

*Orange County*

# JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION



**2017  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**





## 2017 JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION MEMBERS



**Cheryl C. Hart, Chair**

**Rick T. Martinez, Vice Chair**



**Front row from left to right: Commissioners Amy Crowley, Ben deMayo, Cheryl Hart, Rick Martinez**

**Back row from left to right: Executive Administrative Assistant Jazz Hoxsie, Commissioners James Riley, Kathleen Nordin, Judy Zorrilla, Jan Sturla, Susan Leibel, Youth Commissioner Israel Sandez Jr, Eula Nelson, Legal Processing Specialist Hilary Kim and Commissioner Lynda Perring**

**Not Shown: Commissioners Patricia Boortz and John Youngblood**



Jazz Hoxsie  
Executive Administrative Assistant

# Superior Court of California

## County of Orange

### Juvenile Justice Commission

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Susan Leibel  
Eula Nelson  
Kathleen Nordin  
Lynda Perring  
James Riley  
Jan Sturla  
John Yougblood  
Judy L. Zorrilla  
**YOUTH COMMISSIONER**  
Israel Sandez Jr.

December 31, 2017

Dear Reader,

The Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) consists of thirteen dedicated volunteers who contribute their time to monitor the services provided to system-involved youth. They are appointed by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court with the concurrence of the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court for a four year term with the option of a second four year term. There is also a Youth Commissioner who serves until he/she reaches the age of 21. Possessing backgrounds in law enforcement, legal counsel, education, social welfare, local government, business and child advocacy, the members of the JJC are passionate about protecting the rights of dependent and delinquent youth in the county. We report back to the Judge on our observations of how effectively the institutions and agencies are supporting the physical, mental and educational needs of the youth in the juvenile justice system. Last year, we contributed a total of 2,377 volunteer hours.

The Commission is mandated to inspect the five institutions that house court ordered youth in the County. It also inspects group homes and Probation custody facilities. In addition, the Commission inspects all police and sheriff facilities within the County at which minors may have been detained. The Commission works closely with the Orange County Department of Education, the Social Services Agency, the Probation Department, the District Attorney, the Public Defender, the Health Care Agency and Community Care Licensing to promote cooperation and compliance. Finally, the Commissioners represent the Court on various committees and perform liaison functions.

2017 was a very busy year for the Juvenile Justice Commission as we adapted to several changes in our format and focus. With the passing of AB 403 the County had to comply with the state's Continuum of Care Reform regarding the placement of youth. Designed to gradually reduce the use of group homes by replacing them with foster homes or extended family, the new legislation posed many challenges in implementing the changes. New regulations regarding length of stay at the Orangewood Children and Family Center emergency shelter, as well as revised licensing criteria for Special Residential Treatment Programs (STRTP) resulted in an unprecedented demand on social workers and mental health clinicians. The JJC was very concerned about the unintended consequences of the law and worked closely with the agencies to protect the youth who were being affected. One positive outcome of AB 403 is the sharing of information and cross-county collaboration among JJC's across the State. Collectively, JJC's have become more proactive. For the second year Orange County Commissioners attended, at their own expense, a state-wide conference held in Sonoma County to discuss ways of becoming more effective advocates.

Another transition occurred when our stakeholder meetings were reduced to quarterly from monthly. This allowed the Commissioners to invest their time in some special interest topics. More attention was devoted to how the group homes were preparing youth for emancipation and independent living. More scrutiny was placed on the reasons for AWOLS at group homes and institutions and how they could be avoided. When we inspected group homes and institutions, more in-depth interviews were conducted with the residents to ascertain if they were receiving the proper treatment and how to best address complaints. Mental health concerns for both the residents and caregivers were better identified and monitored. And, more support was given to the foster family agencies as they struggled with recruitment, qualifications and retention.

In an effort to remain current on policy and legislative changes, as well as emerging issues, the Commission continued to engage in training and forums. We were also very fortunate to hear from a number of guest speakers who informed us about several topics, including: Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC); trauma informed care; mental health illnesses and treatment in youth; crisis response in schools; quality parenting for foster parents; judicial appointments; multidimensional treatment; suicide prevention; and mentoring programs. We are so grateful for the time that each individual or group gave us as they shared their insights on such relevant issues. Their presentations reflected the passion, wisdom and commitment that they all possess.

A heartfelt testimonial by a sex trafficking survivor who, with the assistance of the Orangewood Foundation, was able to leave "the life" and eventually become a role model was especially profound. We were also impressed by Ms. Crystal Anthony, Clinical Social Worker II, who explained how she collaborated with the Probation Department and the Health Care Agency to implement an innovative compassion-based program at Juvenile Hall.

Throughout the year, Commissioners enthusiastically accept the invitation to participate in several graduation ceremonies including: Sunburst; Padres Unidos; Rio Contiguo High School at the Youth Guidance Center; the Otto A. Fischer School at the Youth Leadership Academy and Juvenile Hall; and other ACCESS schools.

Our ability to interact with Orange County's finest professionals, agencies and community leaders was made possible by the support we received from our Presiding Judge. Judge Hernandez always treated us with respect and encouraged us to stay committed to our efforts on behalf of the system involved youth. We appreciate her guidance and inspiration.

Beverly MacLaren who served as the Administrative Officer for the JJC for the past six years retired in February 2017. Ms. MacLaren served the Orange County Superior Court for 36 ½ years; we wish her the best. We were greatly assisted by our new Executive Administrative Assistant, Jazz Hoxsie, and our Legal Processing Specialist, Hilary Kim. Ms. Hoxsie joined the Commission in June and immediately became indispensable. Her eagerness to learn and please, combined with her attention to detail and professionalism made her a welcome addition.

Finally, I'd like to thank my fellow Commissioners. It was such a special honor to be named Chair. I am proud to have colleagues who are so dedicated, resourceful and personally invested in protecting the juveniles in the court's custody. It has been an immense privilege to serve with you.



Cheryl C. Hart  
Chair

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) is a statutorily mandated group of private citizens. Pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Sections 225 – 231 to “inquire into the administration of juvenile court law” the JJC performs a variety of functions on behalf of the youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission is to inquire into the administration of juvenile court law in this county and to ensure that the highest standards of care and services are maintained for the youth within the juvenile justice system.

