



KARE Centers provide plethora of services to those in need

When parents can no longer provide adequate care for their children, friends and relatives often become a lifeline, but who becomes a lifeline for these caregivers? Between October 2012 and September 2014, more than 3,100 caregivers and nearly 5,000 children received help statewide from Arizona Kinship Support Services.

Read more about what services this agency provides on Pages 13-15.

Inside This Month's Issue

Page 2 — Progress has been made in the fight against disproportionate minority contact.

Page 4 — After 40-plus years with the court, probation officer still loves her job.

Page 6 — More than a decade defending kids provides judge valuable insights.

Page 8 — Three agencies come together to help improve communication and strengthen families.

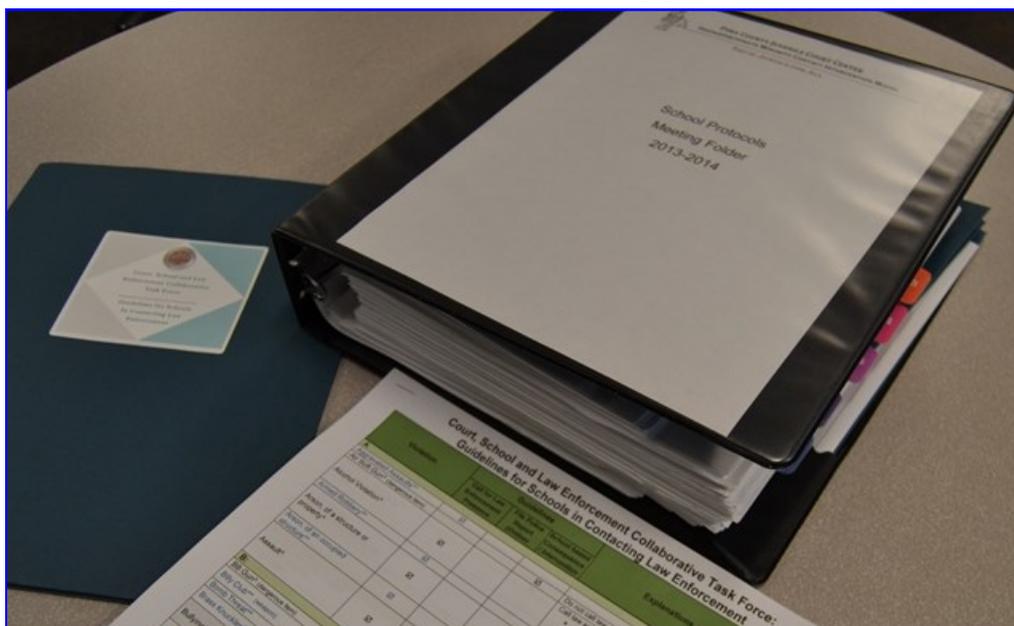
Page 11— Community Renewal and Enrichment through Work Program participants join day-long, county-wide fight against invasive grass.

Page 17 — Our kids are asked what gift they'd give and to whom.

PCJCC has made strides in fight against disproportionality

Just about every day in the news there's a story about some school somewhere calling the police about a child misbehaving. Sometimes, the story pokes fun at "zero-tolerance policies." Other times, they illustrate how deeply troubled some children are.

On a national level, there's even talk about the "schools-to-prison pipeline." The Supportive School Discipline Initiative, a collaborative project between the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, stemmed from the recognition that disadvantaged and troubled kids were being pushed out of school and into the justice system



For years, Pima County Juvenile Court staff, administrators from a variety of schools, and the Tucson Police Department have been working hand-in-hand to make sure the issue is addressed here.

Working together, the different agencies created a protocol that provides guidance as to when schools should call law enforcement officers. The Guidelines for Schools in Calling Law Enforcement were made available for use at the beginning of the school year to more than 110 middle and high schools.

According to a recent survey, 88 percent of those who responded are aware of the guidelines and 93 percent of those who are aware of the guidelines are using them or plan to begin using them.

They praised the guidelines because of their clarity and ease of use and the fact they provide consistency.

