

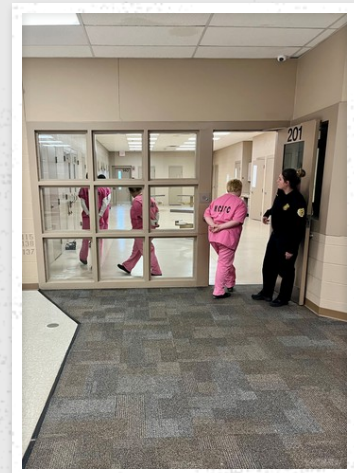
Juvenile Detention Center

Amazing Things Are Happening Here!

February 2023

Random Conversation

I was having a causal conversation with one of our kids a few days ago about some of the challenges in her life. I told her I am confident that I would NOT enjoy being in jail at all, especially having many of my freedoms taken away that most of us take for granted on a daily basis. She commented that that "sucks", but she would still rather be here than at home. Of course I asked her why. She replied that no one at home cares about her (*at least that is her perception*), but we do. I told her she most assuredly has people at home who care about her but maybe they don't know how to show it. She also said she likes the structure we provide because at home she generally finds herself up until 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, online, doing things she shouldn't be doing. This is the case with most of our kids, and this young lady is far from the only youth who has told us they would rather be with us than at home.



The above is obviously very sad, and while we and our court prefer that kids not be in detention unless absolutely necessary, we are glad we have the opportunity to help those who find themselves with us.

- Superintendent Stollar

Library Visit

Each month a teen librarian from the Medina County District Library visits our kids. This month, Mel Vavra from the Brunswick Library spoke to our kids. Below is something she wanted to share with you.



"My name is Mel Vavra and I am Brunswick Library's Teen Librarian. Every month, Medina Library's Teen Librarian (Sean Rapacki) or I visit the teens at the JDC to lead them in activities and talk about books. The teens look forward to our visits, and we look forward to spending time with them.

February's visit focused on the topic of self-care. I shared information that helped the teens understand what self-care is and how it is an important and courageous act. They filled out guided self-care journals to help them feel more positive about their situations and themselves. I then shared a video of motivational speaker and therapist Sean Stephenson called "The Prison of Your Mind." One piece of advice he repeated was: "Never believe a prediction that does not empower you." Those inspiring words were included in the teens' self-care journals, and I hope they will continue to refer to what they wrote for guidance and hope.

My favorite part of the visit is when I show the teens the books I've brought to donate to the JDC and listen to them talk about what they're reading. I always say the most avid and excited readers I encounter during my outreach work are the JDC teens. They are always eager to see the new books, and their faces come alive with enthusiasm as they tell me what book they're enjoying. Restricted from their cell phone or other forms of media entertainment, the JDC is a place where teens discover or rediscover the joy of reading, and many will continue to be lifelong readers once they are out."

Encouragement

Several years ago we put in place a Behavioral Level System through which we provide our kids with incentives and rewards for good behavior. This system has been the single most effective measure we have ever taken to improve the behavior of our kids. Watch for an articles in the future that will go into more detail on it.

For now, we want to share with you something we do when our kids reach the highest level; that of Honoree. We've mentioned in the past that in most correctional settings this level is called "Trusty". We simply like the term "Honoree" better. When our kids reach this level Superintendent Stollar writes them a congratulatory note of encouragement. Please note that when our kids reach the level just below Honoree, that being Level 3, Assistant Superintendent Millikin writes them a similar note. Pictured below is a blank, two-sided Honoree card. The majority of our kids tell us they appreciate these notes, which they take home with them upon their release. It brings us great pleasure to be able to give the kids something tangible that they can reflect on.

HONOREE

DATE: _____

HONOR: TO REGARD WITH GREAT RESPECT; TO HOLD IN HIGH ESTEEM.

HONOREE _____,

"I would prefer to fail with honor than win by cheating." - Sophocles

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON YOU WILL EVER MEET

When your time on earth ends and you have your inevitable appointment at the entrance to the Pearly Gates, there will be someone there to greet you. That someone is going to ask you one single question. How you answer that question is going to determine the rest of your eternity; because you see, that one person holds the key to the Gates, and that person alone decides whether or not you get in.

The only catch is this; that person is going to be the exact opposite of you in every way. They are going to be short if you are tall; weak if you are strong; they are going to have blond hair if your hair is dark; they are going to be heavy if you are thin; that person is going to be black or Asian if you are white, or perhaps Middle-Eastern if you are Hispanic. They are going to have a lot of tattoos or body piercings if you don't have any; they are going to be an immigrant if you are an American. They are going to be Muslim, or Atheist, or Hindu, or Jewish if you are a Christian. They are going to be a nerd if you are athletic; a Democrat if you are a Republican, or vice-versa. They are going to be poor if you are rich. And they are going to be your opposite sex.

And when you arrive at this entrance to Heaven, the person you meet there is going to look you squarely in the eye and ask you one question, and one question only; ***"How did you treat me?"***

Junior Leadership Medina County

Director of JLMC, Carrie Park, brought approximately 75 teens to us this month to learn about our detention center. Magistrate Sue Lewis from our juvenile court also joined us and talked to them about the juvenile criminal justice system. Several of the kids got to role play a true

account of a milestone case from 1964 involving then 15 year-old Gerald Gault that forever changed juvenile's rights for the better. *(You should look this case up!)* Assistant Superintendent Millikin and Superintendent Stollar talked about the rehabilitative approach taken with our kids to help them become responsible, productive members of our communities.