### **Vision Statement**

The Juvenile Justice Commission advocates for a compassionate and collaborative community to meet the mental, physical and educational needs of system involved youth.

### **Functions and Responsibilities**

In accordance with Sections 206 - 210.2 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court has delegated authority to the JJC to act on the Court’s behalf to conduct the annual inspection of law enforcement facilities and publicly administered institutions in Orange County such as:

- Youth Guidance Center
- Orangewood Children and Family Center
- Joplin Youth Center
- Youth Leadership Academy
- Orange County Juvenile Hall

The JJC also conducts inspections of group homes under contract with the Probation Department and the Social Services Agency as well as monitors adoption and foster care programs, independent living programs and proceedings of the Juvenile Court. The Commission may investigate special complaints regarding allegations of unlawful or inappropriate treatment of youth in the juvenile justice system in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 229 and/or conducts special investigations at the direction of the Presiding Judge of Juvenile Court. The results of these studies, reviews and inquiries are filed with the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court. The Commission may hold public hearings and request the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court to issue subpoenas to require attendance, testimony of witnesses and the submission of documents and other evidence.

The Commissioners attend many agency and community meetings monthly, serving as liaisons to gain a strong working knowledge of legislation changes, budget concerns, programs and activities being offered, as well as an opportunity to work collaboratively to ensure needs of the youth are being met.

## Budget at a Glance

Total FY 2015-2016 Approved Budget:	176,201
Totally FY 2015-2016 Actual Expenditure:	171,442
Total FY 2016-2017 Approved Budget:	178,367
Totally FY 2016-2017 Actual Expenditure:	157,200
Percent of County General Fund:	0.01%
Number of Juvenile Justice Commission Meetings held in 2017	23
Commissioner attendance	80.6%

Commissioners continue to receive the legally mandated reimbursement of \$25 per meeting not to exceed two meetings per month.

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***Commissioners spent 2,377 hours of their personal time representing the JJC in 2017***

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## II. MANDATED FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION

### Inspections of Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies

Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 209, the Juvenile Justice Commission annually inspects law enforcement agency facilities with respect to the handling of juveniles. Minors should not be detained in excess of six hours pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 207.1. The total number of minors detained in excess of six hours and minors detained in 2016 and 2017 are noted in the following table. These statistics have been provided by the law enforcement agencies.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY	2017 INSPECTION DATE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS DETAINED IN EXCESS OF SIX HOURS		TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS DETAINED	
		2016	2017	2016	2017
Anaheim	9/27/2017	0	4	284	312
Brea	4/18/2017	0	0	25	33
Buena Park	2/23/2017	0	1	78	139
Costa Mesa	8/1/2017	0	1	99	83
Cypress	4/4/2017	0	1	12	21
Fountain Valley	11/7/2017	0	0	18	17
Fullerton	2/22/2017	0	0	125	127
Garden Grove	4/4/2017	0	0	342	271
Huntington Beach	11/7/2017	0	0	50	41
Irvine	6/12/2017	0	0	52	84
La Habra	2/22/2017	0	0	89	134
La Palma	2/23/2017	0	0	10	21
Laguna Beach	7/20/2017	1	0	139	102
Los Alamitos	8/15/2017	0	0	8	4
Newport Beach	7/20/2017	0	0	74	80
Orange	6/20/2017	0	0	41	42
Placentia	4/18/2017	0	0	60	56
Santa Ana	6/29/2017	2	9	235	270
Santa Ana Unified School District	6/29/2017	0	0	46	43
Seal Beach	8/15/2017	2	0	20	20
Tustin	6/20/2017	0	2	106	103
Westminster	8/25/2017	0	0	57	63
Cal State Fullerton University	9/27/2017	0	0	6	9
<b>Totals</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1,976</b>	<b>2,075</b>

### Inspections of Orange County Sheriff's Department Facilities

The Sheriff's Department does not operate as a "station centric" agency. The Sheriff's Department policy is to detain the minors in the field and release the minors to a responsible adult. Only a limited number of minors are brought into a Sheriff's facility.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT FACILITY	2017 INSPECTION DATE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS DETAINED IN EXCESS OF SIX HOURS		TOTAL NUMBER OF MINORS DETAINED	
		2016	2017	2016	2017
Dana Point*	-----	0	0	0	0
Lake Forest/ Saddleback	8/11/2017	0	0	2	10
North Operations – Santa Ana*	-----	-----	0	-----	0
San Clemente*	-----	0	0	15	5
San Juan Capistrano*	-----	0	0	6	2
South Operations – Aliso Viejo*	-----	0	0	1	2
Stanton Police Services – Stanton	7/24/2017	0	0	16	13
Yorba Linda	10/11/2017	0	0	4	5
<b>Totals</b>		0	0	44	37

\*Due to the lack of detentions, these facilities were not inspected.

## INSTITUTIONS

In addition to inspecting the physical facilities and programmatic aspects of the institutions, the Commission meets with at least one child or youth to determine what the experience is like from his/her point of view. These visits are a vital part of the inspection and can provide additional layers of information to help the Commission evaluate the health and well-being of the program participants.

### Youth Guidance Center

Unannounced Inspection: March 22, 2017



The Youth Guidance Center (YGC) is a residential facility operated by the Probation Department for male and female juvenile offenders ages 14-18. Housed in three dormitory units, the facility can accommodate 120 youth; on the day of our inspection there were 44 males and 16 females. Youth are assigned to YGC by the court to address their substance abuse issues. Intensive individual and group therapy programs are implemented and modified daily to ensure participants acquire a basic understanding of the addiction process. Cognitive restructuring is an important part of the offender's rehabilitation and successful transitioning into the community. Life skills and vocational training is also

emphasized. The Probation staff is assisted by mental health clinicians, family counselors, intervention coaches, fitness trainers, career counselors and others to ingrain pro-social behaviors.

One of the most important goals is to help youth understand how their actions have affected others. They undergo training in which they interact with a victim – not necessarily their victim – to analyze the basic concepts of thinking, feeling and acting. Reconciliation is carefully constructed so that recidivism is reduced.

In addition to the mandatory programs, the youth are required to attend school at the on-campus Rio Contiguo High School. Operated by the Orange County Department of Education's ACCESS program, the school is accredited. The YGC staff assesses the youth's academic status and reviews his/her academic goals (high school diploma, HiSET, college, trade school and/or military).

#### On Site Observation:

- The field probation officers who are assigned for the re-entry phase spend time with the youth prior to release so they can become familiar with each situation. They are very involved as a "broker of services" to supervise the court orders, refer the youth to community programs and provide a warm handoff bridge to transition.
- The two girls who were interviewed were very polite and well spoken. Both felt that the programs were impactful and they were benefitting from their experience.

- The two boys who were interviewed felt they had matured during their stay at YGC and they were learning from the programs. **One of the boys said: “tell my judge thank you for giving me this sentence. Even though I don’t want to be here, it’s working!”**

Action Requested by the Commission:

No corrective action notice was requested by the Commission.

## Orangewood Children and Family Center and William Lyon School

Unannounced Inspection: March 29, 2017

Announced Inspection: August 22, 2017



Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC) is an emergency shelter for abused and neglected children. OCFC is operated by the Orange County Department of Social Services in the city of Orange. The campus-like setting includes residential cottages, athletic fields, a gymnasium, swimming pool, school, medical unit and cafeteria. Mental health services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at OCFC.

The Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) inspection team made two visits to the OCFC in 2017; one on March 29<sup>th</sup> and

one on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The most significant challenge facing OCFC is meeting the requirements of California's newly implemented Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). CCR has as one of its fundamental principles that children "deserve to live with a committed, nurturing and permanent family." Under CCR, an emergency shelter, such as OCFC, must place a child into a suitable placement within 10 days. This mandate is often difficult to meet considering the number of children who need specialized services. During August 2017, the number of children residing at OCFC ranged from 34 to 73 days. The average time in residence was 39 days.

Upon entry into OCFC, a child is assessed by staff through a Level of Care (LOC) protocol to identify the individual needs of the foster child. Every effort is then made to match those needs to home-based care. Foster children with special needs can be referred to Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Centers (STRTC) or Foster Family Agencies (FFA) to provide necessary and appropriate services. Orange County will continue to face challenges related to the recruitment and retention of qualified foster families. While in residence at OCFC, children are assigned to a residential cottage and counselor. Children receive medical, educational and mental health services as necessary.

### William Lyon School

The William Lyon School is located on the Orangewood Children and Family Center campus. The school is operated by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) which provides teachers, administrative staff, counselors, materials, resources and services. Because OCFC is a temporary shelter the student population changes daily, average class size ranges from five to seven students. A number of students are transported to their school of origin.

Students are given 240 minutes of instruction daily by credentialed teachers. The student grade level ranges from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The elementary and middle school students are taught in combination classes. High school students rotate between two classrooms:

- Math, Science and Physical Education
- Language Arts, Social Studies and Art

Students are given the opportunity to participate in programs offered by the Orangewood Foundation including their Independent Living Program and the “FIT” club. The Health Care Agency’s Court Evaluation and Guidance Unit (CEGU) also operates on site.

The classrooms are student friendly, inviting and the bulletin boards display students’ work. The rooms are equipped with computers, books, visuals and resources that are available to the students.

On Site Observation:

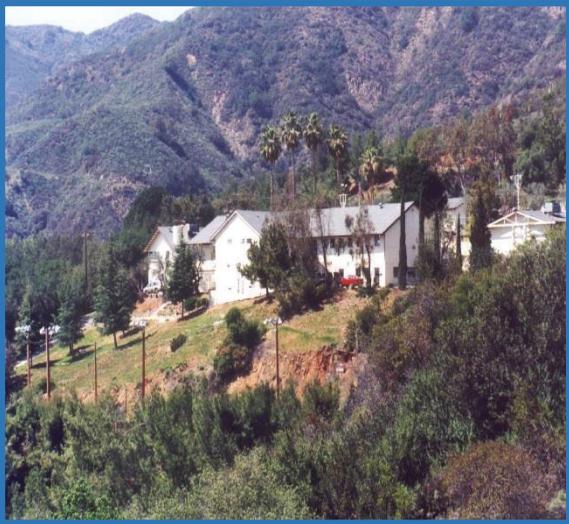
- Several of the residents interviewed indicated the discipline practices at OCFC are very punitive and may result in more AWOLs. This is a constant concern of the JJC. OCFC’s managing team has been very receptive to discussing ways to minimize this risk factor.
- Modifying OCFC’s cell phone policy has also been explored.
- The Commission continues to be impressed by OCFC’s Annual Holiday Tea. The residents provide a very welcoming environment for the guests and are so creative with decorations.
- Generally, the facility was found to be in good repair and order; staffing is appropriate.

Action Requested by the Commission:

The JJC noted that new children’s lockers, which had been the subject of a 2016 Corrective Action Report, had been received but not installed as of our August visit. OCFC was issued a “Corrective Action Notification” as a result of this condition.

## Joplin Youth Center

Unannounced Inspection: May 2, 2017



The Joplin Youth Center is a residential facility operated by the Probation Department for boys 12 to 18 years of age. It is considered to be a step-down placement from Juvenile Hall for boys to complete their commitment. The boys typically live at the Youth Center 30 to 45 days. The program managers recommend the boys remain for 90 days to embrace the behavior changes that are taught. The facility can accommodate a total of 64 boys. On the day of our inspection the population was 39. Joplin Youth Center is located in a rustic area at the base of the Santa Ana Mountains on 336 acres. Although the facility is over 50 years old, it is attractive. The dormitories and classrooms are clean and well-maintained. Boys attend an on-

grounds school. They can participate in a variety of programs offered to improve skills and self-esteem to maximize their opportunity for successful reintegration into the community.

### On Site Observation:

- There is an ROP instructor on staff.
- The boys are making signs with inspirational words and phrases to post along the drive to the facility.
- The recreational facilities are nice including a gym, workout equipment and games.
- One of the boys proudly informed the Commission he had received 3<sup>rd</sup> place in an essay contest.
- Two boys were interviewed and stated they felt safe and were well treated at Joplin.

### Action Requested by the Commission:

No corrective action notice was requested by the Commission.

## Youth Leadership Academy

Unannounced Inspection: July 11, 2017



The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA), operated by the Orange County Probation Department, was opened in 2006 and has the capacity to house 120 males 14-21 years of age in two units. On the day of our inspection there were 54 males in residence, supervised by 32 probation employees.

