

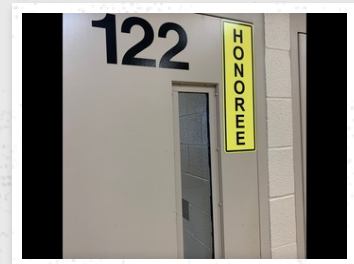
Juvenile Detention Center

Amazing Things Are Happening Here!

January 2022

Letter From Jail

We had a 17 year-old young man with us for approximately the past three months before he was bound over as an adult for his charges and was transferred to our county jail. He is facing a potential of 16 years of incarceration for what he is alleged to have done. Several felony charges are pending. What follows is what he wrote to us from the Medina County Jail:



"Being at the Medina JDC was hard my first week or two but then I told myself it could be worse, I'm not going to die in here. And then things actually got better, not better than being at home but close enough. I had fun being there. I mean they have lots of rules you have to follow but I followed those rules and had fun while doing it. Being there made me realize it's not that bad but it's also not the life I want to live. And I thank you people there for treating me nice and not like a criminal."

So, for a little background here, you just read his words that his first couple of weeks with us were "hard". It was actually a little longer than that. He was defiant, broke rules every day, and told us he was not interested in following our rules. He told me he was not interested in following our rules. I encouraged him and told him he could, and should do better, that he was very capable of this. A couple of days after this, he asked to talk with me. He told me that he had changed his mind and now wanted to follow our rules and progress upward through our Behavioral Level System, that he wanted to earn rewards and privileges for his good behavior. If I am being honest, I did not believe him. *Of course, I did not express that to him.* But guess what? He quickly proved me wrong and worked his way up to Level Three, receiving NO rule violations. That took two weeks. He then told me he was going to become an Honoree, which our kids really have to work for. Honoree is all about being a positive role-model for others.

He just as quickly became an Honoree, again, receiving NO rule violations. This young man lost his "street edge", and was funny and personable to talk with. He was quite pleasant to be around. Many here felt that way about him.

So, this youth's case is now working its way through the adult justice system. What is the point of this story? Nearly 100% of the time when we have youth with us who have essentially grown up on "the streets" (as he did), they inevitably lose that angry edge and become almost a different person. Why is this? Well, in their own words they tell us they feel safe here and that they feel cared for. We wish this young man well in his future.

- Superintendent Ron Stollar

Note that in addition to the yellow uniforms our Honorees wear, we now have HONOREE magnets (pictured above right) that we place on the doors of our kids who earn this status!

Chains and Positive Messages

Our two mental health clinicians asked our kids to write positive messages on strips of paper. Once this was done, they formed a chain of these thoughts. A couple examples of what they wrote are: BE KIND, YOU GOT THIS!, BE NICE, BE A LIGHT, etc. We liked the Chain of Positivity so much that we displayed it in our administrative office area for others to see. We plan on doing this again but with a couple of much longer chains that we will hang where our kids will see them every day!



Writers in Residence is Back!

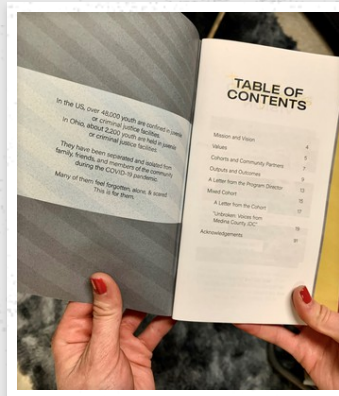
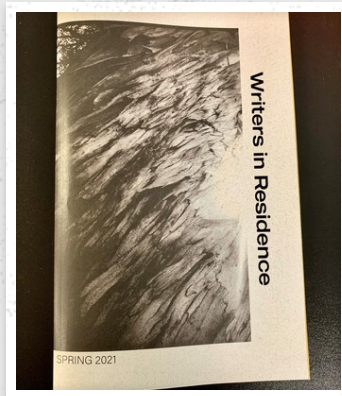
Writers in Residence is a 12-week long, student-run organization that shares new creative writing skills. Each week student volunteers from colleges around Ohio come to our detention center and facilitate an open forum with our youth. Their mission is to give incarcerated youth a voice and an outlet to speak freely about their stories.



At the end of the 12-week program, Writers in Residence creates chapbooks (below) with the stories of the youth that are incarcerated all around Ohio with the hopes that their stories are heard. We had a successful program with them last spring and were excited to bring them back this month. We are thankful that our youth are able to utilize this program to voice their stories.

While yes, our kids are detained in our building for breaking laws, when it comes down to it, most are just like everyone else. Here is a brief writing from one of our kids, expressing some of the things he enjoys most in life:

"I always like summer best. Biking with my friends, camping in a tent, campfire crackling. Telling stories full of horror, playing games in the chilly night, then tanning in the burning sun."



