



A MESSAGE FROM THE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner
Jim Shuler, Director
Office of Communications



DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

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**Commissioner Launches DJJ Citizens' Academy --
A Transparent Look at Georgia Juvenile Justice**

(ATLANTA - GA) Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner Avery D. Niles is pleased to announce the upcoming launch of Georgia's first **DJJ Citizens' Academy**. The inaugural session of the Academy will be an intensive five-week workshop providing an in-depth look into the operational and administrative functions of DJJ.

The Academy curriculum was developed to help educate Georgia citizens and stakeholders about new reforms in juvenile justice. Commissioner Niles said Governor Deal has supported meaningful changes that are already working to help reduce youthful offender populations and recidivism rates in the juvenile justice system. The Commissioner said the Academy project provides additional transparency in government that will allow citizens to observe those juvenile reforms underway.

"This Citizens' Academy will provide those participants with a 360-degree scope of our enhanced juvenile correctional practices," the Commissioner said. "We have a core belief in transparent government at DJJ and we support the governor's vision for a safer and better-educated Georgia."

The academy sessions will be scheduled at Youth Development Campuses, Court Service Offices, and local courts around the state. The course will commence with an agency overview and introduction to DJJ executive leadership. The curriculum will cover topics from secure confinement and community supervision to high school diplomas and GED's at Georgia's 181st School District.

"Our Citizens' Academy will provide an opportunity to see and experience DJJ's commitment to young offenders and their families, to enhanced juvenile reentry programs, and to DJJ's non-negotiable mission to promote safer communities for all Georgians by holding juvenile offenders accountable," said Commissioner Niles.

The **Inaugural Citizens' Academy** will begin October 23, 2014. A statewide schedule for future sessions of the DJJ Citizens' Academies is under development.

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Space for the Inaugural Citizens' Academy will be limited, so invitations must be restricted by the Commissioner's Office to a roster of twenty local citizens to participate in each Academy. Clearance must be obtained prior to participation and an application process will determine consideration for admittance into each session.

Additional Academy schedules will be announced on DJJ's News & Views website at <http://www.djijnnewsandviews.org/> or **for additional information, please contact:**

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(END RELEASE)

The Department of Juvenile Justice provides supervision, detention, and a wide range of treatment, educational and reentry services for youth referred by the Juvenile Courts. More than 50,000 youth are served each year by DJJ, including youth placed on probation, sentenced to short-term incarceration, or committed into custody by the Juvenile Courts.

In addition to the DJJ Central Office in Decatur, there are more than 100 DJJ court office and facility locations throughout Georgia.

For more information about special programs at the Department of Juvenile Justice join us on the web at <http://www.djijnnewsandviews.org/>

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