YLA utilizes several different reinforcement programs to promote maturity and responsibility. These include Thinking for a Change (T4C); Decision Points (cognitive restructuring); New Beginnings (parenting classes); Safe Schools (drug and alcohol

education); ART (Aggression Replacement Training); Summer at the Center (performing arts); YOW (Youthful Offender Wraparound) and PAWS (Puppies and Wards).

This year for the first time B Status juvenile offenders were admitted to YLA. These are youth who have already been on probation and are detained pending a pre-trial or trial. The category also includes a minor who is a return escapee, a minor who has been booked for a Home Supervision Program (HSP) violation, a minor who is receiving new charges, or a minor who has a pending court replacement. The move to house these minors is based on the more intensive programs offered at YLA that require more participation and social skills.

### On Site Observation:

- The Commissioners were pleased to find the facility clean and generally well maintained.
- The facility is staffed by caring professionals.
- The Commissioners took note that the average length of stay has been reduced for the third year in a row.
- The Commissioners spoke to two boys. One was very negative and appeared to have learned very little from the programs offered. The second young man was very grateful for the instruction he received and was enthusiastic about the 'Cut for Men' program which rewards good behavior with weekly haircuts – he plans to become a barber!

### Action Requested by the Commission:

A Corrective Action Notice (CAN) was sent after the inspection. It requested the removal of the rust in the toilet and the replacement of the missing metal plate in the Unit 1 bathroom. In the Unit 2 bathroom, it was requested the mold in the shower be removed and the floors be cleaned.

## Juvenile Hall and Otto A. Fischer School

### Unannounced Inspection: July 19, 2017



Juvenile Hall is a maximum-security facility with a 380 bed capacity. On the day of the inspection, the population was 120 males and 21 females. The Orange County Juvenile Hall population has declined significantly in recent years due to the implementation of the JDAI – Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative developed through the Annie E. Casey Foundation. On the day of the inspection, the average length of stay was 18 days for minors.

The Juvenile Hall physical plant has some buildings that were constructed in 1957. Ongoing maintenance is problematic.

The youth housed in the Hall are either detained or committed. If they are waiting for a hearing or trial, they are detained. Those who have been adjudicated and given a sentence are committed.

The youth are housed in separate units based on several factors such as gender, seriousness of the crime, age, mental health and status (detained, committed, or charged as an adult). Members of the team from the Commission visit all of the units during an inspection.

There is a variety of programs available to the youth whether they are detained or committed. The programs are designed to reduce recidivism and teach behavior modification skills. Given the short average stay, programs begin immediately upon intake and are not part of any punishment. The Commission is informed following each inspection when there are changes to existing programs or the addition of new ones.

### Otto A. Fischer School

Youth attend Otto A. Fischer school on site. Students are taught by teachers and staff who are provided by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) ACCESS program. Youth can earn high school credits, HiSET certificate or a diploma while in custody. Some students who graduate can enroll in on-line college courses.

Probation and OCDE provides a dedicated teacher (Transition Specialist) who works with students to develop a career plan to ensure a successful transition back to the community or future school placement. The Transition Specialist helps students with resume writing, cover letters, job applications, completion of college applications and financial aid forms (FAFSA). Some students create a binder that includes an individualized graduation plan, a sample resume, cover letter and other valuable information that will be useful for transition.

Graduation ceremonies are conducted each year to honor students who earned a high school diploma or a HiSET diploma. Juvenile Justice Commissioners are invited to the ceremonies and participate in the awarding of certificates.

Otto A. Fischer staff and teachers provide a number of vocation and education resources and materials to the youth at this school. The library is well equipped with books and the Library Cart Program is available. The Regional Occupational Program (ROP) that is available on site provide the students with some of the knowledge and skills that will be beneficial to the youth on his/her path to adulthood.

On Site Observation:

- The Commission interviewed a young man who was very courteous and well spoken. He had been in Juvenile Hall for two years and his release date was still two years away. He was complimentary of the staff and his experience in general. He was continuing his education through Chapman College online courses and very grateful for the opportunity.
- The second youth interviewed was a young woman who was transgender, identified as male but was living in the girls' unit for her safety. She was very emotional and very open about discussing her experience. She indicated she felt comfortable in the girls' unit.
- The Juvenile Justice Commission commends the teachers, staff and administrators at Otto A. Fischer for the service and support that is provided to the students at this school.

Action Requested by the Commission:

A Corrective Action Notice (CAN) was sent after the inspection, requesting the sinks in Unit O be re-caulked, the corroded shower controls in Unit B be replaced and the urinals be more thoroughly cleaned.

### **III. COLLABORATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Child Death Review Committee**

This Committee was formed to review information related to the deaths of children while in the custody or care of the Orange County juvenile justice system. The Committee meets with probation officers or social workers on a quarterly basis to determine whether system gaps or processes may have contributed to the death of a child. As appropriate, the Committee makes recommendations for changes to policies and procedures to the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court.

##### **Education Committee**

According to some experts, education is a critical but often neglected component of care provided to children and youth in foster care. Studies show that foster youth are often at a higher risk of academic failure than youth and children in the general pre K-12 population. The mission of the Education Committee is to “Ensure that all students within the Juvenile Justice System are given the opportunity to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education” (FAPE).

Commissioners visited ACCESS schools, attended graduations and special Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) programs and activities that focused on foster children. During graduation celebrations Commissioners presented certificates to students who earned a HiSET certificate or diploma.

The Commission was invited to visit Scholarship Prep Elementary and Samueli Academy High, two public charter schools in Santa Ana. Commissioners visited both schools and were impressed with the programs, administrators, staff, teachers and students at both locations.

Scholarship Prep is a transitional kindergarten through eighth grade comprehensive school with a data drawn emphasis on making a dramatic and sustainable impact on underserved students, including foster children. Scholarship Prep utilizes a university-inspired physical environment and college scholarship concept. It suggests that students will understand that by achieving academic, art and/or athletic excellence, a broader array of options exists for future endeavors in higher education. The school enrollment is open to all Orange County residents. Students are admitted through a lottery process; foster children are given priority.

Samueli Academy caters to foster and underserved youth in the area. Samueli is a Project Based Learning school (PBL). The Academy offers extra support staff who bridge students' on-campus and off-campus lives, ensuring that most needs are met. The school offers an array of programs and activities to enhance student learning and growth. Some of the programs offered include:

- Staff that cares about the “whole” student.
- After school enrichment programs: tutoring, athletics, extracurricular clubs and activities.
- College Readiness: courses that are accepted by all UC's and CSU's; college nights; financial aid and college application workshops; partnerships with local colleges and the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school.
- Work based learning: job shadowing, Career Day, Career Mentor and Career Dress Day.

