

# Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2022**



# Superior Court of California

## County of Orange

### Juvenile Justice Commission

Dear Reader:

I would like to begin this 2022 Annual Report by thanking the Commissioners who serve with commitment and concern for the children and youth served by the Juvenile Justice system. As you will note when you review the report it takes many hours of volunteer time to accomplish the goals of the Juvenile Justice Commission.

In 2022 the Commission was able to return to in-person meetings, inspections, and other activities which were largely impossible during COVID.

The Commission fulfilled its mandated inspections of Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs, Juvenile Institutions, and Law Enforcement Departments. We are pleased to report that our inspections revealed programs that are well run and dedicated to the care of the children and youth they serve. Because the Commission inspects all the agencies listed above, we are able to share innovative practices we hear about from one agency to another.

While the Commission's specific duties are defined by the Welfare and Institutions Code, we are always looking for ways we can add to ideas or activities that benefit the children and youth under care. I hope you will take a moment to read about the Book Club two Commissioners led for a group of young men in Juvenile Hall. It has been well received and will be offered again.

In our same concern for the welfare of these children and youth, the Commission also had an emphasis this year on educating and encouraging all STRTPs and Institutions to have Narcan onsite. The tragedy of fentanyl overdoses and deaths has made it a priority to assure we are protecting our youth in care.

We want to thank the Juvenile Court Presiding Judge, Craig E. Arthur for his guidance and support. We are very grateful to our Executive Administrative Assistant, Lii Toelupe, and our Legal Processing Specialist both of whom keep us on track and running efficiently. We also thank our Stakeholders with whom we meet quarterly to be kept apprised of all programs, innovations, and issues which are relevant to their agencies and impact the children and youth we all serve.

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Commission this past year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynda Perring".

Lynda Perring  
Chairperson



# THE ORANGE COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION (JJC)



Front Row: Mary Lou Vachet, Lynda Perring, Amy Crowley, Jan Sturla  
Back Row: Wyatt McClean, Dolores Yost, Silvestre Lopez, Judy Johnson,  
Marcy Garfias, Steve Winder, Cheryl Hart, Michael Schumacher  
(not pictured: Ben de Mayo and Robin Rounaghi)

**JJC** members are appointed to four-year terms by the Presiding Judge of the Orange County Superior Court

**JJC** is composed of 7-15 members, including two or more who are between 14 and 21 years old

**JJC** members have diverse backgrounds, which include professional experience in education, business, law, mental health, public administration, probation, social services, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

**JJC** is mandated by California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 225-231 to annually inspect:

All youth-related publicly administered institutions; and

All jails or lockups which were used to house minors for more than 24 hours.

**JJC** may inquire into the operation of any group home within the County that serves wards or dependent children.

**JJC** may recommend changes to practices or procedures that it concludes would be beneficial

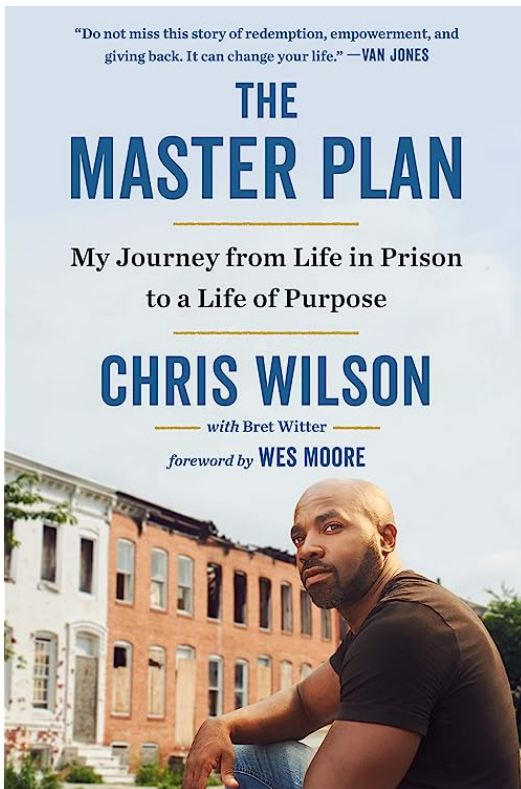
**JJC** members acted as liaison with 17 youth-oriented community groups in 2022

