



BETHLEHEM YOUTH COURT

2016 Annual Report

The power of positive peer pressure.
Utilizing peer led sentencing hearings to give youth a second chance.

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Bethlehem Youth Court

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Board of Directors

Co-Chairpersons

Theresa L. Egan, *Executive Deputy Commissioner, NYS Department of Motor Vehicles*

Thomas Spina Jr., *Assistant U.S. Attorney*

Secretary

Jennifer Miller, *Albany County Probation Supervisor (January-September)*

Detective Michael Whiteley, *Bethlehem Police Department (September-December)*

Treasurer

Maureen McLeod, PhD, *Sage Colleges Professor*

Ex-Officio Member

Hon. John Clarkson, *Bethlehem Town Supervisor*

Members

Dave Doemel, *Administrative Dean, Bethlehem Central High School and Interim Principal, Bethlehem Middle School*

Adam Katz, *Assistant U.S. Attorney*

Jennifer Kilcoyne, *President, Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce*

Anthony Malizia, *Administrative Dean, Bethlehem Central High School*

Tina Martin, *Albany County Probation Officer*

Nancy Maurer, *Director, Field Placement Programs, Albany Law School*

Nick Petraccione, *BCSD Supervisor for Social Studies and Business Education*

Gene Primomo, *Assistant Federal Defender*

Pamela Clark Robbins, *CEO, Policy Research Associates*

Julie Sasso, *Bethlehem Town Board Member*

Executive Director

Katrina Charland

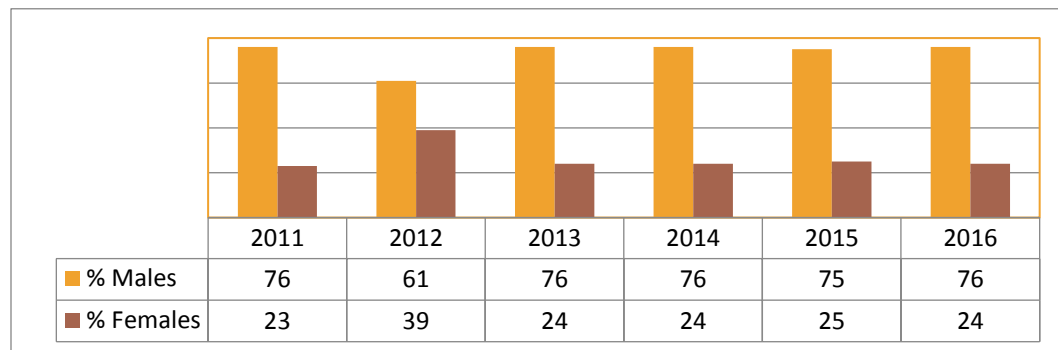
End of Year Report

Offender Statistics

Bethlehem Youth Court (BYC) heard a total of 21 cases in 2016 and handed down disposition on a total of 34 charges. The most common charges heard in Youth Court this past year were Unlawful Possession of Marijuana (41% of offenses) followed by vehicle and traffic infractions (32% of offenses heard). This is consistent with the 2015 statistics, which at the time showed an uptick in traffic infractions being referred to Youth Court. Unlawful Possession of Marijuana (UPM) has historically been one of the most common offenses handled in Youth Court, however the increase in traffic referrals is fairly new within the past few years. Respondents who have traffic tickets, particularly moving violations, stand to benefit from participation in Youth Court in particular because a successful disposition will take care of all DMV reporting matters, which means there are no points, no fines, and no court fees.

Of the 21 cases that proceeded through Youth Court, 100% successfully completed the program in 2016, which means that every participant received a full seal on their case. Of the 21 cases heard, 3 were referred directly to Youth Court from the police department through our Direct Referral Diversion program. This process allows juveniles (those 15 years old and younger) to be referred directly to Youth Court without any actual arrest or charges filed. This diversion process has been well received by community members, victims of offenses, families of offenders and the police department.

The average age of participants remained steady at 17 years old. Males comprised 76% of participants, while females made up 24%, which is very consistent with past year's gender split.



Truancy Pilot Program

A new Truancy Pilot Program was introduced in 2016. The program was created at the request of Bethlehem High School administrators who were struggling with more options for truant students before filing PINS cases with the local probation department. Two cases were referred to BYC for disposition, however neither case made it to the point of having a hearing and therefore were returned back to Bethlehem Central High School.