Commissioners attended the emotionally charged graduation celebration for the first graduating class of Samueli Academy.

The Juvenile Justice Commission commends the charter schools for the commitment, educational, support and effort given to enhance the education outcome for this unique population as they transition to adulthood.

### **Foster Care**

The Foster Care Committee was created in 2017 in response to the Continuing Care Reform legislation and its impact on the children of our county. Although the Juvenile Justice Commission does not inspect or visit foster homes, the Commission does want to be informed on the problems of finding and supporting foster families, which are now called Resource Families. The youth that cannot be placed with a resource family will have to be placed in other care facilities. The challenges that may ensue are of special interest to the Commission.

### **Group Home / Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)**

In 2017, members of the Commission inspected 20 group homes housing Orange County dependent children. The Commission was able to meet with youth residing in the homes as well as interview program staff. Thirteen homes had Corrective Action Notifications (CAN) letters sent to address necessary repairs and improvements. The Presiding Judge was provided group home reports and 12 homes have completed necessary repairs by the end of the year.

The implementation of Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) has been an area of interest for the Commission as it will have significant impact on congregate care within the County. There is a need for additional resource families to care for youth that do not meet the Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) criteria, but, require intensive treatment and care. The Commission will continue to pay special attention to how the County addresses the needs of these youth.

As group homes transition to a Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP), the Commission will allocate time during the inspection process to discuss trauma informed care, mental health programming and independent living skills. A revised inspection form has been implemented for 2018 that will allow us to conduct a more comprehensive review when we visit the group homes. The Commission has always understood the value of talking with the youth who reside in group homes to gain their perspective. In the coming year, the Commission will refine the interview to be more thorough and substantive.

### **Law Enforcement**

As required by law, members of the Juvenile Justice Commissioners inspected all Orange County Police Department and Sheriff facilities that held minors in a secure detention or non-secure custody setting during 2017.

The purpose of the inspection is to assure that every agency complies with current laws. We are pleased to report that all agencies were in compliance with the law.

These inspections also served to allow Commissioners to better understand how each law enforcement agency serves juveniles in different ways. Commissioners were updated on what resources and programs are available for each law enforcement agency to serve youth in their respective communities. Every law enforcement agency received special training. Some have unique programs while others have similar programs to other agencies throughout the County. We learned of their outreach to their unique community and resources. Oftentimes, agencies share their resources with other Orange County law enforcement agencies.

The Commission noted that many Orange County law enforcement agencies have developed and implemented exceptional programs for youth crime prevention and diversion. Some of the programs are operated independently by the law enforcement agency. Others are operated in partnerships with a variety of non-profit organizations, neighborhood groups, educational institutions, civic organizations and private entities.

This year JJC was pleased to learn about many new programs being developed by some agencies and the continued operation and success of other long-standing programs. Those include:

- The Huntington Beach Police Department operates a program entitled LEAD HS (Leadership, Education And Development). This is a week-long program aimed at future leaders in their community between the ages of 14 and 17. Conducted in the former Senior Citizen Center, participants learn about leadership from guest speakers; through community service projects; and from presentations and mentorship by volunteer police personnel. Participants contributed their time and services to the Orange County Food Bank; spent time cleaning the beach and learned to surf.
- The Huntington Beach Police Department also developed the Fishing with the Force program, teaching youth how to fish as a diversion from crime. They recently successfully provided the program to 80 at-risk youth, ages 10-15.
- The Anaheim Police Department has been successfully operating many youth programs for a number of years. Included are: the Cops 4 Kids program; the Jr. Cadet program; the Anaheim Public Safety Career Pipeline program for junior high school students; and a Police Explorer program. This department is also proactive and a leader in the area of Human Trafficking.
- The Newport Beach Police Department offers a Teen Academy to youth in their city.
- The Laguna Beach Police Department is active in child/youth and parent education and crime prevention.
- A majority of law enforcement agencies utilize personnel to serve as School Resource Officers (SRO). Some agencies utilize them for enforcement of laws and crime deterrent, while other SRO's provide instruction in the school as a means of crime prevention. A few departments handle both functions.

These are just a few examples of the great work taking place in the Orange County law enforcement agencies. We are pleased to see the level of dedication and commitment to youth that many agencies provide through their unique, non-mandated programs and services.

## **Legislative Committee**

The primary focus of the Legislative Committee during 2017 was to monitor the progress of bills designed to implement and refine the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) legislation that was enacted in 2015. The Committee continues to be concerned about the negative impact that CCR has had on the ability to recruit and retain resource families to provide homes for foster youth. The Committee monitored the status of over 50 bills during the 2017 legislative session. We received a presentation on new legislation that impacts foster youth, dual status youth and Continuum of Care Reform by Brandy Miller, the legislative analyst for the Social Services Agency.

## **Mental Health**

The primary function of the Mental Health Committee is to serve on the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) as a voting member of the Steering Committee. In order to make an informed decision about which existing and new programs should be considered for funding, it is necessary

for the appointee to remain abreast of current changes in policy and/or legislation re: the provision of mental health services and treatments to system-involved youth.

Members of the Committee also promote services and programs that specifically assist youth, Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and their families. They collaborate with agencies and organizations to ensure that mental health services are available to youth in group homes, STRTPs and resource family placements. They attend court instructional sessions, continuing education presentations and community outreach programs to remain involved and informed about emerging issues, trends and treatments.

### **Special Issues**

The Special Issues Committee continued to advocate for a compassionate and collaborative community to meet the mental, physical and educational needs of system-involved youth. In doing this, the JJC monitored the prevailing areas of study relevant to the work of the JJC and explored new ideas with the potential to increase both the visibility and the effectiveness of the JJC.

One committee member attended the annual JJC conference in Northern California to share best practices and to explore common areas of JJC work. The feasibility of creating an essay contest for high school students in local court schools was studied and planned for 2018 implementation.

This year, report guidelines for various inspections (Group Homes and Law Enforcement Agencies) were done in the respective committees.

The committee will refine the institution report guidelines in early 2018.