Former Resident

A former resident of ours stopped in to visit. He spent five months with us in 2017 and has, by all accounts, been doing very well since he left us. He is interested in coming back to talk to our kids about his life before he got it straightened out, and how he did so. We hope this works out sometime but he is currently working three jobs and has a young son. We will, of course, let you know if this happens.

For now, we leave you with a quote he left us with when he visited. *"I learned when I was serving my time the importance of changing your friends and people you hang out with if you really want to change you life. Your circle of friends will become a cage that keeps you locked in your behaviors"*. He then recited a phrase that is printed on the guidebook each youth receives upon their intake with us. It is; **SHOW ME YOUR FRIENDS AND I WILL PREDICT YOUR FUTURE**. He remembered this from his five months with us, now going on five years ago. We smiled at that.

MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

655 INDEPENDENCE DRIVE
MEDINA, OHIO 44256

RONALD V. STOLLAR – SUPERINTENDENT

MEGAN C. MILLIKIN – ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

RESIDENT GUIDEBOOK



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING ALL THE
RULES CONTAINED IN THIS GUIDEBOOK. FOLLOWING
THEM WILL MAKE YOUR TIME WITH US MORE POSITIVE!

"Show me your friends and I will predict your future!"

Rules of Conduct

Duffel vs. Trash Bags

We just purchased a couple dozen large (15"x42") duffel bags. Why? Because at times we will have a young man or young lady get released from us to somewhere other than their own home. They might be going to a residential treatment facility, maybe a foster home, or perhaps their parents have refused to let them come back home. Sometimes, what happens is that youth's personal belongings get dropped off to us just before the youth's release, and those belongings are often given to us in trash bags.



We find this handling of personal items distasteful. What does this subconsciously say to the person receiving their most personal items, during a very difficult and low time of their life, that everything they will take with them from here is in trash bags? Again, we don't like it. When we receive trash bags in the future, we will transfer everything in them into duffel bags that our kids can take with them and keep. It just seems like the right thing to do.

Speaking to Others About Juvenile Corrections

A couple of weeks ago Officer Fields addressed both junior and senior students in the Criminal Justice program at the Medina County Career Center, telling them about our detention center.

"On January 12th, I had the honor of speaking to the Criminal Justice program about juvenile corrections. Being that I was a graduate of that program only a few years ago, I loved how much the program had changed and the amount of resources they have been provided to succeed in this career path. When I was a student there I studied Fire/EMS my junior year, however; I switched to Criminal Justice my senior year. This program helped me realize the passion I had for this line of work. It is difficult for me to realize that only a few years ago I was in their shoes, listening to other past students of Commander Mike Stone. Now, I was the one they were asking questions of. I spoke about some differences between adult and juvenile corrections, as many people do not know there are key differences between the two.

One of the things I enjoy doing is community outreach for us to educate others on what we do. I keep in mind that maybe I can help just one person at a time with the things I have learned through the mistakes I have made. I encourage them that they, too, can succeed in this profession - they just have to push through the up and downs. This is one of the things I say to all our residents here. Everyone can succeed, they just need to make a step in the right direction and strive to be their best at it.

This job has taught me many valuable lessons, some of which I didn't even know I needed to learn. Law enforcement/corrections are passions of mine and I would not trade it for anything. I want to help, protect, and serve my community with every fiber of my being. We serve others, not ourselves, and hopefully I got that point across to them."

- Officer E. Fields

(Officer Fields and Superintendent Stollar below:)



WCTV Award

You may recall that we received recognition not too long ago from Wadsworth's WCTV television station for our 5th annual Art Experience. This recognition was an Honorable Mention in our category. Our certificate for this is now framed and on display in our lobby (below). We are proud of our efforts with the art we engage our kids in and even more proud of the art they produce!!



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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

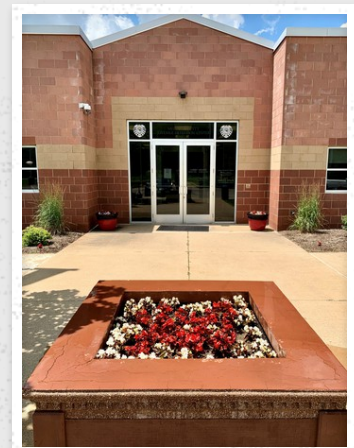
Fax: 330-764-8412

Administrative Hours

Monday-Friday

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

www.medinajdc.org

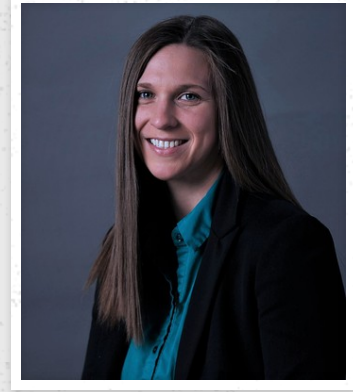




**Judge Kevin W.
Dunn;
Juvenile/Probate
Court**



**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."