Those involved in creating the guidelines hope their use will help to lower the number of children who are brought to the court, as well as improve fairness and consistency of disciplinary decision-making. (Contd. Page 3)

For the past decade, the PCJCC and community stakeholders have made a coordinated effort to promote a fair and just system by reducing disproportionate minority contact (DMC) at all decision points.

They've had some success, too.



John Jackson, assistant division director for juvenile probation, makes a point during one of several meetings about DMC.

According to recently released figures, between 2009 and 2013, DMC has decreased over time in Pima County. In 2004, DMC existed at nearly every level - referral, detention, petition, disposition and probation. In 2013, disproportionality was observed at the referral and

petition levels.

The juvenile court's next step will be to continue looking at data that is being gathered in an attempt to ascertain why the differences continue to exist and to formulate additional ways to address them.

"We're doing all of this work as a court on this issue, but there are other things at play that affect the rates of contact," said Kevin Koegel, research and evaluation specialist.

Those other things include changes in the justice system itself, along with bigger societal ills, like poverty.

"Ours is a long term effort. It's on-going," said Joanne Basta, manager of the court's Research and Evaluation unit. "No jurisdiction has had really good success nationally. It's difficult work. The lesson here is that the court is working on it and collecting data. We have supportive leadership and we are making policy changes. We've seen some positive effects, but there's still more work to do."

Veteran P.O. going strong after 4 decades with Court

If you look at Teri Franco's hire date, it looks like she's celebrating her 28th year at Pima County Juvenile court. The fact is, she's been with the court 42 years!

Sure, Franco quit in 1987 to work for the U.S. Postal Service, but it was only for a couple of months and she knew right away she'd made a mistake.

"It was a very mundane job," Franco said. "I'm too much of a people person and I missed the kids and families."

Franco currently holds the title of probation unit supervisor for the south field team, but as you might imagine, she's held a multitude of titles over the past four decades. She started out as a clerk/typist in detention's intake unit. She's been a dispatcher, an early version of a surveillance officer, deputy adoption examiner and probation support specialist.

After Franco graduated from the University of Phoenix with a bachelor's degree in business in 1988, she was promoted to probation officer. She's spent time in intensive probation, the Safe Schools program and as a volunteer coordinator. For the last several years she's been a unit supervisor for several geographic areas.

Ironically, Franco obtained her business degree because she feared she'd be laid off some day. She's thankful it never came to that.

"I enjoy working with kids," Franco said. "It's a good feeling when you see a kid doing well and that's always been my goal. I want to make sure these kids don't come back."

Over the years, Franco has seen the criminal justice system pendulum swing back and forth several times. At times, the emphasis has been on punishment. At others, it's been about rehabilitation. Right now, Pima County is focusing on rehabilitation and she's glad.

"These kids go through trauma," Franco said. "We're doing more evaluating and assessing now. We're not putting labels on them. People don't understand that we don't see most of these kids again. There's a reason things are going on and given the right services, it's possible for kids to change their lifestyles and to be a positive human being." (Contd. Page 5)



Teri Franco

Although a supervisor, Franco still loves to be out in the field and continues to carry her own caseload. Not only does she love talking to kids and families, but she figures she can't provide advice unless she understands what her probation and surveillance officers are going through.

Kids are growing up far faster than they used to and she's had to adapt to that.

"Change is normal and we have to change because our population and the community we serve is changing," Franco said.

Like any veteran probation or surveillance officer, Franco has tons of stories to tell.

One day, Franco said she noticed she was being followed by a man in a Wal-Mart. He finally approached her and re-introduced himself. He'd been one of her probationers and he'd spent time in both the juvenile and adult prison systems.

He was following her because he just wanted to say "Thank you, I finally got what you were trying to tell me," Franco said.

He was working as an auto mechanic, had a family and was doing fine, he told her.

She had told him that no matter what anyone said, he was worth something.

"He had just been an angry kid and he didn't know how to deal with it," Franco said, adding the man had been horribly abused as a child.