## **COMMISSION LIAISON ACTIVITIES**

### **Blue Ribbon Commission**

The Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court conducts a bi-monthly meeting with representatives from Orange County Department of Education, Social Services Agency, Health Care Agency, Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office, Probation Department and other invested agencies and organizations. The Chair of the JJC is included as an observer.

### **Child Abuse Services Team (CAST) Policy Board**

The Child Abuse Services Team is a multi-disciplinary team comprised of members from the Orange County Social Services Agency, District Attorney, Health Care Agency, Orange County law enforcement and medical staff from the University of California, Irvine. CAST uses a team approach to investigate allegations of child physical or sexual abuse in order to streamline the process and minimize the stress placed on the child victims. Representatives of Social Services Agency, District Attorney, Health Care Agency, law enforcement, Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center and Juvenile Justice Commission sit on the CAST Policy Board.

The CAST facility, located at the Orangewood Children and Family Center, provides a child-friendly site for victim interviews, forensic medical examinations, investigational conferences, victim therapy and professional training. In 2017, CAST averaged 55 victim interviews per month and 17 forensic medical exams per month. The CAST approach to investigations not only reduces the stress and trauma on the child victims of crime, but increases the efficiency of the entire investigative process.

### **Child Welfare System Improvement Partnership (CWSIP)**

The Child Welfare System Improvement Partnership meets monthly to provide a venue for County agencies to meet with community partners. This year's meetings included updates on Continuum of Care Reform, the Resource Family Approval process and Faith in Motion efforts for foster youth. This collaborative approach to addressing the needs of dependent youth within our county allows for stronger partnerships and better understanding of how to help foster youth succeed.

### **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Steering Committee**

The Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Steering Committee meets once a month to update the members and discuss the issues of this population of youth. These youth (usually females) are a challenge to help because of the uniqueness of their situation. They are not accused of breaking the law but the adults who are victimizing them are. However, the CSEC victims are often bonded with their abusers and frequently run away. The challenges faced by the Committee are identifying housing for the youth, keeping them in care and counseling to prevent a return to "the life." The Committee's members are from all parts of the system. At the monthly meetings information is shared as to what each agency or service provider has been doing to help the CSEC victims.

The JJC has a representative at these meetings in order to keep the Commission informed about the progress in helping this segment of youth in our county.

### **Eliminating Racial Disparity Disproportionality Advisory Board (ERDD)**

The ERDD stated mission is "To Ensure Fair Treatment and Equitable Service to All".

The Committee meets monthly to discuss disparate or inequitable services provided to children and youth of color compared to those provided to similarly situated white children; and the over or under representation of children and youth of color in foster care and the child welfare system compared to their representation in the general population.

The goal of ERDD is to collaborate with County agencies and community organizations to create awareness, training, outreach and data to address the concerns and issues that children and youth in the foster care system face.

The committee continues to work with Social Service Agency's Planning Research and Communication Team evaluating data provided on the Latino Reunification Presentation.

### **Foster Care Advisory Board (FCAB) / Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)**

The FCAB/QPI committee consists of representatives from County agencies and community partners who meet monthly to discuss general issues and policies pertaining to resource families, biological families and caregivers. The committee discusses prudent parenting practice, resource parent training, resource family approval training process and courses available to caregivers.

Some of the topics discussed:

- Resource family support
- Foster youth access to financial aid support
- Foster family reimbursement
- Questions regarding communication with caseworker

The JJC would like to commend the Children and Family Service Foster, Kinship and Family Liaison and the FCAB/QPI committee members for working collaboratively with caregivers, community partners and other county agencies to provide quality service to families and to the children who do not live with their parents

### **Foster Family Agency Forum (FFA)**

The Foster Family Agency meets quarterly. Participants are members of the several foster family agencies that recruit and manage placements for children and Social Services Agency specialists who recommend placements. They meet to discuss common areas of concern and to hear speakers on related topics. Members of the Juvenile Justice Commission attend to monitor these discussions.

### **Group Home Forum / Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)**

The Group Home Forum is a biannual meeting with Social Services and Group Home agencies that serve Orange County youth. With the implementation of Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), representatives from the Probation Department and Health Care Agency (HCA) also attend. The meetings provide an opportunity for the County to share updates in areas such as new legislation, transitional housing and placement of youth. The forum also offers an important avenue to gather feedback from group homes to better address issues and share best practices.

### **Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)**

Annually, a Juvenile Justice Commissioner is designated as a voting member of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Steering Committee. The JJC appointee or an alternate attends the monthly MHSA meetings that are conducted by the Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA). The appointee participates in the evaluation of proposed and approved MHSA projects.

Passed by California voters in 2004, the MHSA provides a tax-based fund for mental health programs that provide services to children, adults and older adults who suffer from severe mental illness. The target population of MHSA is seriously mentally ill individuals who are currently unserved, underserved, homeless, or at risk of homelessness. As advocates for juveniles in Orange County, the JJC appointee focuses primarily on the programs that specifically assist youth (0-17 years), Transitional Age Youth (TAY) ages 18-25 years and their families and/or caregivers. The majority of the MHSA annual funding goes to the Community Services and Supports (CSS) component that specifically assists those in need. The goal is to reduce the long-term impact resulting from untreated serious mental illness.

There are 93 different MHSA programs identified for funding with an approximate budget of \$168 million. Therefore, as a voting member of the MHSA Steering Committee, it is extremely important for the JJC appointee to attend the meetings, consider proposed programs and budgets for implementation and monitor the allocation of funding. It is also necessary for the JJC member to be well informed about emerging mental health issues, legislation and reforms, as well as interacting with the HCA and other providers of services to youth in the system.

### **Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP)**

The Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP) is a 22 member advisory board established by the Board of Supervisors in 1983. The mission of the OCCP is to provide a unified voice that champions health, education, safety and economic stability by advancing more responsive services that effectively meet the needs of children and families in Orange County. This year the OCCP focused on the Continuum of Care Reform and the coordinated efforts of all County agencies to recruit and train additional resource families, license group homes as Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs) and meet the standards laid out in state law to serve our foster children.

In coordination with the Children and Families Commission, the OCCP continues to refine and publish an Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County and hold Community Forums to disseminate information on trends affecting the well-being of children today.

