

# Connect

THE NEWS YOU NEED | THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH

MARCH/APRIL 2015



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

## INSIDE

Foster Care Parents Get Lesson in Hair Care	1
Director's Corner	2
Star Awards Streamlined	3
2015 Star Awards	3
Alexandria Teens Kick Butts	4
When Should I Blow the Whistle?	5
Newsletter Gets a New Look—and Name	5
Workforce Development Center New Name, New Successes	6
Staff Help Seniors Show Off Talents and Pets	6
Salute to Women Ceremony Recognizes Two DCHS Staff	7
Meyer Honored with SCAN Award	7
Center Raises Awareness of Sexual Assault in April	8
Pinwheel Gardens Raise Awareness of Child Abuse	8
Staff Explore Unconscious Bias	9
Serving the City's Muslim Families	9
Hello & Goodbye	10
News You Can Use	12



## Foster Care Parents Get Lesson in Hair Care

What's this? A hair styling demonstration at a Resource Parent training? What does hair care have to do with foster care?

*IT TURNS OUT* that hair care is an important component of child care in the eyes of Family Engagement Social Worker Taren Lambert, who is also a licensed cosmetologist. Lambert had seen some foster children whose hair was looking a little unruly and she decided that people needed to know more about hair. So she went to the local hair supply and drug stores, purchased products and equipment and appeared at a recent training to share her expertise.

Sometimes people who are familiar with straight, fine hair foster or adopt children with wavy, curly, or coarse hair. Products and

techniques that work on straight hair seldom have the desired effect on curly hair. And we all know that having hair that looks good promotes a positive self-image, otherwise we would not have invented the phrase "having a bad hair day."

Lambert told the group that she has been interested in styling hair since she was a teen. She even signed up for an elective cosmetology class in high school against her parents' wishes. Through trial and error, practice and experience working in various salons, she has found

*continued on page 4*



*"All that I could think about was how DCHS is truly a community asset and it is gratifying to see how each day you all are making a difference."*



## Director's Corner

*HAPPY SPRING* to all! I am happy that we can shake off the snow and clouds and look forward to sunshine, blossoms and good news:

### **Budget**

We have a few more weeks until the Budget process is completed, but we have had some very positive indications during the process thus far. As I shared previously, we are hopeful that we will not face any staff or service reductions. In addition, during our budget hearing we received accolades from Council and the Mayor for the responsiveness of our staff and our ability to carry out best practices, resulting in better outcomes for children and families. It was also pointed out that we have dealt with reductions and flat funding while still meeting the needs of the residents of Alexandria. It made me feel so proud and glad that our leaders are fully aware of your efforts! Thank you for your good work and perseverance!

### **Changes in Administration**

The recent changes in our administrative structure will allow us to review our current structure to see if changes can be made to provide more support for our programs and infrastructure. Over the next month, we will be touching base with you to get feedback on some proposed approaches.

### **Data and Performance**

Another area where we are trying to strengthen our capacity is in the area of data analysis and performance. We were fortunate to visit Allegheny County in Pennsylvania, where the County generously shared a tremendous amount of information and guidance on the work that they have done to build a system that

fully integrates their data and allows them to support clients in a more comprehensive manner. The data they collect and analyze also helps them to improve their practice and effectiveness. They have an agreement with their largest school system so they can share information in order to be responsive to needs of children and families. Locally, we are working with the Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA) to receive assistance to build our own internal capacity to manage and use our data. We will have some additional support from OPA in developing performance dashboards, supporting our current performance and data collection efforts, and utilizing an innovative tool that may assist us in integrating our data systems. We are looking forward to working with OPA and would love your feedback on additional ways to work together.

### **Truly Serving the Community—Every Day**

The commitment and effectiveness of our staff struck me very significantly one night this month. Earlier in the day, our Emergency Services staff had responded so swiftly and so well to a deteriorating situation with a family that they averted what could have been a very serious situation impacting a neighborhood. In the evening of that same day, as I walked out of one of our buildings, the lobby was filled with individuals getting assistance in completing their taxes. Also, each of the conference rooms was filled—one with a Commission deliberating on important issues, one with previously incarcerated individuals supporting each other, and another with early childhood providers participating in training. All that I could think about was how DCHS is truly a community asset and it is gratifying to see how each day you all are making a difference. Thank you! 🌱

# Star Awards Streamlined

THE DCHS Stars Award Program—which gives staff the opportunity to acknowledge and recognize significant employee contributions—just got simpler and easier.