In another case, Franco recalls having a 9-year-old Pascua Yaqui boy on her caseload. He'd stolen a bicycle from his elementary school. When she went to visit the boy's guardian, his grandmother, she discovered they were living in a small home with a dirt floor and furniture made out of milk cartons. They had electricity only because they were running extension cords to a neighbor's home.

Within a few days, Franco was able to deliver a bike to the boy thanks to several donations. The reaction she received made it seem as if she'd delivered the world to the family, Franco said.

"If I had gotten into trouble, it would've been worth it," Franco said.

The boy never stepped foot into a courtroom again, Franco said.

Franco will also never forget the 12-year-old boy who hung himself after his father decided he couldn't go on a school field trip. The boy had been doing really well on probation and in school and his death still haunts Franco.

"There are things we think are insignificant and for a kid, it's everything," Franco said.

To Franco, the key to success is communication. Parents and children need to learn how to speak to each other.

Although Franco keeps herself busy outside of work with family, a wide-range of arts and crafts and University of Arizona sporting events, don't expect her to take to a rocking chair when she retires next year. She's planning to take a three-month vacation before volunteering at Pima Prevention Partnership's Sin Puertas program. The program helps kids deal with substance abuse and/or mental health issues.

Defense work laid solid groundwork for Judge Langford

When Jennifer Langford was a public defender representing kids in trouble with the law, she'd often talk to her dad about feeling restricted. As an attorney, she could only convey her client's wishes. She wasn't allowed to argue for what *she* thought was best for her client.



Judge Jennifer Langford

Her dad would always tell her to become a judge.

A little over two years ago, she decided to follow her father's advice and applied when a court commissioner position became available. She had served on every juvenile court committee imaginable – including those on detention alternatives and disproportionate minority contact – and felt ready for

something new.

“I felt like I was kind of maxed out, that I had gone as far as I could go as an attorney. I thought that if I wanted to help on a system's level, I had to apply for a judgeship,” Langford said.

In November 2012, Langford was appointed to the bench and assigned to Pima County Juvenile Court. Although he didn't live to see it, Judge Langford knows her father would be proud of her.

Judge Langford knew from a relatively early age she wanted to work with kids. When she was an undergraduate student attending the University of Arizona, her parents ran a group home for foster children involved in the juvenile justice system. She would often share Sunday dinners with the kids and her parents. She'd also take them on outings.

“My parents had always instilled in us how important it is to give back to the community,” Judge Langford said. “Each one of us kids had a friend who needed a place to stay and they'd come stay at our house.”

Judge Langford obtained her bachelor's degree in psychology before going on and graduating from the UA law school. (Contd. Page 7)

She worked in private practice for a year before joining the Pima County Public Defender's Office in the mid-90s. She did some felony trial work, but knew she wanted to work with kids. While a public defender, she spent several years representing kids in the drug court program.

Things have come full circle to some degree. She was recently assigned to preside over what is now called Youth Recovery Court. Working as an attorney in the drug court program was an excellent experience, she said.

"It really helped me understand the issues facing kids and families," Judge Langford said.

Looking back over the years, Judge Langford feels incredibly lucky. She has gotten to work with several inspiring judges, excellent attorneys and stellar probation officers in a court that is constantly striving to provide better programs for the kids and families it serves.

"It's very exciting," Judge Langford said. "I think about all of the great programs we have when we have such limited resources. We've got so many people who give so much back to the community."

Judge Langford cites among her inspirations retired Judges Hector Campoy, Patricia Escher and Terry Chandler and Judge Karen Adam.

Judge Campoy launched the detention alternatives and disproportionate minority contact initiatives. Judge Escher invited the community to collaborate with the court and improved access to the court. Judge Chandler was the epitome of a thoughtful, fair, wise and considered judge, Judge Langford said.

During her years in Drug Court, Judge Langford learned from Judge Chandler how important it is for kids and their parents to know they were being listened to and respected.

"I learned a lot from Judge Chandler, watching how she put things together to promote rehabilitation. She thought outside the box," Judge Langford said. "It was so different than going into a regular courtroom."

Thanks to Judge Adam, the folks at Pima County Juvenile Court are now aware of what it means to be a trauma responsive court and are far more educated when it comes to the issue of domestic violence, Judge Langford said.