### **Orange County Pediatric And Young Adult Mental Health System Of Care Task Force**

Created in 2015, the Task Force is comprised of Orange County representatives from CHOC, Kaiser Hospital, Hoag Hospital, Cal-Optima, Social Services, Health Care Agency, Department of Education, the Regional Center and other invested agencies and private organizations. Its main purpose is "to provide an integrated, coordinated system of mental health care for children, teens and young adults that allows for early identification and diagnosis, treatment at the right level of intensity and support for children, families and community-based organizations trying to navigate the system of care." A primary goal was the establishment of a Pediatric Mental Health Inpatient Center for youth ages 3-17. That Center at Children's Hospital of Orange County will open its 18 bed facility in April 2018. The Task Force holds bi-monthly meetings. A JJC Commissioner attended several of the meetings as a representative of the Presiding Judge, but it was determined that it was no longer necessary. Instead, the Judge is informed of the progress of the Task Force through its meeting minutes.

## Recruitment, Training and Support (RTS)

The Recruitment, Training and Support committee meets monthly for the purpose of finding and maintaining local resources that can support children and families in their own neighborhood. The committee's focus is on recruiting foster/adoptive parents and relative caregivers. RTS continues to focus on recruiting homes for target populations: teens, sibling sets, medically challenged children and those with special needs. An extraordinary program within the committee is Faith in Motion (FIM). This is a unique collaboration between the Social Service Agency, the Children and Family Services, the Health Care Agency and the Orange County faith based community whose mission is to find loving foster and adoptive families for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. The goal is to recruit foster and adoptive families within the faith community and encourage faith-based congregations to develop support services and mentoring programs for foster and adoptive families and relative caregivers.

Some of the activities supported by RTS include:

**The Zero by 2020 Vision:** A collaborative initiative of faith based organizations in Orange County with the goal of finding families for all children in care by the year 2020. The vision includes a three-pronged approach:

- Recruit foster and adoptive families from within congregations. Each participating church hosts an information seminar to generate interest. "A Seminar in a Box" (a tool kit) is provided to the church. The tool kit includes: a powerpoint presentation, a workbook and other useful information about the Orange County foster care system.
- Equip the church to holistically care for families caring for children; this includes hosting training classes, conferences and recruiting volunteers to support families.
- Build a network of support groups for caregivers as a foundation of care and give practical tools to assist the families and help the children heal from trauma.

**Caregiver day off:** Families are given free childcare for a day hosted by a local church.

**Super Saturday:** (Fifth Saturday) A day of family fun that includes a variety of activities for foster families.

### **Annual Picnic/ field trip to Santa Ana Zoo**

The Commission commends RTS for collaborating with community organizations/agencies and stakeholders to provide service, resources and activities that support foster/adoptive parents, caregivers and children in care.

## GUEST SPEAKERS

The Juvenile Justice Commission would like to acknowledge and thank the following guest speakers for their significant role in providing insight on their programs, roles and resources offered to the families and the youth of Orange County.

Brandy Miller, Social Services Agency, Legislation Analyst provided an overview of legislation impacting education, foster youth rights and protections, mental health, Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) and dual status minors.

Heather Williams, Regional Peer Support Coordinator, Orange Unified School District, gave a presentation on building resiliency to reduce compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue can happen when one is exposed to traumatic events by reading, listening, or witnessing the event. Ms. Williams leads the Crisis Response Teams that responds to emergency response calls to assist victims and secondary trauma victims in accidents. Ms. Williams shared various resources and coping mechanisms to assist with trauma.

TerryLynn Fisher, Administrative Manager II, Social Services Agency, Lynn Kleist, LCSW, Service Chief II, Health Care Agency and Alicia Lemire, Psy.D., Program Manager II, Health Care Agency presented on the Orange County version of Treatment Foster Care of Oregon (TFCO). TFCO, formerly known as Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), was developed by the Oregon Social Learning Center in Eugene, Oregon in 1983. TFCO is an evidence based solution for youth who exhibit emotional and behavioral problems with their families and their communities. The goal of TFCO is to reunify youth with their permanent caregivers. Within the program, youth and families have various services readily available, such as behavioral training, skills training, family therapy, supportive therapy, school-based behavioral interventions and academic support, as well as psychiatric consultation. Wraparound services are also provided to the youth.

Joanna Hussey, Senior Social Services Supervisor, is the Children and Family Services Resource Family Liaison and assists resource families by providing support, advice and guidance in resolving issues such as foster care payments, birth family visitations, social worker communication and questions about the foster care system. Ms. Hussey was joined by Norean Lubchenko, Administrative Manager II, Social Services Agency and provided an overview of the various services available to resource families and foster parents by SSA. SSA provides support services and training for potential resource families as well as for foster youth.

Kerri Dunkelberger, Executive Director of the Orange County region, Olive Crest, provided an overview of Olive Crest homes. Olive Crest was founded in 1973 and established one of the first group homes in Orange County. Olive Crest provides several services to the youth and families and ensures youth are receiving all the resources necessary. With the transition to become a Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP), Olive Crest will be able to have therapists and mental health services on site at the homes to provide comfort and stability to the youth. Olive Crest is working to change their group home models to accommodate the programs for STRTPs.

Jim Perez, Administrator of ACCESS Safe Schools and Support Services, introduced the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) Crisis Response Network (CRN) and shared how they assist the community. The CRN is a team of trained crisis responders who provide support upon request from trauma-impacted schools and youth-based organizations within Orange County. The network utilizes the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) Model of Crisis Response, and Psychological First Aid (PFA) is also embedded in the model. They provide

certified training in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). The CRN team also provides certified ICISF training to schools at no cost, if requested.

When there is a death of a youth under the age of 18, the CRN team reaches out to school administration and offers support and coordinates communication with school officials, law enforcement, coroner's office and community partners. If the school requests the CRN team's assistance, they are mobilized for community and school-wide response, such as providing therapy dogs for students. The CRN also provides ambassador training to combat school bullying. The students are trained to provide support when bullying occurs.

Jim Carson, Program Manager, Orangewood Foundation, introduced Oree Freeman, an advocate for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and highlighted her accomplishments. Oree is a sex trafficking survivor. Oree shared how she met her mentor, Jim Carson at her last group home, Crittenton. Through the support and assistance from the staff at Crittenton, she was able to graduate from high school and find stability in her life. Currently, Oree travels statewide to conduct trainings and works with educators to inform the public about CSEC. She also provides support to youth in the juvenile justice system by teaching classes at schools, group homes and foster homes. Oree wants to help youth that "fall through the cracks" of the system by providing tips of what to do if they are approached by exploiters. She stated the importance for CSEC youth to have mentors in their lives.