After reviewing employee feedback, the DCHS Awards Committee folded together previous award categories and now offers staff two ways to nominate individual and groups for recognition: the **Star Award** and the **Super Star Award**.

The **Star Awards** are designed to recognize an individual whose action was significant to another employee. Awards will be given out each month, and all nominated staff will receive a certificate recognizing their action. Five nominees will receive a \$25 gift card; if there are more than five nominees in a month, names will be drawn to decide the recipients. The names of those who do not win will be put back in the pool for the next month's drawing.

The **Super Star Awards** are designed to recognize an individual or group whose

action was outside normal work expectations and had a significant impact on internal or external DCHS customers or departmental operations. These awards will be given out twice a year to two individuals for \$500 each and one group award of \$500. Because any awards of \$100 or more in value must have taxes paid, the \$500 awards will be in the form of a check with taxes already deducted. Nominees and winners will be recognized during a late March breakfast celebration and the DCHS picnic in September.

All nominees will be invited to both celebrations and will receive a certificate.

The committee made the nominating process simpler and easier as well. Staff can now nominate someone online, using one of two forms. The committee will

include the links to the forms in monthly emails announcing that month's Star Awards and reminding staff to enter their nominations for the coming month. Printable nomination forms along with the Awards policy are available in the *DCHS Information* folder under Shining Stars Awards Program.

Employees may be nominated for and receive awards from any or all programs in the course of a year. The nomination process is open to all staff—anyone can nominate anyone else in the Department. Notices of award winners will be posted by e-mail and on *DCHS Information*. 

**Want to recognize a co-worker or group for their contribution to DCHS?**

~ **Star Award:** [survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/DCHS-Star-Award-Nomination-Form](http://survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/DCHS-Star-Award-Nomination-Form)

~ **Super Star Award:** [survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/DCHS-Superstar-Award-Nomination-Form](http://survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/DCHS-Superstar-Award-Nomination-Form)

## 2015 Star Awards Ceremony

### Superstar Award

Asta Lynch

### Shooting Stars - Individuals

Patricia Martinez - Jennifer Cohen-Cordero - Deatrice Williams

### Shooting Stars - Groups

Paul Kim and Dave Facemire

Diana Fernandez, Lashon Joseph, Veronica Brewer, Fernando Sanchez, Tempestt Boulware, Michelle Lopez, Anna Michael and Esperita Bullard

### Stars - Individuals

Renee Viar - Taren Lambert - Randy Arnold - Corey Grant - Tammi Carter - Donna Warney - Colette Salgat - Anita Martineau - Gail Henderson-Scott - Elois Alexander - Lind Dell - Krystal Fenwick - Jeff Bollen - Michelle Summers - Diana Fernandez - Dana Mathews - Jennifer Cohen-Cordero

### Stars - Groups

Cheryl Elliot, Laurentia Obeng-Fimpong, and Darrell Wesley

Nelva Hernandez and Meron Worku

Bonita Copeland, Christina Hines, Genean Puryear, Diana Reynosa, Bonnie Mitchell, Kelly Robinson, Patty Martinez and Julio Basurto.

Michelle Albert, Mike Razak, Julie Frye, Jessica Wenger, Jennifer Miller, Ellietta Lazaro, Wendy Vaughan and Allison Mitchell



Star Awards Winners: Individual (above) and Groups (below). Shooting Star Award winners Paul Kim and Jennifer Cohen-Cordero (bottom).



Shooting Stars Award Winners: Individuals (above) and Groups (below)



# Alexandria Teens Kick Butts

*THE SUBSTANCE* Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) celebrated this year's Kick Butts Day by engaging 30 Alexandria youth to ensure tobacco vendors are checking photo IDs.

Kick Butts Day is an annual day of activism sponsored by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

"It's one way we are able to empower Alexandria's youth with opportunities to advocate and make a difference in their world," says DCHS Health Education Community Specialist Kim Hurley. "It's a first step in building up a community of young change makers that will hopefully go out and conquer the world."

On March 18, more than 2,000 events were held around the country mobilizing youth to raise awareness about the problems of tobacco use in schools and the community. In Alexandria, teens visited over 55 retailers in the City. The information the teens collected will be used to create a tobacco retailer registry for Virginia.

