



Department of
Youth Services

**Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed
Southeastern Ohio Efforts to Help Youth**

April 7, 2016

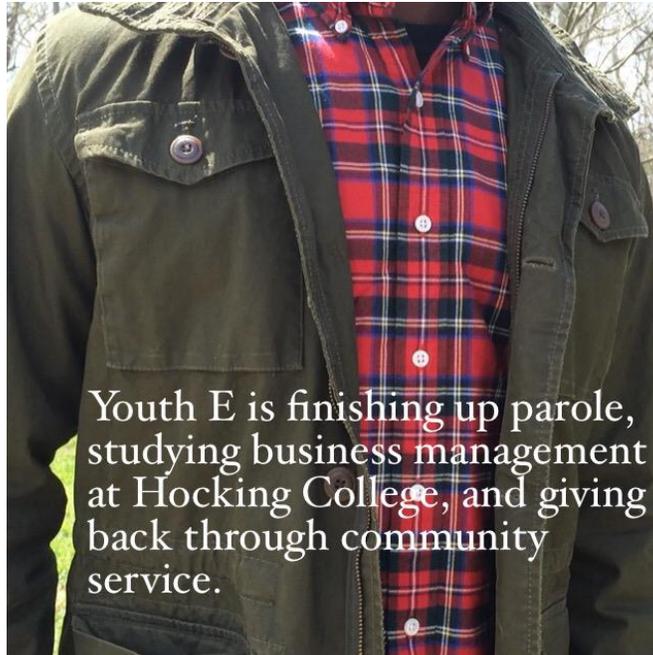
It's always a pleasure to meet with individuals who are devoting their lives to Ohio's young people as well as youth who have been served by DYS. Yesterday, several staff and I had the opportunity to visit with a variety of people in southeastern Ohio.

First, we toured and met with youth and staff at the Hocking Valley Community Residential Center (HVCRC) in Nelsonville. HVCRC is one of 12 Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) in the state that provides an alternative to juvenile and family court judges for adjudicated felony youth who would otherwise be committed to DYS. CCFs are funded by DYS and operated by counties. One of many approaches that stood out at HVCRC was that staff work with youth to identify 5 positive people who youth can reach out to if they find themselves in trouble once they return to the community. We all know that reentry poses challenges for youth, and supportive individuals provide an invaluable source of encouragement, advice, and information.



From left to right: Deputy Director Gies, Parole Supervisor Tobin, Assistant Director Janes, Director Reed, HVCRC Executive Director Tammy Bauman, and HVCRC Program Coordinator Duane Nakanishi.

Next, we had lunch with Youth E, currently on parole after serving 2 ½ years in DYS facilities. He explained how getting his diploma, working, participating in the Power of Peace Project, and taking part in faith-based programs made all the difference during his time incarcerated. Today he's studying business management at Hocking College and expects to land a spot on the football team for the next season.



Youth E is finishing up parole, studying business management at Hocking College, and giving back through community service.

Our third stop of the day was at [Sojourners Care Network](#) in McArthur. This youth development organization provides a variety of programs including foster care, runaway and homeless youth services, employment training, diploma and GED support, mentoring, leadership training, supportive services, and service learning opportunities. We got to see how youth gain valuable work experience through Sojourners' recycling center and at a house the program is rehabbing to eventually serve the homeless. According to Co-Executive Director Marcus Games, "We give youth many opportunities to improve themselves, lots of work experience, and teach them that community service is about becoming a citizen again."



Sojourners Participants Explain Renovations to Director Reed

The next stop was to talk with a youth, recently discharged from parole, at his home in Belpre. Youth A explained that when his brother died unexpectedly during his incarceration, staff at

Circleville JCF were there to assist him and his family. The young man, who is a father to two children, is managing a work crew for a pool company and continuing to receive counseling. Juvenile Parole Officer David Vancleave said, "Before DYS, he took his family for granted, but he was able to reconnect with his family *because* of his DYS stay. I have hopes of him being a solid father to his kids and supportive of family. I'm proud of him."

Later that evening, I attended Governor Kasich's [State of the State Address](#) in Marietta. Governor Kasich stressed the importance of hope last night when he said, "That's the funny thing about hope — it's powerful because it can be contagious, and the progress that we're making is giving hope not only to Ohioans, but to many other people across our great country." I couldn't agree more. When we instill hope in those that we serve, it has a way of spreading. Thank you to all of our colleagues, community partners, family members, and staff who encourage our young people day in and day out.