



Department of  
Youth Services

## **Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed**

Emerging Leaders Propose Projects to Benefit Agency and Youth

July 1, 2014

Dear Staff and Stakeholders:

Last Friday, a total of 12 DYS staff graduated from the DYS Emerging Leaders program. These individuals met over a total of two months to immerse themselves in leadership studies, professional development, and service projects while still maintaining their regular workload. They were challenged, persisted, and prepared to serve as future leaders.

Laura Melnick, Jodi Slagle, Nicole Pace, and Scharron Kane completed a proposal for an electronic paper filing process for Youth Specialists called the “Standardized Tracking Electronic Paperless System” or STEPS. After surveying Youth Specialists throughout DYS, the team focused its proposal on electronic unit log books and Youth Behavior Incident Reports (YBIRs). Information Technology Services (ITS) would be able to create the software for doing this, and units would be equipped with secured desktop computers and signature pads. STEPS would help Youth Specialists complete documentation easier and with improved accuracy and efficiency.

The Job Sustainability Track project proposal, completed by Demetrius Al-Lateef, Michael Greco, Corey Shrieve, and Candace Stewart, focused on helping youth gain and maintain employment. Their idea was to build upon current DYS job initiatives, including the work of Transitional Coordinators, the apprenticeship program, and O.N.E.-Stop, to support a youth in employment while still in a facility and continuing through supervision on parole. A proposed reentry job coach would help assess the employment strengths and needs of a youth through an application process, help a youth acquire and keep successful employment, and serve as a liaison with youths’ employers.

Larry Blake, Clifton Duckson, Darrin Kreis, and Vanessa Tower presented a proposal on enhancing meaningful activities for youth. Their goal was to address idleness, manage gang activity, improve social skills, and enhance reentry. Initial ideas include an online application for volunteers as well as a resource database in order for sites to share ideas and best practices.



*Emerging Leaders Class of 2014 left to right front row: Vanessa Tower, Demetrius Al-Lateef, Nicole Pace; second row: Scharron Kane, Jodi Slagle, Laura Melnick, Candace Stewart; third row: Darrin Kreis, Michael Greco, Clifton Duckson, Corey Shrieve and Larry Blake*

Participant Cory Shrieve was selected by the class to share about the Emerging Leaders experience. He called it “revitalizing, empowering, enlightening, and awesome” and explained that he learned, “Leaders don’t build followers. Leaders create leaders.”

Dr. Terrell Strayhorn, Associate Professor at the OSU College of Education and Human Ecology, provided the commencement address. Dr. Strayhorn encouraged the class to “dare to be different,” “dream big,” and “face your fears.” He encouraged the graduates to always “add a little extra to become extraordinary.”

Congratulations to all of the graduates! Special thanks to all of the staff who served as mentors, advisors, and presenters. I would especially like to thank those who led and coordinated the inaugural class: Cedric Collins, Training Director; Robyn Peterson, Training Program Manager; Dave “Doc” Blackburn, Project Manager and Earl Myles, Professional Development Administrator.