"Kick Butts Day is one of the teens' favorite activities because they get to lead and carry out the initiative," says SAPCA Coordinator Noraine Buttar. "They were the ones educating Alexandria's retailers about the importance of checking IDs so they didn't sell to minors. They didn't need an adult to speak for them; they advocated for themselves."

Mayor William D. Euille and Chief Earl Cook spoke at a kickoff event that was emceed by T.C. Williams Students.

SAPCA is an alliance of parents, youth, schools, City health and recreation agencies, media, nonprofits, businesses, policy makers and law enforcement whose mission is to engage diverse sectors of the community in collaborative, cross-cultural and comprehensive substance abuse prevention efforts that result in a reduction of underage substance use and abuse in the City.

To see more photos from the event, visit the Kick Butts Day photo album at [www.facebook.com/SAPCAlexandria](http://www.facebook.com/SAPCAlexandria). 🌱



Raheem Ruffin, Andrea Melara, Rebeca Molina, Deputy Valarie Wright (Alexandria Sheriff's Department), and Rose Anne Valderamma. Deputy Wright was the driver.

## Lesson in Haircare (continued)

what works and what doesn't when working with various types of hair.

After describing the products she had brought, Lambert demonstrated technique and solution on two models from the audience. Mary Kay Popeck-Snow, a long-time resource parent for DCHS who adopted four children from the agency, brought her first and last adopted children for a beauty treatment.

Her son, with wavy hair, got a conditioner and everyone ran their hands through his hair afterward to feel how soft it was. He seemed pleased. Her daughter got a spray and condition and comb through. She was not happy after the process, but she looked very cute.

"In some cultures," she told the group, "it's just a norm that people expect that the hair is put together." So

she counseled parents to "allow lots of time for the hair process. Ideally, create a special time once a week for hair care." Lambert added that learning about hair and providing better hair care aligns culturally, and it also helps bridge the gap between the birth families and foster families.

Everyone left with a product and a new appreciation for hair. 🌱

~ by Jan Schrader



# When Should I Blow the Whistle?



**HOW LOYAL DO I** have to be to the rules? Are there times I have to break the rules in order to do the right thing? How do I know when to keep quiet or when to say something? What do I need to know in order to make the right decision? When should I blow the whistle?

DCHS staff wrestled with questions like these during the **Ethics of Whistleblowing** seminar guided by Dr. Michael Gillette on April 6. Gillette is the president of Bioethical Services of Virginia and consults with the DCHS Ethics Committee, which creates awareness of ethical issues in DCHS services, works to clarify and resolve ethical issues, and provides education, case consultation and support in policy development.

Gillette led participants through lively discussions and several scenarios related to ethical choices and whistleblowing, helping them explore the ethical tension that is created out of a conflict between a duty to remain loyal to one's professional obligations and the duty to protect public welfare.

"Motivation matters when it comes to whistleblowing," Gillette underscored.

Gillette drew an analogy to civil disobedience, where people knowingly, publicly and civilly break the law in order to advance a goal or change an unjust law. The goal of civil disobedience, said Gillette, is not to overthrow but rather adjust a system of government.

"It is an act that seeks to defy in order to support," he explained.

And this is what whistleblowing needs to be as well, he said. By its nature, whistleblowing is breaking the rules, but true whistleblowers step outside the normal chains of commands in order to support that process, not out of desires for retribution, mischief or self-interest.

"Motivation and action must be ethical," said Gillette.



Dr. Michael Gillette leads staff in lively discussions.

True whistleblowers will also try to stay in the chain of command to effect change, only blowing the whistle as a last resort.

However, if someone stands in the way of a valid process, a valid process is being avoided or a flawed process can't be changed by staying within the chain of command, then whistleblowing may be an option to consider. The decision to blow the whistle should be carefully contemplated and done only after all in-house

means to resolve the situation have been exhausted, concluded Gillette.

DCHS and the City offer several resources to staff seeking ethical training or facing difficult ethical situations, either with clients or other staff.

The Ethics Committee offers periodic seminars like this one as well as confidential case consultation for client-centered and staff issues. For confidential consultation, contact Center for Children and Families Director Deborah Warren, who chairs the committee. Staff can also contact Warren if they are interested in serving on the committee, which is looking for new members.

The City offers similar resources, including training as well as the Ethical Advocate Call Center, which is staffed by agents who are not employees or representatives of the City. The City encourages employees to make every effort to resolve a particular issue through supervisors and the City's administrative process first, but if those are not options a staff member is comfortable with, they can call the Ethical Advocate Call Center. The system is completely anonymous. Visit [alexnet.alexandriava.gov/EthicsHotline](http://alexnet.alexandriava.gov/EthicsHotline) for more information. 🌱

## Newsletter Gets a New Look—and Name!



Congratulations to Krystal Fenwick, the winner of Give DCHS eNews a New Name Contest! She wins a \$25 gift certificate to Target.

And congratulations to Odessa R. Becker! We chose her entry, "News You Can Use," for our news section on page 12. She wins a \$15 gift certificate to Target.

A huge thank you to both of our winners and the 21 people who made over 60 entries! 🌱

# Workforce Development Center New Name, New Successes

*THE STAFF AT* the newly named Workforce Development Center (formerly JobLink) marked some notable achievements in the last few months.

## VIEW Program Ranks #1

WDC's Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) ranked first out of 120 localities in the *Virginia Department of Social Services Virginia Independence Program* report for the period of July 2014 through January 2015. The report ranks the program based on average wage, placement data and job retention.

"To be ranked number one gives a sense of accomplishment," says Glenda Johnson, VIEW leader. "You tend to realize that all the hard work and efforts put into meet the goals and overall mission of the agency were not in vain."

Staff were honored for the accomplishment at a March 13 achievement award ceremony.

## STEM Academy for Youth with Disabilities

This spring, the WDC launched a 15-session training course for high school

seniors with disabilities focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

According to the National Science Foundation, individuals with disabilities are employed in only five to six percent of U.S. STEM jobs. WDC's In-School STEM Academy for Youth with Disabilities is the first in Northern Virginia, according to Workforce Initiative Act (WIA) Youth Program Coordinator Tiffany Gray.

Partnering with George Mason's Volgenau School of Engineering TechAdvance Program, Gray developed the Academy to help high school seniors with disabilities participate and progress in STEM curricula.

## Together We Bake Graduates Its First Class

Four WIA Program clients graduated from the eight-week Culinary Arts Program at Together We Bake (TWB) on March 3. Two graduates have secured full-time employment in the food services industry.



WDC Staff honored at celebration on March 13.

The program provides academic and hands-on training to low-income and disadvantaged women in the culinary arts. This graduating class represents the first group of apprentices to graduate with the assistance of the WDC.

"This unique partnership is a crucial component towards personal growth and increasing job opportunities, leading to self-sufficiency," says WDC Director Carolyn Jones. The WDC will assist the graduates with job preparation and job placement assistance. 🌱

# Staff Help Seniors Show Off Talent and Pets

*THE ADULT DAY SERVICES* Center staff hosted the Seniors Got Talent and Pet Fashion Show on April 17 at the Lee Center on Jefferson Street. "We are all about the seniors," says ADSC Therapeutic Rec Leader Jackie McCord. "We love to see them have fun and engage them in activities that let them see what they still can do." MaryAnn Griffin, the former director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, even got in on the show, entering her own dog in the pet fashion segment (photo, left).



(Top) ADSC Director Darrell Wesley chats with two seniors during the event.  
(Bottom left) ADSC Therapeutic Rec Leaders Angela White and Jackie McCord.  
(Bottom right) Talent portion judges Diana Reynoso, Francine McCray Brown and Valarie Dunn.



ADSC Therapeutic Rec Leader Angela White with the talent show winners.



# Salute to Women Ceremony Recognizes Two DCHS Staff

AMONG THE WOMEN honored for their valuable community contributions and their impact on the well-being of Alexandria's women at the March 26 Annual Salute to Women Awards Banquet were former DCHS Team Leader Laurie Meyer and retiring Sexual Assault Center Director Claire Dunn.

Laurie Meyer, who died of cancer at 53 last year, was bestowed the Vola Lawson Award, which recognizes a City employee who advanced or improved the status of women in Alexandria during the course of her job.

Meyer worked for the City for 24 years, where she strengthened the system of care for children and families. She was the founding team leader for the Community Wraparound Team in the DCHS Center for Children and Families and led the highly successful community-based children's behavioral health team for 15 years. She was recognized across the system for her leadership and work initiatives and was

highly respected by families, staff and the child-serving community across the state.

Meyer's husband, Robert Nash, and one of her three daughters, Rebecca, accepted the award.

The Commission for Women presented Claire Dunn with a recognition plaque and a bouquet of flowers to celebrate her contributions and retirement. Mayor William D. Euille read a proclamation highlighting the critical work Claire has done to assist survivors of domestic and sexual violence during her 30 years of service to the City of Alexandria.

The Salute to Women Awards Banquet is sponsored by the Alexandria Commission for Women. This year, the event commemorated the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Alexandria Sexual Assault Center. Proceeds from this event support the Center, which provides critical services to victims of sexual assault, including a 24-hour hotline that offers victim advocacy, counseling, support services and school education programs. 🌱



Robert Nash (husband of Laurie Meyer) and Rebecca Nash (daughter of Meyer) accepted the Vola Lawson Award for Laurie Meyer presented by McArthur Myers.



Mayor William D. Euille (left) and CCF Director Deborah Warren congratulate Claire Dunn (center).



Laurie Meyer

## Meyer Also Honored With SCAN Award

Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) and Allies in Prevention honored Laurie Meyer for changing children's lives in Northern Virginia. The founding team leader for the Community Wraparound Team, Meyer led in the development of all the program's services which prevent child abuse by strengthening family attachment, building parenting skills, supporting young people to be empowered and safe, and creating the conditions for young people to reach their goals. In 2008, Alexandria had 66 children in congregate care; today it has six. Without Meyer's wisdom and leadership, this would not have been possible. 🌱

# Center Raises Awareness of Sexual Assault in April

*THE SEXUAL ASSAULT* Center of Alexandria sponsored and participated in a variety of events during Sexual Assault Awareness Month to raise awareness of sexual assault and support survivors of sexual violence.

Center volunteers and staff spent the morning of April 11 at local Metro stations and farmer markets raising community awareness about the prevention of sexual violence. Several exhibits were also on display to raise awareness. Jeans decorated by survivors and supporters were displayed as part of the Message of Hope Campaign in various places around the City, including the Police Department, City Hall and at DCHS' 2525 Mount Vernon Avenue location. The Clothesline Project, a visual display of T-shirts made by survivors that bear witness to the violence they have experienced, was set up at City Hall.

A poetry slam and bowling tournament also helped raise awareness and support during the month's events. 🌱



Message of Hope jean display.



Krystal Theodore and Diana Hernandez decorate.



Jen Enslin (Domestic Violence Program), Bonnie Carlson (Legal Services of Northern Virginia), Debbie Evans (DVP) and Hewan Walker (DVP)



Jacob Quintana (guest), Ashley Blowe (Sexual Assault Center), Lisette Torres (ACAP), Norraine Buttar (Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition) and Jeremy Long (Youth Development)



## Pinwheel Gardens Raise Awareness of Child Abuse



*APRIL WAS* Child Abuse Prevention Month and DCHS centers and programs around the City brought attention to child abuse prevention by planting pinwheel gardens. Locations included outside the offices at (starting top left) 2525 Mount Vernon Avenue, 720 North Saint Asaph Street, 1900 N. Beaugard St (The Center for Alexandria's Children, JobLink and Early Childhood Division) and the Health Department on King Street.

# Staff Explore Unconscious Bias

Uncovering and facing unconscious bias was the focus of Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee's first Lunch and Learn on March 19.

"Uncovering our unconscious bias is very important work, not only in supporting the people we are serving but also in having a better understanding of each other, which will help us collaborate better," said Allyson Coleman at the beginning of the hour. Coleman is the chair of the CLCC.

Staff and committee members watched a 10 minute video featuring Howard Ross, a nationally recognized expert on diversity, who explained how we are all biased—and most of it is unconsciously absorbed and learned from our culture and families of origin. Most of the time, people make choices that discriminate against one group in favor of another without even realizing that they are doing it.

Ross shared some of his own experiences in uncovering his own unconscious biases—and they surprised him. "We learn things about ourselves we don't know—that's why they call it unconscious," said

Ross, who encouraged his listeners to be willing to explore their own unconscious biases.

Another, more humorous video got at unconscious bias as it depicted what can happen when we make assumptions about somebody's culture and heritage simply based on the way they look.