The kids were asked, ***"What emotional intelligence skills do you think Stollar and Millikin use in their jobs and why?"*** Here are some of their responses:

- ***"Motivation, because this high intensity job requires someone with true passion."***
- ***"I think both of them need to have good social skills because they deal with all different kinds of kids. It takes an experienced person with good social skills to be good at what they do."***
- ***"Empathy, because they try to see where these kids are coming from and feel how they are feeling."***
- ***Self awareness, they have to be aware of the kids' feelings and understand what they are going through while also being there to enforce rules."***
- ***Self regulation - after being involved in some scary things and having to deal with criminals I'd guess that emotions can get really high during the job and they need to control them the best they can."***

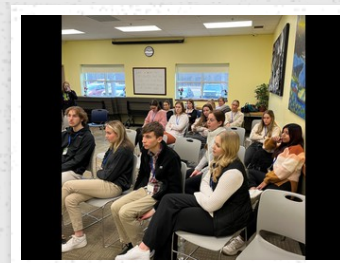
These future leaders listed all five of the emotional intelligence skills that most experts in this field cite. Empathy and motivation were the two skills the kids mentioned most often. We always enjoy hosting Junior Leadership, and hope these kids were accurate in their "assessment" of Ron and Megan's emotional intelligence skills!



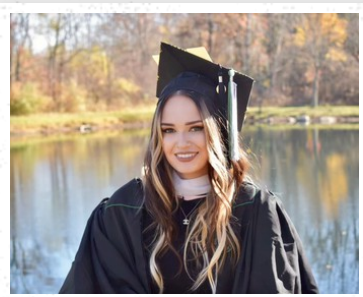
Young leaders.



Director Carrie Park in black & white.



And more young leaders!



Thoughts From Our Intern

Last month we introduced you to Ashley Norris who is currently interning with us. She has her Bachelor's Degree in psychology from Kent State, and her Master's in Forensics from the University of North Dakota. Here are some of her thoughts...

"When I was attending college I was a bit unsure as to what field I wanted to go into. I was exploring options such as going into the FBI, crime analysis, jury consulting, and even law school. There were a few areas I had zero interest in during college and one of them was corrections. I was always drawn towards investigative and psychological work, hence why I completely debunked the idea of corrections.

When I was presented with the opportunity to intern at the Medina Juvenile Detention Center I was unsure of what to expect. I went into the internship cautiously, but I was pleasantly surprised. The detention center is run in a way I did not expect. The base of the detention center is reformation. The focus is on helping the resident kids grow and overcome challenges. The employees at the detention center want the kids to succeed and have a bright future.

I was also introduced to many incredible people and was given various opportunities to expand my knowledge on the criminal justice system as a whole. I was introduced to judges, magistrates, attorneys, and several other incredible people. I got to see how juvenile detention centers, jails, courthouses, police departments, and children services work together. I was introduced to the idea of several career paths I never considered. The internship changed my view on corrections. The whole experience was an eye opener for me and I am very grateful for the opportunity."

Most Valuable Player

Congratulations to Sergeant Jason Gordon on being voted by his peers as our 2022 Most Valuable Player!

How does one receive this honor? By CONSISTENTLY:

1. Exhibiting an encouraging and positive disposition
2. Demonstrating a willingness to help others
3. Performing a high level of quality work
4. Performing beyond the scope of their regular duties
5. Displaying concern for our youth
6. And ALWAYS displaying ethical conduct

Sgt. Gordon worked here originally from 2010-2013, left to work in a family business in Hawaii, then asked in 2014 if he could come back. *He wanted to come back to us from Hawaii of all places! Are you kidding me?!!* Jason was an excellent Corrections Officer for us so we gladly took him back. He has been an outstanding team member all along, and Medina County is fortunate to have Jason serving them.

- Superintendent Stollar



Congratulations!

... to our friends and partner, **Access the Arts**, for receiving the **2023 Organization Service to the Arts** award from the Medina County Arts Council! Janet George (left) and Jane Back pictured below.



What is the Difference Between a \$25 Steak and a \$75 Steak?

February 14th!!



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@medina.jdc



@medina_jdc

[**Click here for past newsletters!**](#)

Have you missed a newsletter? We archive all of our newsletters on our website. Click the link to see previous issues!

Contact Us!

655 Independence Drive, Medina, Ohio 44256

Phone: 330-764-8408

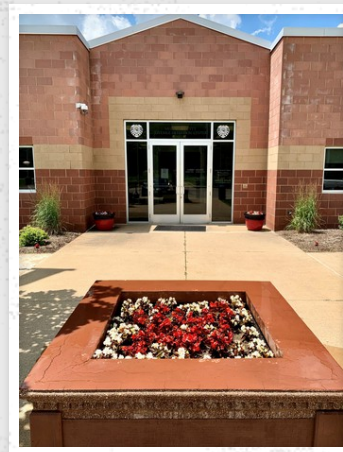
Fax: 330-764-8412

Administrative Hours

Monday-Friday

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

www.medinajdc.org



**Judge Kevin W.
Dunn;
Juvenile/Probate
Court**



**Ron Stollar;
Superintendent**



**Megan Millikin;
Assistant
Superintendent**

"We are making the Medina community a better place by inspiring troubled youth to become responsible, productive citizens."