**JJC** members attended 27 youth-related trainings and webinars in 2022

**JJC** members contributed over 2,108 volunteer hours in 2022

# JUVENILE JUSTICE OUTREACH BOOK CLUB

In December, the Juvenile Justice Commission embarked on a new program in collaboration with Juvenile Hall. A selected group of youth were open to participating in a book club reading *The Master Plan* by Chris Wilson. The youth agreed to meet weekly and share thoughts and reflections on the book and develop their own master plan.



The *Master Plan* is written by a man who, as a teenager, was incarcerated with a life sentence. The author created a plan on how he would conduct his life while incarcerated and developed goals for reentry despite his life sentence.

His efforts led to a successful release after serving a 16-year sentence. Chris has since graduated from college and was invited to the White House. Chris now runs a successful non-profit helping youth in the juvenile justice system.

The book club has expanded and there are now two separate book clubs serving ten youth and the inaugural group will be starting their third book together. The youth come prepared after reading the weekly selections to engage in active dialogue and most importantly, spend time with Commissioners to share their

thoughts and insights on incarceration, reentry, goals, and dreams.

With the support of Probation, the Commission has plans to grow and develop the book club which illustrates the importance of providing opportunities to engage youth in active programming.

*"LIFE IS NOT EASY, BUT WITH THE HELP OF PEOPLE I KNOW, OR EVEN DON'T KNOW, IT HAS GOTTEN EASIER."*

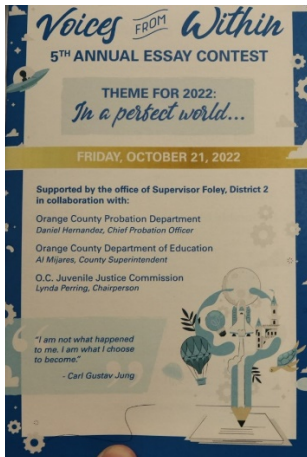
*"THIS BOOK IS A LIFE CHANGER."*

*"Honestly, I think it is my favorite book I've read so far."*



# JUVENILE JUSTICE OUTREACH

## JJC ESSAY CONTEST



Pictured left to right: Amy Crowley, Dolores Yost, Judy Johnson, Silvestre Lopez, Judge Antony Ufland, Mary Lou Vachet, Wyatt McClean, Cheryl Hart, Steve Winder

The Juvenile Justice Commission's (JJC) 5<sup>th</sup> 'Annual Voices from Within' Essay Contest was held in the Probation Department's new Multipurpose Rehabilitation Center. This event is an annual collaboration among the JJC, Probation Department and the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE).

The October 2022 ceremony was held in person and live streamed to 77 pre-registered account holders, to extend the opportunity for family, friends, and interested community members both in the United States and internationally to view the event.

Forty-eight students, including post-secondary youth graduates, submitted personal reflective essays in response to the writing prompt, "In a perfect world..." All students who submitted an essay received a Certificate of Participation and a writing journal. There were entrants for high school and post-secondary students. Each group was awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. There were also eight Honorable Mentions. These 14 participants received Target gift cards. A pizza party was hosted by the JJC for the winners and their respective living units to encourage a peer-supported positive group celebration. The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Essay Contest also included three students who received special recognition in the areas of the Young Writers Award, the Perseverance Award, and the International Award. These students shared a cake and ice cream snack with their respective classroom peers.

This year the JJC additionally recognized a former essay contest participant. He expressed the significance of participating in the essay contest when he was incarcerated. He felt his 'voice' was heard and validated by adults who cared about his success in moving forward in his life.