After the videos, staff and guests discussed how unconscious bias impacts the way we work with clients, particularly in importing larger society or cultural views onto smaller communities, and how recognizing differences in cultures can help us communicate laws and regulations to those coming from a different culture.

As they discussed practical ways to confront this issue, participants honed in on several aspects, particularly the need to invest in taking time to explain and share new ideas and ways of doing things with people who aren't familiar with the laws in the United States and the need to come to the process with a humble, curious and nonjudgmental attitude.

Dr. Bob Weigl, a clinical and cross-



Staff watch a video during Lunch & Learn.

cultural psychologist who consults with the committee, noted that we need each other in order to discover our own blind spots. We also need role models—"People who will say, 'These are the biases I have, and this is how I deal with them.'"

The lunch was the first of three that will focus on unconscious bias. The series grew out of comments and results from the Employee Engagement and Cultural Competence surveys and the Civility Brown Bags.

**The next lunch will be offered on May 19 at 2525 Mount Vernon and May 21 at 4880 King Street, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.** 🌱

**What are your unconscious biases? Find out at [implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html](http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html)**

## Serving the City's Muslim Families

*IN MARCH*, Tahani Jabarin, director of the Social Services Department at Dar Al-Hijrah Social Services, visited DCHS and outlined the services available through her organization. She also talked about the various partnerships that they have in the community, many of which are inter-faith partnerships.

Jabarin was invited by DCHS child welfare staff, who have worked with the Mosque on several occasions to serve Muslim families.

"I believe we are seeing an increase in the number of Muslim families here in the City, many of whom attend that Mosque," says Margaret Dhillon, who values the collaboration with the Mosque. "The stats show that 25% of Alexandria's population are foreign-born and 28% of that population are from Africa, and many are Muslim." 🌱



### Foreign Born Population in the City of Alexandria

**Total population:** 140, 337

**Foreign Born:** 35,214 (25% of population)

### Area of Origin

**Europe:** 2,933 (8.3% of foreign born population)

**Asia:** 9,217 (26.1% of foreign born population)

**Africa:** 9,892 (28% of foreign born population and 30% of people who identify as black)

**Oceania:** 184 (.5% of foreign born population)

**Latin America:** 12,525 (36% of foreign born population and 9% of total population)

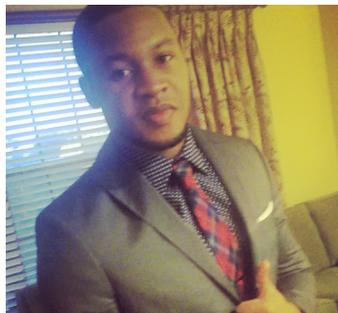
# Hello & Goodbye

## NEW STAFF



### JUSTIN ALLEN

Justin writes, "Greetings, I now serve as Youth Advisor at the Workforce Development Center. I come with vast experience in youth development, community outreach and program administration. I earned my Bachelors of Science Degree from Virginia State University. I am a native of the City of Alexandria with many heartfelt connections and memories to the local community. It will be a blessing and pleasure to share my experiences and continue to grow in my journey here in this Department."



### DOUGLAS ARCHIE III

Douglas writes, "I serve as the Supported Education & Employment Specialist with the new TRAILS team at the West End Wellness Center. This

initiative focuses on providing assistance to young adults with mental health issues. I hold my bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Florida (Go Gators!) and my master's degree in rehabilitation and mental health counseling from the University of South Florida (Go Bulls!). I moved from Florida last month and look forward to working in Virginia as we move into the warmer months."

### MICHAEL BOYD

Michael Boyd is a Youth Employment Counselor at the the Workforce Development Center.

### VIRGINIA CHRIST

Virginia Christ joined DCHS as a Family Services Specialist II at the Workforce Development Center.

### DELANEY COLBERT

Delaney Colbert joined Program Discovery as a Program Associate at the Office of Youth Services.

### JAMES DANIELS

James Daniels joined DCHS as a Residential Detox Counselor.

### MIRIAM ELWELL

Miriam Elwell, LCSW was excited to join the Mental Health Adult Outpatient Team last year as a Senior Therapist. She is a graduate of the Psychodynamic Therapy Program at the American Institute for Psychoanalysis

in New York. She received her MSW at Smith College in Massachusetts and B.S. in Psychology at Virginia Tech.



### ELIZABETH HALL

Elizabeth writes, "Hi, my name is Elizabeth. I'm working with the Quality Assurance Team as a Record Review Specialist. I've worked in the field of social and disability services for many years. My first experiences were volunteering with my family in our community and as a volunteer tutor in junior high school. I've worked in almost every facet of the field, and I expect to bring that wealth of experience to this position. I'm a native Washingtonian, raised in Prince George's County, Maryland, with personal and professional ties to Virginia, therefore fully embodying the entire D-M-V area."

### LAUREN JONES

Lauren Jones joined DCHS as a part-time Residential Detox Counselor.

### MICHELLE MCCOY

Michelle McCoy joined DCHS as a Senior Therapist in MH/SA Residential Services.



### TARA MILLINGTON

Tara writes, "Hello, I've been adopted by DCHS, working with Debbie Anderson, Grants and Contracts Coordinator after temping here for about SIX months. I'm Administrative Support and many of you may already know me as DCHS RSVP for CPR/First Aid. I'm a native Washingtonian and previously worked for the NIH for 10 years. Everything else, we'll

learn in our many interactions. See you next email!"



### KATE REARDON

Early Intervention Specialist Kate Reardon recently joined the Parent Infant Education team as a Service Coordinator, supporting families through the Early Intervention process. She has a Master's and Educational Specialist Degree in School Psychology. Prior to moving to the area, she

worked for five years as a school psychologist for the pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade population, providing assessment, consultation and intervention services. Kate appreciates being part of teams that enhance children's development and is excited to begin working with the children, families and professionals in Alexandria's early intervention community. When she has free time, she and her family enjoy finding new playgrounds, dog parks and local watering holes.

### ISSA SESAY

Issa Sesay joined DCHS as a part-time Direct Support Technician at Alexandria Vocational Services.

### JOB CHANGES

**Andres Acosta** became a Senior Therapist; **Elke Hayes** a part time cook at the West End Wellness Center; **Toby Kellk** a Psychiatric Administrator in the Center for Adult Services; **Kim Burson** a Team Leader in the Substance Abuse Outpatient Program; **Nichole Rohrer** a Therapist Supervisor with the TRAILS Team at the West End Wellness Center; and **Zenobia Russ** a case worker in homeless prevention.

### LEFT DCHS

Lisa Baker  
Catherine Cook  
Keisha Culbreth Brooks  
Jim Fleming  
Bryana Head  
Lyn Joyce Macolini  
Betsy Vasquez



## New Youth & Family Team Members

**KAREN KIMBALL** writes, "I am 'six weeks old' and enjoying every day as a bilingual senior therapist joining the Youth and Family Team of DCHS at 720 N. Saint Asaph Street. I have served previously as an on-site bilingual elementary and middle school therapist in the Linkages to Learning program with Montgomery County, Maryland Public Schools for five years, as a clinician with WATS in Silver Spring, Maryland, for three years, and in private practice for three years. I obtained my training at the University of Maryland College Park in the Department of Family Science and my licensure as a Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist with the State of Maryland. I eagerly await endorsed licensure with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**LAUREN YODER** works as a senior therapist with the City of Alexandria's Youth and Family Team and is based at Minnie Howard. She is a Board Certified Art Therapist and a Licensed Professional Counselor in Virginia. Lauren is a graduate of The George Washington University, with a Master of Arts degree in Art Therapy and a specialization in trauma therapy. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**PAOLA NAVARRO** is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She joined the Youth and Family Team in December, 2014. Ms. Navarro has over 10 years of experience working with immigrant families, school age youth and mothers with perinatal mood and anxiety disorder.



Lauren Yoder, Paola Navarro, Jerry Lowell and Karen Kimball.

ders. Ms. Navarro earned her Bachelors in Psychology with Universidad Del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia. She possesses a diploma in the Therapeutic Use of Arts with Universidad De Cartagena, Department of Psychiatry. Navarro earned her Master's degree in 2003 in Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling Psychology with Antioch University in Keene, NH. Navarro is passionate about her work and involvement with the immigrant families in our community. She has helped many families in their process of re-unification and adjustment to U.S. culture and many parents developing positive parenting skills to best

support their children adjusting into U.S.