During her time in Youth Recovery Court, Judge Langford said she hopes to serve more older teens, more Native American teens and more children who are in both the foster care and juvenile justice systems.

She has tough days on the bench, but she is thrilled when kids graduate from Youth Recovery Court and when families are reunited, Judge Langford said. In each instance it's gratifying to see their hard work pay off, she said.

When she's not on the bench, Judge Langford enjoys spending time with her family, which includes two kids, walking her dogs and doing yoga.

Collaborative program works hard to strengthen families

In today's fast-paced world, it's difficult to find time to sit down to a family dinner let alone have a chat with your child about school, friends and important every day issues that come up in their lives. Is it any wonder then, that kids sometimes make poor choices?



We all know life has never been like it was portrayed in the Brady Bunch or the Cosby Show, but the goal of the Strengthening Families program is to help families learn how to communicate and improve resiliency in tough times.

Well, Arizona Youth Partnership, Pima County Juvenile Court and Interfaith Community Services are here to help.

If you have children between the ages of 10 and 14 who are experiencing behavioral, academic or social problems, you are invited to participate in a seven-week

program called Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10-14.

This evidence-based curriculum has been proven to improve resilience in difficult times and reduction in youth behavioral, academic and social problems. It has been recognized by Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, National Institute on Drug Abuse, OJJDP, SAMHSA and the U.S. Department of Education. It has also received the Annie E. Casey Foundation Family Strengthening Award.

Every Tuesday, families gather at the Pima County Juvenile Court's Training Center to learn how to talk to each other and play together, said Susan Towne, juvenile justice family focused services liaison. (Contd. Page 9)

Although many of the families were brought to the program because their child is participating in the court's Diversion program, all families with kids between 10 and 14 are encouraged to sign up if space allows.

The family has dinner together while playing card games or doing some other structured activity together. The adults and the kids then break into separate groups.

Parents learn about such things as identifying stresses in kids, the value of setting limits while showing love, how to support kids' goals, using consequences and understanding why kids misbehave.

The kids learn the importance of visualizing their future, how to appreciate their parents, healthy ways of coping, following the rules, dealing with peer pressure and what good friends are like.

The two groups then come back together to incorporate strategies they learned, such as appreciating each other, how to have family meetings, building communication skills and families/peer pressure.

The activities in the program mirror the Kids at Hope Universal Truths: children succeed when they are surrounded by adults who believe they can succeed, when they have meaningful sustainable relationships with caring adults, and when they can articulate their future, Towne said.

To improve communication skills, the families will do an activity that builds listening skills and practice solving problems together. For example, they sometimes play a version of the old Newlywed Game where each family is given points for correctly guessing what answer was provided by their child or their parent.

On another night, they create a family shield to see connection between their own family values, their behaviors and decisions, said Gauri Gladish, director of family programs for Arizona Youth Partnership

It is amazing to watch the process as it unfolds, Towne said. Most families have reservations about being there during the first session, but by the end they want to know if any similar programs are available to them so they can continue to build upon what they have learned.

"Because it's seven weeks, you can see the growth, the understanding and the increase in communication," Towne said. "They're so grateful. It's so touching when they say it really made a difference."

Gladish agreed.

(Contd. Page 10)

“There have been times when kids don’t even want to sit by their parents during the first session, but over time, they start sitting closer together and interacting,” Gladish said. “By the third session the dynamics have really changed.”

One of the other benefits of the program is that it’s been an avenue to share community resources, Towne said. The participants often learn about what help is out there for them, whether it’s an employment program or counseling.

Interfaith Community also provides gas vouchers and bus passes and Arizona Youth Partnership is able to provide career/job services and incentives through their Building Futures for Families Program.

Since the program began in May 2012, more than 110 court-involved children have completed the program, but that number doesn’t include the siblings who participated, Towne said.

The hope is that all of the kids who go through the program will learn the skills needed to avoid getting into trouble, Towne said. Perhaps, the refusal skills they learn and practice using in class will help in preventing them shoplifting, skipping school, drinking, using drugs or engaging in domestic violence.

“Often, kids are influenced to participate in crimes by other kids who make poor choices,” Towne said. “Thanks to this program, the parents are encouraged to monitor and set clear expectation for the youth, the kids are getting information on refusal skills and then they get the information together as a family about drug and alcohol abuse prevention.”

For more information, call Arizona Youth Partnership at 744-9595, ext. 132.

Spanish-speaking parents can be accommodated with interpreters and written materials.



Strengthening Families

CREW program kids join fight against buffelgrass

Sixteen-year-old Michael confessed. Despite the fact he'd normally be fast asleep at 9 a.m. on a Saturday, he actually "enjoyed" himself during Beat Back Buffelgrass Day at Saguaro National Park Jan. 24.

"I like the view of the mountains and I like the sun," Michael said.



National Park Service employees give kids some tips on the best way to get rid of highly invasive buffelgrass. The kids enjoyed the beautiful day, but had to do their best to navigate around tons of cholla.

Buffelgrass is a non-native invasive grass that crowds out native plants and can fuel devastating fires in what is normally a fireproof desert. This year, for the first time, Pima County's juvenile probation department decided to participate in the annual buffelgrass event, which was held at roughly 20 sites all across the county.

Ten kids participating in the court's CREW (Community Renewal and Enrichment through Work) program spent more than three hours at the park dealing with a large swatch of the stuff. Some of the teens, like Michael, were assigned community service as part of the court's Diversion program.



(Contd. Page 12)



Others are on probation and were earning funds toward restitution or were being sanctioned for a technical violation of their probation.

Dana Backer, a restoration ecologist with the National Park Service, was pleased to see the turnout.

“Kids are so important because they are our next generation,” Backer said. “To have them know about threats to the environment is vitally important. It’s great having the labor, but really their education is the benefit.”

Lead probation officer Mia Strom accompanied the teens along with six surveillance officers. On the way to the work site, she was amazed to learn some of the kids had never been out in the desert. She was pleased to be able to introduce them to the park, but also to give them a chance to work alongside professionals and other volunteers.



Normally, kids who participate in CREW help clean up yards and city parks.

“It’s almost as though they’re in a foreign land,” Strom said. “They’re out here for community service and to pay restitution, but they’re getting an education, too. I think this is something they’ll remember for a while.”

In the coming months, Strom said the court hopes to find other opportunities to incorporate an educational or vocational element into the CREW program.

KARE Centers help families who take on children in need

Are you taking care of a child because you have relatives struggling with substance abuse, legal, immigration or housing issues? Not only are you not alone, but there is help for you.

Back in 2001, the Arizona's Children Association created Kinship and Adoption, Resource and Education (KARE) Centers in Maricopa, Pima, Pinal and Cochise counties to help relatives who are raising children.

Whether the Arizona Department of Child Safety is involved with the families or not, you can go to a KARE Center for emotional support, family-oriented events and educational classes on such topics as parenting, discipline and trauma. Moreover, caregivers can also get help navigating through the often complex world of foster care, adoption, food stamps, cash assistance and medical insurance.

Between October 2012 and September 2014, more than 3,100 caregivers and nearly 5,000 children received help statewide from Arizona Kinship Support Services, said Julie Treinen, program director.

Last year, 1,200 new kinship caregivers sought help in Pima County alone. Locally and statewide, roughly 42 percent of the caregivers had no legal relationship with the child, Treinen said.

In those cases, the goal is to prevent families from becoming involved with DCS by providing help to those relatives, Treinen said.



Julie Treinen, Arizona Kinship Support Services program director, shows off the Tucson KARE Center's playroom. While relatives get the help they need, kids have a fun place to play.

"These families don't need case management, they need someone to help them pull all of the strings together so they can engage in services," Treinen said.

(Contd. Page 14)

Forty-eight percent of those helped at the KARE Centers are involved with DCS.

The KARE Center receives a list of kinship placements from DCS monthly, Treinen said. Each of those families receives information about the KARE Center in their area and follow-up calls are made to those relatives who have taken in three or more kids.