Orangewood Foundation currently has the Lighthouse Program for survivors of sex trafficking. The mission of the Lighthouse Program is to assist young women who are survivors of sex trafficking to feel safe, valued and loved while supporting their individual journeys of healing and independence.

Bob Theemling, Chief Program Officer, Samueli Academy, Orangewood Foundation, provided an overview of the Orangewood Foundation. The Orangewood Foundation is a nonprofit organization that began in the early 80's as the first private and public sector partnership. Their programs focus on four critical areas: health and wellness, housing, life skills and employment and education. The Foundation provides various services, such as providing hot meals, transitional housing, workshops and scholarships for college and graduate schools as well as a mentoring program for foster youth and youth at the Samueli Academy for ages twelve and above. The Foundation recently opened the Samueli Academy, a charter school that recruits foster youth as well as at-risk youth.

Youth are referred to the Orangewood Foundation once the social worker completes the youth's Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) usually around the age of 16. The Orangewood Foundation continually works to improve its trainings and procedures to ensure that the staff are providing the best possible care and attention to the youth.

## TRAININGS

The Commission attended several training sessions to stay informed about programs; obtain information on the needs of the youth; to remain current on legislation changes; and to learn about services available to youths and their families.

### Girls Court Observation, January 27, 2017

Commissioners observed the Judge review the cases with social workers and attorneys to discuss the best solution for the youth as well as the courtroom proceedings.

### Juvenile Dependency Court and Reducing Pregnancy Among Youth seminar, February 3, 2017

The seminar focused on trends and finding a solution to prevent pregnancy among youth.

### UC Irvine Initiative to End Family Violence Conference, February 9<sup>th</sup>, February 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 8, 2017

The conference focused on trauma informed care for transgender and the LGBTQI community

### Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Inspection pre-meeting February 14, 2017

BSCC is a state agency that conducts inspections of all juvenile detention facilities. The BSCC pre-meeting provided an overview of what to check and look for during facility inspections.

### Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Training, March 6, 2017

Training discussed the overview of the CCR initiative.

### Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Juvenile Justice Training, April 17, 2017

The training provided a list of identification markers for infants with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

### Educational Opportunities for Students with Special Needs Training, May 12, 2017

Orange County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Directors presented information on various disability services that are accessible to youth.

### MCLE: Educational Opportunities for Students with Special Needs, May 12, 2017

Training provided a basic overview of the types of services that Federal and State law require for youth with special needs in the areas of academics and behavior. Participants are also educated on the additional supports and services available in Orange County for vulnerable populations.

### MCLE: Addressing Community Complex Children in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System, May 24, 2017

Training provided information and strategies for addressing the needs of dually involved youth across the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems. Honorable Steven C. Teske, Chief Judge, Juvenile Court, Clayton Judicial Circuit - Nationwide Leader from Atlanta Georgia discussed the positive impacts of using diversion programs for youth offenders instead of placing them in Juvenile Hall.

### Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Subcommittee, August 1, 2017

The subcommittee reviewed eight programs funded through the Juvenile Justice Crime Act: Youth Reporting Center; Addiction, Substance Abuse, Education and Recognition Treatment (ASERT); Sobriety Through Education and Prevention (STEP); Juvenile Drug Court; Truancy Response Program; Decentralized Intake (DCI)/Sheriff's Prevention Program; and School Mobile Assessment and Response Team (SMART). The programs will be re-evaluated to ensure the programs are running effectively and to ensure the youth are receiving the best services.

#### Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Training, September 14, 2017

Training was held in Long Beach, CA. The role of the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) and Juvenile Justice Commission was discussed, providing suggestions on how to conduct inspections and which items to review during an inspection. Several Senate Bills were also discussed such as Senate Bill 1004 which allows adults ages 18-21 to reside in Juvenile Hall based on certain criteria.

#### MCLE: Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) and Family Finding, October 12, 2017

Daniel Richardson, attorney, from the Judicial Council of California provided legal updates related to the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), including new legal requirements for establishing permanency, family finding and placement, improving out-of home care by reducing the reliance on congregate care, improving services to support placements and modifying procedures related to the formation of case plans. Participants learned and discussed strategies for implementing CCR mandates including increased reunification and non-offending parent placements, improved family finding and family based placements, improved foster placements and decreased congregate care placements.

#### Sonoma County Conference, November 4, 2017

The conference discussed the various legislation affecting youth in the Juvenile Court System. The conference also had JJC's from neighboring counties discuss their accomplishments and programs they have implemented as well as share their concerns on Continuum of Care Reform (CCR).

## **IV. PROPOSED COMMISSION ACTIVITIES FOR 2018**

Areas the Commission would like to focus on in the coming year:

- The impact of AB403, Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), on Orange County's children and youth.
- Independent Living Program (ILP) and what can be done to improve outcomes for those exiting the dependency system.
- Concern over AWOLs and the safety of children who run from their placement
- Normalization of daily living to the greatest extent possible for those children in care.
- Create a video to inspire youths in the juvenile justice system and those employees that can impact the youths.
- Create an Essay Contest for youths at ACCESS schools.
- Collaborate with the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) administrators to compile an easy to read reference guide.

## V. COMMUNITY OUTREACH



**Commissioner John Youngblood is sworn in by Judge Douglas Hatchimonji to serve on the Juvenile Justice Commission.**



**Beverly MacLaren's farewell celebration with Chair Cheryl C. Hart.**



**Chair Cheryl C. Hart presents Kimberly Schneider, SSA, Senior Social Worker, Runaway Prevention and Recovery Liaison, with gift cards donated by members of the Commission.**



**Commissioners with guest speaker Oree Freeman, Advocate for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC).**



### **Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) PAW Program**

**Commissioners donated materials and supplies for the youth to make beds for the dogs in the program. Both dogs, Sadie and Duffy have been lovingly adopted.**

**Janet Rome, Training Instructor, Cell Dogs Inc, Commissioner Amy Crowley, Chair Cheryl C. Hart, Youth Commissioner Israel Sandez Jr. and Janette Thomas, Executive Director, Cell Dogs Inc.**



<http://www.occourts.org/directory/juvenile/jjc/index.html>