**JERRY LOWELL** writes, "I am delighted to join DCHS as the Team Leader for the Youth and Family Team. My experience includes a variety of clinical and administrative roles for a large non-profit agency in Illinois. Most recently, I was the Chief Clinical Officer, with oversight over agency clinical practice in child welfare and community mental health services and supervision of the behavioral health services in an 18 site FQHC. I am looking forward to working with the talented team in Youth and Family and with the larger DCHS community."

# News You Can Use

## SELF SERVICE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Open Enrollment begins May 6 and runs through May 22. This year, every benefitted employee will be required to elect their plan for next year. **Even if you are not making any changes to your elected coverage, you still have to make a selection.** Make plans to attend an information session, where you can get the details you need to make an educated decision.

In the meantime, log in to Employee Self Service now to ensure your Dependents are accurately listed. If you plan to cover a spouse or any dependents on your plan, they will need to be accurately listed in the Employee Self Service portal. To do that, go to AlexNet, and click on "My Pay, Leave & Info" in the top left corner. On the next screen, click "My Pay, Leave & Info" again. (You may be prompted to log in; if you have login trouble, email [TechSupport@alexandriava.gov](mailto:TechSupport@alexandriava.gov).) Click "Employee Self Service" on the left. In this area, you can view info on your pay, leave balances, training opportunities, etc. Click "Personal Information" on the left. Find the Dependents section on the right, and if your dependents are not listed, click "Add Dependent."

## NEW WIRELESS AT CITY HALL

As of March 25, you can now access a new wireless network if you are at City Hall.

The new network replaces all existing wireless networks at City Hall. The WiFi network has two sides. The Private side is for internal use for city employees with city issued computers. To connect, you will need network login credentials. The public side is for visitors, non-City issued laptops and all handheld devices, such as iPhones and iPads. The public side only has access to the Internet and not internal City resources.

## DON'T FORGET TO WEAR YOUR ID BADGE

Several years ago, the City asked all City employees to wear their identification badges when working. A recent audit from a state agency called attention to the need for employees to wear ID badges in the workplace. If you need a clip or a lanyard, contact Johnathan Edmund in DCHS HR.

## BEFORE YOU BUY OR MOVE

Thinking of moving cubicles or offices, buying new furniture or ordering new carpet? Please first contact DCHS Business Project Manager Linda Dell in order to coordinate with any larger plans or budget allocation needs.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NOW ON SHAREPOINT

In an effort to streamline access to policies and pro-

cedures, the most recently updated Policies and Procedures can now be found on SharePoint. For those who are accustomed to accessing policies through the Common Drive, the PoliciesOnline Icon will now prompt you to follow a link to the SharePoint page. The PDF and Word versions of policies have been removed from their current location on the Q common drive.

In order to find the most recent version of the policy you're looking for, log into SharePoint by opening the SharePoint Homepage shortcut located in the DCHS Shortcuts folder on your desktop and then log in as you would to your Outlook 365 email. Click on the Policies and Procedures Icon (the first policies you will see are DCHS-wide policies; policies for specific programs or areas that are not relevant to the entire agency have their own pages). If you have any questions or wish to add policies to this page please email the Policy and Procedure Committee Chairs at [DCHSPolicyandProcedure-Committee@alexandriava.gov](mailto:DCHSPolicyandProcedure-Committee@alexandriava.gov).

## LOOKING FOR CITY EMPLOYEE NEWS?

Check out **AlexNews**, the City's online employee newsletter. Find out about opportunities for employees, celebrate staff achievements, learn about City departments and read health, wellness and benefits news. Go to [alexnet.net](http://alexnet.net).

[alexandriava.gov/AlexNews/](http://alexandriava.gov/AlexNews/) to access current and past issues of the newsletter.

Also, don't forget to check in with **AlexNet** every day. Besides having direct links to your email and pay and leave info, you can access the latest City news, employee forums, a wide range of resources, and links to benefits information. 🌱



**Connect** seeks to inform DCHS employees about programs, services and changes within the Department. It also introduces you to one another on a more personal level, recognizes employee and team accomplishments, and helps foster relationships between programs and employees across DCHS. It features program activities and special events and helps keep you informed on departmental initiatives.

We are always looking for news and ideas for stories. If you have an idea for a story or content, contact Carmen Andres at [carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov](mailto:carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov) or call 5753.