Whether DCS is involved or not, KARE Center employees do what they can to help hook families up with whatever services they might need, whether it's behavioral health help, child care, employment, respite care, housing, food or education.

Arizona's Children Association has partnerships with the community food bank, the diaper bank and the Pima Council on Aging, Treinen said.

Kinship caregivers can also receive help at the KARE Center if the child they are raising has parents who have been incarcerated. They help relatives navigate the criminal justice system, run a visitation program and even provide gas cards so the kids can see their parents. In addition, they develop a reunification plan once the parent or parents are released.

There are currently 24 families in Pima County receiving such help, Treinen said.

A certain percentage of those who seek help at the KARE Center want to pursue a legal relationship with the child. In those cases, KARE Center employees provide assistance.

Kinship Support Services statistics

Why children are in kinship care:

DCS Removal — 43%

Drugs/Alcohol abuse — 36%

One/both parents incarcerated—18%

Immigration/Deportation — 16%

Housing issues — 15%

Financial issues — 9%

Abuse/neglect — 8%

For example, the KARE Center offers guardianship clinics through the Southern Arizona Legal Aid (SALA) Volunteer Lawyer Program for families.

Last year, 545 families were referred to the KARE Center in Tucson for information on pursuing guardianships. In 2009, there were only 92 referrals made.

In addition, foster care licensing classes are held at the center, too, and the center provides child care.

Casey Family Programs are also located within the KARE Center, Treinen said.

(Contd. Page 15)

Casey has a pre-employment program for children between 12 and 15-years-old. They teach the kids job skills, such as how to follow directions, be polite, work in teams and complete tasks.



Every year, those involved in the program plan three big events that are often attended by as many as 400 people, Treinen said. They deal with the caterers, plan the games, make center pieces and do a variety of other things for a family appreciation night, a back-to-school party and a holiday party.

Casey also provides in and out-of-home support in cases where more intensive services are needed, Treinen said.

Chris Swenson-Smith, director of Pima County Juvenile Court's Children and Family Services division, said KARE Center employees are vitally important.

"The KARE Center has long been a vital resource for our families. When children cannot remain safely in their homes, the next best thing is a safe placement with a grandparent or other kin. These children are

often dealing with trauma and the resulting behavioral or mental health issues, and need lots of time, love and attention," Swenson-Smith said. "While the relative is a lifeline for the child, the KARE Center is the lifeline for the relative."

Visit www.arizonaschildren.org for more information.

You can also call 323-4476.



Protecting Children,
Empowering Youth,
Strengthening Families.

Odds & Ends

Milestones

Jimmy Madison, 15 years, probation

Martin Ohlmaier, 20 years, probation

Lynn Parente, 20 years, probation

Anna Kin, 20 years, probation

Upcoming Events

Monday, Feb. 16 — Presidents' Day

Detention Employee of Month

Israel L. is being honored for his "keen awareness" and "quick-thinking actions" during a recent crisis.



This month the Bravo committee honored Gary Alvarez with a U Roc award. Gary created an electronic probation placement committee form that will allow the committee to make treatment decisions in a more consistent, informed manner. The form hadn't been updated or modified in more than 20 years.

By the way...

The Pima County Juvenile Court now has 319 followers on Twitter and 178 Facebook "Likes."



Twitter: Pima County
Juvenile@PCJuvenileCourt



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PimaCountyJuvenileCourt>

You can also find us on:



Voices

Since the PCJCC is here to help strengthen kids and families, it seems only appropriate the kids in our Detention Center have a platform from which to speak. We'll be asking them questions periodically and printing some of their unedited answers here.

What is the best gift you could give and who would you give it to?

I would give money because money can buy anything. And just think when you get a large amount of money it can just make your day because it does for me. If I was a millionaire I would give money to my family, homeless people and people who are broke — Samantha B.

The greatest gift I could give to somebody would be to be there for my little brother and show him the right what to do things because he loves me sooooo much and looks up to me — Alex H.

The greatest gift I could give to someone is Love; I would give it to my mom because she deserves it and because she gives me love — Zaryk D.

