesion and teamwork is strong amongst the participants, and many times the participants rely on one another for support, transportation, and become very close as they assist in building each other's recovery support system. The participants become a family, and as a family, they enjoy celebrating their successes. This day, the team and the participants gathered as a family to share the joy as Jonathan Talbert and Michael Parker graduated from an intensive and highly rigorous program to forge ahead to the next step of their live and recovery. Join us in saying Congratulations and all the best for the future to Jonathan and Michael.



# Annual Recovery Night at Scott Park

On September 20, 2018, Riverside Criminal Justice Agency held its Third Annual Recovery Night event. September is the national SAMSHA Celebrate Recovery Month. This year was a smaller and more intimate gathering of those who have or are attending substance abuse treatment at the RCJA office. Just as last year, we had our guest speaker Tony from the Center for Therapeutic Justice lead the event. His love and passion for people and their recovery as well as his dynamic presentation and fun approach always make Recovery Night such a success. We also couldn't do it without the culinary support of Prince George Officer Harold Shreves, as he joined us again as the Chief Grill Master. Those attending the event were treated to hamburgers, hotdogs, water, soda, and chips. Everyone always loves free food and when it is cooked in front of and provided free of charge, it's a simple gesture that people care. Let's remember and celebrate those that have entered recovery and those who work so diligently daily to help others maintain their recovery.



# Teamwork In Progress: Camp Hanover

There is nothing better than having fun at work and building a great team with your co-workers! Each year, the Agency does a day of team building with a facilitator so staff can get to know one another in a non-business setting and to learn more about their strengths and weaknesses. The event also helps our staff think outside the standard box that the criminal justice system can often



find itself in. The obstacles challenge our perceptions and our personal biases helps us to push out of our comfort zones; and sometimes to get much closer to each other professionally and personally! Many events are physical in nature but require critical thinking skills as this group wants to get it right on the first try! By working with each other outside of the office, staff get a different perception on one another that improves our working relationship when we are back in the office!

