‘DYS Connections’ – News for our volunteer community

By Curtis Kemp, Administrator of DYS Volunteer & Religious Services

Welcome to “DYS Connections.” This is our new quarterly newsletter for the volunteers and community partners who work with us at the Ohio Department of Youth Services to improve the lives and communities of youth in the juvenile justice system, creating a safer, better Ohio along the way.

My purpose and goal for this newsletter is to share the latest news, programming, special projects, and youth success stories stemming from our Volunteer & Religious Services team at DYS. I especially want to highlight the important work being done by all of you – the volunteers, faith-based groups, and other community organizations determined to make a positive difference in the lives of youth in the juvenile justice system.

In past years, we produced a similar publication called “DYS Volunteer News Brief,” a quarterly hard-copy magazine. “DYS Connections” is similar in spirit, but we will produce an electronic edition only. We will post it to our website at www.dys.ohio.gov and email it to our various community partners across the state every three months. It is my hope that you will share this newsletter far and wide, inspiring friends, family, and others to join our efforts.

For those considering volunteering with us, I’ll leave you with this thought: I believe strongly we’re all put on this earth for a purpose greater than our individual selves. We may have a lot in common, but there’s a special part in you that only you can play. Whatever that may be – even your simple presence, providing a warm human connection to a battered soul – it can make a difference, it can change lives.

I guarantee it will change at least one – your own.

Volunteering in a pandemic — ways you can help

Safety precautions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic prohibit in-person visits between our volunteer community and youth for now, but you can still touch a life and make a difference, thanks to virtual visits.

In the photo to the right, for example, staff at the Cleveland Play House work with our youth at our Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility, teaching its CARE curriculum (Compassionate Arts Remaking Education).

CARE is an evidence based social-emotional learning program designed to build social and emotional competencies and improve language arts skills.

There are many ways to contribute your skills and talents to our mission, in-person or remotely.

Visit our Volunteer webpage at dys.ohio.gov.
Email DYSVolunteer@dys.ohio.gov.
Meet our Chaplains!

Our chaplains set the “spiritual temperature” at our three juvenile correctional facilities (JCFs). They produce worship services, religious education, and counseling and mentoring programs for our youth. They serve as volunteer coordinators, recruiting and working with community and faith-based organizations and individuals to place our youth on a healthy, productive path for a bright future.

**Circleville JCF**

Chaplain Joshua Stone

**START DATE:** Sept. 13, 2021

**EXPERIENCE:** Associate Pastor, Lead Pastor, Ohio Army National Guard Chaplain, Hospice Chaplain.

**BORN AND RAISED:** Born in Winchester, Kentucky, I moved around a bit in my childhood to wherever my father’s ministry took us. I became a minister under my father’s direction and earned my undergraduate and graduate degrees at Cincinnati Christian University and Seminary.

**WHY ARE YOU A CHAPLAIN?**

I was drawn to God at a young age. With a minister father, I learned the basic principles of faith, love, and compassion for others – standing up for the vulnerable and marginalized, leading a life where I could grow in the character and image of God in community with His family, and teaching others to do the same. I went with my father on many house calls and visits to hospitals, jails, and people’s homes. I developed a deep compassion for those who suffer. I found myself in the ministry through faith and prayer, and I asked God to place me in service to others. I’ve worked in churches, in the U.S. Army, and with hospice patients and their families. I’ve known since I was a boy that I wanted to work with troubled youth in a correctional setting, so I immediately applied when the chaplain opportunity came open at Circleville. This is truly my dream job, and I can’t wait to get involved in the lives of these kids and make a difference.

**FAVORITE QUOTE:**

“I want to know God’s thoughts. The rest are just details.”

– Albert Einstein.

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740-571-8267

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**Cuyahoga Hills JCF**

Chaplain Eddie Sands

**START DATE:** Oct. 13, 2020

**EXPERIENCE:** Chaplain for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction’s Southeastern Correctional Institution in Lancaster; Associate Minister at New Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus.

**BORN AND RAISED:** Cleveland

**WHY ARE YOU A CHAPLAIN?**

I was called by God to serve our youth and staff and their families. I grew up in a home where serving God was part of our family’s core. I went astray as a youth, and God sustained me long enough for me to return into His grace. I then realized that God chose me to be an instrument for His glory.

Our youth are under serious spiritual attack. A lot of them are in trouble because of a generational curse – they learned a way of life and certain behaviors from their parents, who learned from their parents, and so on. When those behaviors are criminal, it’s a real problem. The only way to break that generational curse is through the love and power of God. Because of my life experiences, I understand their backgrounds, the language they use, and the choices they make. All their lives, for instance, they’re thinking a handgun is a tool of honor, but it’s not. It’s a tool of destruction. I have to undo that thinking. It doesn’t happen overnight, it takes time, it takes work, but it’s worth it, and I just thank God for giving me the skills to do His work.