The greatest gift I could give someone is the skills you need to get sober. I'd give it to anyone who wants more but too scared to take the first step because I was there once too — Judah C.

I will give my mom a kiss because it is the best and because everything she has done for me. I will also give her a dog — Anthony G.

The greatest gift I could give someone is my life. I would give it to my mom because she gave it to me — Rosario R.

I would give the gift of love to my mother because I appreciate everything she has done for me. Even after everything she still loves me — Summer W.

The greatest gift I'll give someone is to my mom. I would give her a chance for me to be her son — Jack M.

Month in Photos

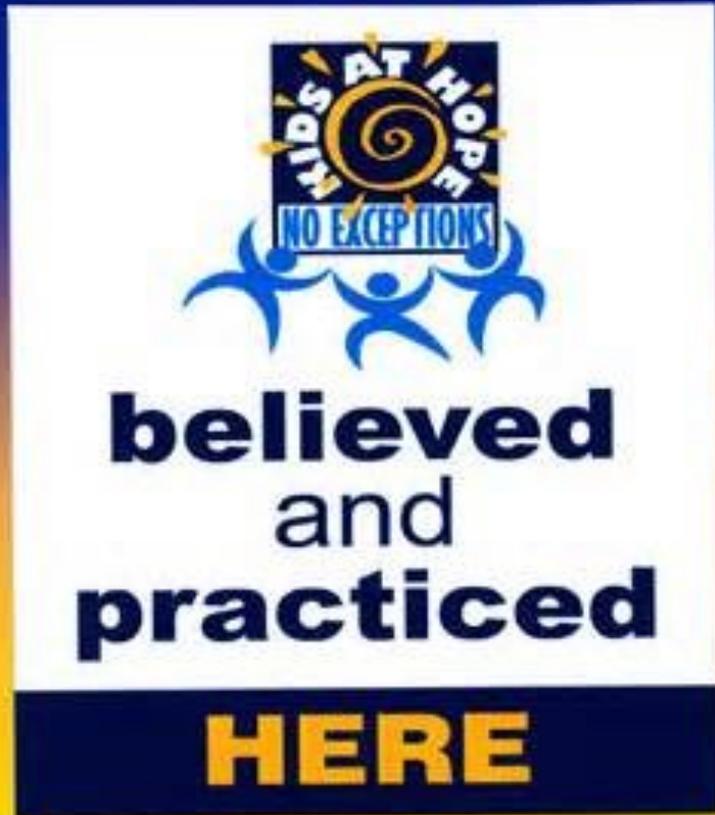


Library associate William Bevill accepts a going-away card from Assistant Detention Division Director Kim Chumley. After eight years of working in the Detention Center, Bevill was recently transferred to another library branch.

John Schow, Director of Juvenile Court Services, (right) and the rest of the PCJCC family said goodbye to probation officer Mike Bushey Dec. 31. Bushey first joined the court as an on-call detention officer in 1989.



Court Appointed Special Advocates Art and Jan were among five CASAs gracious enough to appear in a new CASA video that began appearing this month on KOLD News 13. If you are interested in becoming the voice for a child in the foster care system, contact 724-2060 for more information.



Universal Truth No. 1 –

Children succeed when they are surrounded by adults who believe they can succeed, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Universal Truth No. 2 –

Children succeed when they have meaningful and sustainable relationships with caring adults.

Universal Truth No. 3 –

Children succeed when they can articulate their future in more than one destination. (Home & Family, Community & Service, Hobbies & Recreation, Education & Career)

PCJCC Communications Bulletin

Published periodically

Presiding Juvenile Judge

Kathleen Quigley

Interim Deputy Court Administrator

Ron Overholt

520-724-2068

Director of Juvenile Court Services

John Schow

520-724-9444

Managing Editor

Kim Smith

Contributors

Joellen Brown

Susan Towne

All content is collected, written and edited by the PCJCC Public Information Office.

You may reach the office by calling

520-724-2904 or by emailing:

kim.smith@pcjcc.pima.gov

For more information about the court,

visit our website: [http://](http://www.pcjcc.pima.gov/)

www.pcjcc.pima.gov/