This creative writing activity has proven to be profound and self-empowering. The youth freely share their personal background, family situations, and experience in and out of custody. The JJC, as well as the Judges of the Juvenile Court, and multi-agency staff, have also benefitted from the contest and given all of us a better understanding of what has led a youth to offend.

# JUVENILE JUSTICE OUTREACH

## SB 823 – IMPLEMENTATION

In 2020, California enacted SB 823, which phases the closure of California's Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and instead provides resources to counties for supervision and service delivery to the youthful offenders.

With the approval of the Juvenile Court Presiding Judge (JCPJ) and the Orange County Probation Department (OCPD), the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) began a focus group project with currently incarcerated youth to assess the needs and gather input from the targeted population. The JJC Commissioners met with 51 youth on 5 separate occasions.

The JJC made written recommendations to the JCPJ and the OCPD, which included:

1. Create post-secondary programming focused on education, vocational skills, and independent living.
2. Provide individualized placement/step down plans giving youth an opportunity to voice concerns.
3. Create a Juvenile Justice Youth Leadership program to develop an incentive program.
4. Incorporate community-based programs in the reentry process.
5. Assess current DJJ programs to determine best practices.
6. Offer sibling visits where appropriate, create a commissary, and develop a program for paid job opportunities.



## FACILITATED OUTCOMES

1. As a result of the JJC's continued concerns and questions about opioid/fentanyl overdoses for system involved youth, HCA has confirmed that Narcan is now available onsite at all Orange County STRTPs with staff trained to administer it.
2. At the suggestion of the JJC, Orange County's SSA provided Resource Parents with a "Super Saturday" education program on the subject of "Youth and Dangerous Drug Trends" which included the topic of Narcan.
3. The Juvenile Justice Education Subcommittee met several times with key administrators from the Department of Education with a focus on increasing and improving the education experience for youth in the institutional schools. The meetings provided an opportunity for discussion and identification of areas for maximizing effort and progress.

### 2022 COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES

2,108 Volunteer Hours in 2022

14 STRTP/QRTP Unannounced Inspections

4 Institution Inspections

7 Law Enforcement Agency Inspections

27 Trainings and Webinars

23 Juvenile Justice Committee Meetings – including 3 Stakeholder Meetings

17 Liaison Committees



# INSTITUTION INSPECTIONS

Annually, the Juvenile Justice Commission inspects the four facilities that provide residential care and services for those children/youth who are part of the Juvenile Justice System. The purpose of the inspections is to ensure that high quality and appropriate care is being provided.

## Orange County Juvenile Hall

- Juvenile Hall is a Probation maximum security facility for male and female youth who have committed serious offenses in the community.
- Treatment options include anger management, conflict resolution, substance abuse, and others.
- One-on-one counseling is provided.
- Family reunification efforts are provided where appropriate.



## Youth Leadership Academy (YLA)

- The Youth Leadership Academy is a secure probation program for males only.
- This program focuses on the youth's smooth transition back into the local community.
- Treatment options are available to address substance abuse, gang prevention, and aggressive behavior.
- Group therapy, family planning, crisis counseling, and individual therapy are also provided.
- Youth have access to some post-secondary education.





Each of the four the facilities provides an accredited school program staffed by the Orange County Department of Education so that education continues while in residence. Each facility has medical staff on site to address medical needs and youth have access to behavioral health care.

### **Youth Guidance Center (YGC)**

- The Youth Guidance Center is a secure Probation four dormitory campus that includes a gymnasium and outdoor recreation area.
- This program is for male and female residents ages 14 to 18.
- Substance abuse is the treatment focus.
- There is emphasis on career readiness and occupational skill assistance.
- There is access to some post-secondary education.



### **Orangewood Children and Family Center**

- Orangewood Children and Family Center is a Social Services cottage campus serving Court Dependents.
- This program serves both male and female youth from birth to age 18.
- The length of stay is intended to be 10 days or less.
- The goal is to return the youth to their families or, if that is not possible, to locate a suitable placement.