**FAVORITE QUOTE:**

"Kindness is the only language the blind can see and the deaf can hear.” – Author unknown

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Helping youth discover ‘why they’re on the planet’

Ohio, and youth with his promotion Aug. 15 to Administrator of Volunteer & Religious Services.

Formerly the chaplain of our Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility, Mr. Kemp brings 25 years of public service in the corrections industry to his new role, where he is charged with supporting facility chaplains, establishing partnerships with community organizations, and overseeing volunteers and related programming.

“I still see myself as a minister, setting the spiritual temperature and tone at our facilities, helping youth and staff identify the best version of themselves and why they’re on the planet,” he said.

Born in South Carolina and raised in Columbus, Mr. Kemp attended The Ohio State University and completed his ministerial studies at Ever Increasing Word Training Center in Darrow, Louisiana.

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” he said. “I want our youth and everyone at DYS to know I care. I really do.”

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.”

- Muhammed Ali, former heavyweight boxing champion

How does this quote relate to your life?
How are you “paying your rent?”

Chaplain needed for Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility

If you or someone you know would like to join our team as a chaplain and change young lives for the better, please scan the QR code in this article or visit our career opportunities page at dys.ohio.gov and search for “chaplain.”

The link will take you to the State of Ohio’s careers page, where you can learn more about the position and apply.

“Working as a chaplain at DYS is rewarding on many levels — especially at the ‘soul level,’” said former chaplain Curtis Kemp, now administrator of DYS Volunteer & Religious Services. “The work is deeply fulfilling.”

Interested? Mr. Kemp can be reached at 614-387-2554 or by email at:
Curtis.kemp@dys.ohio.gov.

Located in Massillon in Northeast Ohio (10 miles west of Canton), our Indian River JCF serves 130 youth today and a maximum of 169.
Spread the word, we’re hiring! Multiple positions available

Come change lives with us!

DYS is continuously recruiting for qualified individuals to join our organization. Positions include nurses, youth specialists (juvenile correctional officers), behavioral health professionals, teachers, and more. In addition to competitive pay and benefits, we offer the opportunity for a long-lasting career that’s rewarding on many levels. All staff are important in our mission to habilitate juvenile offenders committed to DYS. Search for DYS Jobs here or scan the QR Code.

OUR JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Circleville JCF
640 Island Road
Circleville, Ohio, 43113
Chaplain Joshua Stone
740-571-8267

Cuyahoga Hills JCF
4321 Green Road
Highland Hills, Ohio, 44128
Chaplain Eddie Sands
216-682-2269

Indian River JCF
2775 Indian River Road, S.W.
Massillon, Ohio, 44646
Curtis Kemp
614-387-2554

About DYS

The Ohio Department of Youth Services is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio. DYS 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. During their stay with DYS, youth are engaged in programming that is designed to address their criminological and behavioral needs. Each of the DYS facilities also operates a year-round school that offers general curriculum as well as vocation opportunities. Our MISSION is to improve Ohio’s future by habilitating youth and empowering families and communities. Our VISION is a safer Ohio – one youth, one family, one community at a time.

Follow, connect, and have a conversation with us.

Visit: www.dys.ohio.gov Contact: Communications@dys.ohio.gov
COVID-19 — THE BATTLE CONTINUES

OHIO VAX-2-SCHOOL encourages vaccination

State offers $2 million in educational scholarships

Governor Mike DeWine’s latest initiative to encourage COVID-19 vaccination kicked off Oct. 4, offering Ohioans age 12 to 25 the chance to win up to $100,000 in educational scholarships.

Prizes under the Ohio Vax-2-School program include 50 scholarships worth $10,000 each and five $100,000 scholarships to an Ohio college or university for career or technical education. Anyone 12 to 25 who has received at least one dose of the vaccine can enter at OhioVax2School.com or by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634) 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Governor DeWine continues to emphasize that keeping kids in school, in-person, five days a week, remains a priority, and the best way to do that is to get students vaccinated. In addition to protecting kids from the severe effects of the virus, students who are vaccinated do not have to quarantine if exposed.

Although similar to Ohio’s Vax-A-Million campaign, individuals who entered that drawing must re-enter into Ohio’s Vax-2 School drawing. Drawing dates will be announced at a later time. Answers to frequently asked questions and other details can be found at OhioVax2School.com.

Docs speak out on COVID-19 in new campaign

Sometimes the best medical advice comes straight from your own hometown doctor.

In this new video series “Ask Away,” doctors from communities across Ohio talk about the importance of getting a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine. They also offer their advice for where to turn for trusted medical information, and how to separate fact from fiction.

For more on COVID-19:

In-depth COVID-19 data for Ohio: coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Ohio’s central scheduling system: gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov

All vaccine providers: vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov

Frequently Asked Questions – COVID-19 vaccines

Frequently Asked Questions – Youth vaccinations

Myths vs. Facts – COVID-19 vaccines

Safety and Effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines

Frequently Asked Questions - COVID-19 variants

What to know before, during, and after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine