



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

AVERY D. NILES, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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DJJ FOCUS ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH: “Transition to Success” and “RESPECT” Programs

(ATLANTA – GA) Commissioner Avery D. Niles is proud to announce the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice is partnering with two new job training programs designed to expedite the assimilation of former young offenders back into their communities and to prepare them for re-entry to the workforce after being charged with a juvenile offense.

“For efforts to stop recidivism to have any chance of working at all, the education process for youth in our care cannot end at the gates of our detention facilities,” said Commissioner Avery Niles. “Community Outreach programs are essential to continue ongoing activities and training.”

“That’s why the Education Division at DJJ is excited to be working hand in hand with outside organizations that can assist with this next step in youth development,” said DJJ Associate School Superintendent Dr. Audrey Armistad. The next steps in Community Outreach for DJJ are new programs like “**RESPECT**” and “**Transition to Success**”.

“**Transition to Success**” is a collaborative transition program between the Adult Education Program of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice school system and Georgia Mountains Regional Workforce Development.

“The goal of the ‘**Transition to Success**’ program is to provide GED preparation and testing opportunities,” said Associate Superintendent Armistad. “This innovative program includes technical college enrollment and tuition, job training, and employment for youth involved with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, whether they are incarcerated or on probation.”

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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In order to meet the needs of Georgia's young offenders, the "***Transition to Success***" program is based inside the Gainesville Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC). Students who transition from the Gainesville RYDC back into the community can continue to receive services provided by the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development, as long as they are involved with DJJ.

Eligible students will be enrolled in GED preparation courses taught by Lanier Technical college instructors. There they can receive additional job training, and employment or technical college enrollment after release.

The "***RESPECT***" program works with the Governor's Office of Workforce Development and takes a different approach to preparing young offenders for transition back to their home communities. "***RESPECT***" stands for *Re-Entry Skills Preparation & Education Career Training*.

"This is soft skills training," said DJJ Associate Superintendent Armistad. "Our students enrolled in this transition program are taught network building, proper attitude and behavior for the workplace, how to write resumes and how to prepare for interviews."

DJJ students at the Eastman Youth Development Campus (YDC) can enroll in the Graduate Education Program there and sign up for the "***RESPECT***" program. Students who transition from Eastman YDC back to their community can continue to receive services provided by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development through twenty local Workforce Investment areas in Georgia.

"Young people convicted of juvenile offenses often encounter many challenges when entering the workforce for their first time," said Commissioner Niles. "These difficulties can magnify the risk of a juvenile re-offending once released. It can even lead to later adult criminal activity. But the "***RESPECT***" program helps Georgia's young people break the recidivism cycle by leaving their former juvenile offender behaviors behind to focus on more positive futures," the Commissioner said.

Chartered as Georgia's 181st school district and accredited by both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Correctional Educational Association (CEA), the DJJ School System was recently renamed as the Georgia Preparatory Academy. The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice operates one of the largest school systems in the state.

For more information on DJJ's continuing commitment to provide the best educational and transitional programs, the best possible learning environment for the youth in its care, and the most recent technological improvements to its classrooms, please visit the Department of Juvenile Justice Education Division on the web at www.djj.state.ga.us.

Photos of DJJ's 2013 graduation ceremonies can be viewed on the agency's "News & Views" webpage at <http://www.djjnewsandviews.org/2013djjgraduation/>.

For more information on the Transition to Success program, go to the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development site at www.qmrc.ga.gov.

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..The mission statement of the Georgia Preparatory Academy is to provide a comprehensive educational program which will facilitate the successful integration of each student into the community and workplace..