

For Immediate Release: June 5, 2014

Contact: Kim Jump
614-466-9854 or 614-623-2209
Kim.Jump@dys.ohio.gov

Ohio Department of Youth Services Recognizes Top Employees *Agency Names Youth Specialist of the Year and Employee of the Year*

Columbus, Ohio — The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) Employee Recognition Ceremony today honored outstanding employees. Youth Specialist Melissa McDay, who supervises youth at the Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (ChJCF), was named DYS Youth Specialist of the Year for 2013. Juvenile Parole Officer Dee Pendlebury, who supervises youth in the Akron Region, was named DYS Employee of the Year for 2013.



Left: Dee Pendlebury, DYS Employee of the Year for 2013
Right: Melissa McDay, DYS Youth Specialist of the Year for 2013

McDay began working for DYS at the Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility in 2008. She transferred to ChJCF as a Youth Specialist in 2009. The agency employs 376 Youth Specialists statewide. Beyond the critical task of maintaining safe and secure facilities, Youth Specialists participate in activities and programs designed to educate and rehabilitate youth. These staff interact with youth and serve as educators, mentors, role models, and authority figures.

“Her greatest value comes from the fact that she is committed to teaching our youth and encouraging them to improve their lives,” said Katie Needham, ChJCF Superintendent. “She has proven time and time again that she truly cares about our youth and is committed to ensuring that they will be successful.”

Pendlebury began working at DYS in 1992. She joined the Akron Regional Parole Office in 2004. The office supervises youth on parole in Summit County and 18 additional surrounding counties, working with youth and their families to provide the guidance necessary for youth to become positive, contributing members of society. Beyond the important task of supervision, parole staff help youth on parole receive needed services including housing, public assistance, education and treatment for medical, mental health and substance abuse. Having access to these services reduces the likelihood of a youth committing a new offense.

“Ms. Pendlebury’s quality of work is second to none. She maintains accurate records and pays attention to details. She gives unselfishly of herself,” said Joe Marsilio, Regional Administrator for the Akron Regional Parole Office. “She searches the community for alternative solutions and has countless resources to assist youth.”

DYS is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio and is statutorily mandated to confine felony offenders, ages 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio's 88 county juvenile courts. DYS currently operates three juvenile correctional facilities, provides parole services from five regional sites and funds and supports 625 community programs throughout the state.

###