## INSPECTIONS OF OC LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The JJC is mandated to inspect all law enforcement facilities where a minor is held in secure detention for any length of time and those where a minor is held in non-secure detention for 24 hours or more. No facility, other than the Probation-run institutions, holds minors for more than 24 hours. The JJC exceeds state law mandates by inspecting all facilities where a minor is held in non-secure detention for 6 hours or more. Listed below are OC law enforcement facilities operated by police or sheriff departments with their recent statistics on detention of minors. 2022 inspection dates are listed for those that met inspection criteria. The JJC inquired about topics such as human trafficking of minors, the role of School Resource Officers, community youth programs, compliance with COVID-19 protocols, and interactions with Probation and Social Services.

In 2021, seven Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) met the criteria for inspection and were subsequently inspected in 2022 as recorded in this chart.

Law Enforcement Agency	2022 Inspection	Number of Minors Detained		Minors in secure detention for any time		Minors in non-secure detention for 6+ Hours	
		2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Anaheim PD	June 6	91	107	6	8	0	0
Brea PD	N/A	0	14	0	2	0	0
Buena Park PD	April 25	52	103	5	1	0	0
Costa Mesa PD	April 28	63	147	5	6	0	0
Cypress PD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fountain Valley PD	N/A	29	10	0	0	0	0
Fullerton PD	N/A	0	78	0	1	0	0
Garden Grove PD	N/A	0	75	0	0	0	0
Huntington Beach PD	April 25	42	55	1	0	0	0
Irvine PD	N/A	0	16	0	0	0	0
Laguna Beach PD	May 23	40	38	0	0	0	0
La Habra PD	N/A	0	64	0	10	0	0
La Palma PD	N/A	21	4	0	0	0	0
Los Alamitos PD	N/A	0	2	0	0	0	0
Newport Beach PD	N/A	0	31	0	0	0	0
Orange PD	N/A	0	30	0	0	0	0
Placentia PD	May 16	31	37	3	3	0	0
Santa Ana PD	May 10	58	79	23	60	0	0
Santa Ana Unified School District	N/A	0	10	0	0	0	10
Seal Beach PD	N/A	0	13	0	0	0	0
Tustin PD	N/A	0	86	0	0	0	0
Westminster PD	N/A	28	35	6	0	0	0
CSU Fullerton PD	N/A	0	2	0	2	0	0
Dana Point - OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lake Forest - OCSD	N/A	0	1	0	1	0	0
San Clemente OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
SJ Capistrano OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aliso Viejo OCSD	N/A	0	3	0	3	0	0
Stanton OCSD	N/A	0	6	0	0	0	2
Yorba Linda OCSD	N/A	0	1	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>455</b>	<b>1047</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>

# **TRAININGS AND WEBINARS**

## **TRAFFICKING AND CRIMES AGAINST MINORS**

Supporting Youth

Teen Talk

## **MENTAL HEALTH/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Screening, Assessing and Treating Pregnant Women with Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

Substance Abuse

Fighting Fentanyl

Addiction Medicine

OC Fentanyl

OCHCA Fentanyl

Child Welfare/Opioid Use

OCHCA Medication Assisted Treatment

Hope for Recovery

## **RACISM/RACIAL EQUITY**

Equality in OC Taskforce

## **GROUP HOMES/FOSTER CARE**

Working with Immigrant and Foster Care Youth

Foster Youth Bill of Rights

College for Foster Youth

Foster Care to PHD

## **LEGAL AND LEGISLATION**

Child Welfare Touchpoint

Legislative Changes to Child Welfare Laws



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.

To contact us or learn more,  
go to: [www.occourts.org/directory/juvenile/jjc](http://www.occourts.org/directory/juvenile/jjc)  
or email: [jjc@occourts.org](mailto:jjc@occourts.org)