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**Ohio Department of Youth Services Recognizes Top Employees**  
*Agency Celebrates Staff during National Correctional Officers and Employees Week*

**Columbus, Ohio** — The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) honored top employees at today’s Employee Recognition Ceremony at the DYS Training Academy in Orient. The event was held in conjunction with National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, which is the first full week of May. Laura Melnick, Business Office Manager at the Northern Parole Region, District 3 in Akron, was named Employee of the Year. Cesar Vanderpool, Jr., Youth Specialist at the Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility (IRJCF) in Massillon, was named Youth Specialist of the Year.



*Left to right: Cesar Vanderpool, Jr., Director Harvey Reed, and Laura Melnick*

Melnick has been a DYS employee since 2003. “Laura is the kind of person you go to if you have a problem,” said Ian Fraser, Regional Parole Administrator. “She is there for people,” he added.

Vanderpool began working at DYS in 2008. Youth Specialists, previously known as Juvenile Correctional Officers, provide supervision in juvenile correctional facilities while also participating in activities and programs designed to educate and rehabilitate youth. “He has concern and passion for both youth and coworkers. He brings energy and enthusiasm to all that he does,” said Jim Darnell, IRJCF Superintendent.

DYS is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio and is statutorily mandated to confine felony offenders, ages 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio’s 88 county juvenile courts. DYS currently operates three juvenile correctional facilities, provides parole services from two regional sites and funds and supports nearly 600 community programs serving 79,000 youth throughout the state.

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