Community Service

A total of 381 hours of community service were handed down by the peer jury to be completed by offenders in 2016. In addition to that, offenders completed 27 jury duties, participated in numerous educational classes, such as Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Good Decision Making, and wrote apology letters. When Youth Court volunteers' time is taken into consideration, over 1,000 hours of service to

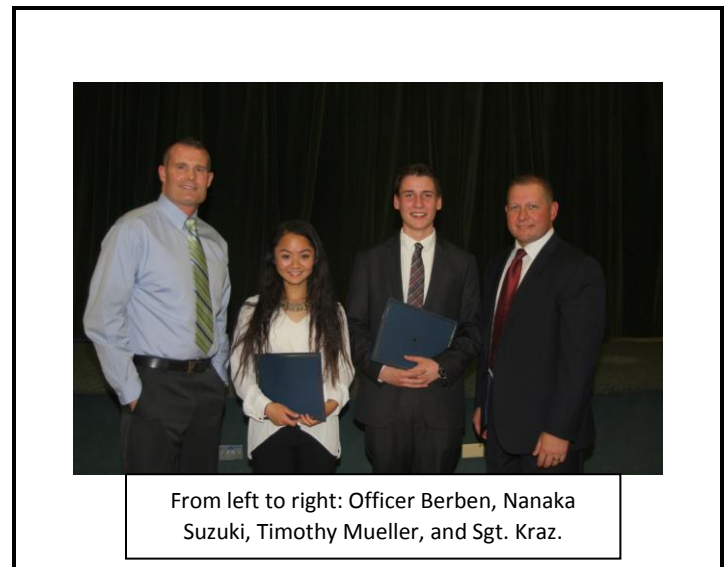
the community were performed all together in 2016. Community service was performed at 28 different sites throughout the capital district, primarily in the Town of Bethlehem. Offenders were sentenced to an average of 18 hours of community service.

Board Members

In 2016 the BYC board welcomed new member Tina Martin from Albany County Probation. Ms. Martin joined the board upon Jennifer Miller's retirement from Albany County Probation. While Ms. Miller continues to serve on the board as a dedicated community member, she resigned from her executive committee position of Secretary, which was then filled by Det. Whiteley of the Bethlehem Police Department.

Youth Court Members

In May of 2016, BYC hosted a combined Law Day Celebration and Induction Ceremony for newly trained members. Judge Donovan swore in 17 new members and Albany County District Attorney David Soares delivered the keynote address. In addition to the induction ceremony, BYC hosted the 4th annual Judge Jordan Memorial Award scholarship competition. This scholarship was made possible by contributions from the Bethlehem Police Supervisors' Association and the Police Benevolent Association. The first place winner was Timothy Mueller and second place went to Nanaka Suzuki, pictured to the right with Officer Berben of the Police Benevolent Association and Sgt. Kraz of the Bethlehem Police Supervisor's Association.



In addition to the regular training program in the spring, BYC hosted a Skills Development Day for current members in December of 2016. The Skills Development Day included guest speakers, a luncheon and workshops. The cost of this event was paid for through a grant from Bethlehem Opportunities Unlimited.

Financial

BYC's financial support from The Town of Bethlehem increased by \$5,000 from prior years to \$35,000 in 2016. This increase in funding is reflective of declining funding options for BYC and simultaneous increases in expenses. The Town's financial support continues to be a vital component to the success of the program.

In addition to Town funding, BYC received financial support from Stewarts Holiday Match, and from donations made by community members in response to our annual letter campaign and through the State Employee Federated Appeal (SEFA).

Association of New York State Youth Court (ANYSYC)

BYC continues to be an active court in the Association, with the Director regularly participating in conference calls, planning, and advocacy. In 2016 the ANYSYC moved to disband regular in-person

meetings in light of low attendance and the availability and regular use of conference calling. The regularly conducted quarterly meetings are now done via conference call and one in-person meeting per year is still held.

Future

BYC is constantly looking for areas of improvement and need within the community. To this point, the referral committee has been addressing the issue of increased traffic related incidents being handled and is working on creating a Traffic Referral Pilot Program, which could be put into place in 2017.

The benefits of Youth Court are far reaching. Not only does the immediate target audience, who are the offenders, benefit from being given a second chance, but the program also offers a very unique volunteer opportunity for the students to make it all possible. The combined benefits of this program truly are an asset to the community.

Comprehensive Statistics 2010-2016

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Breakdown | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Total # of cases | 34 | 43 | 23 | 37 | 25 | 12 | 21 | Total: | 195 |
| % of successful cases | 97% | 93% | 100% | 95% | 92% | 100% | 100% | Average: | 97% |
| Total # of community service hours sentenced | 551 | 979 | 481 | 738.5 | 708.5 | 240 | 381 | Total: | 4079 |
| Total # of community service hours performed by program | 1466 | 2866 | 1530 | 1888.5 | 1571.5 | 785 | 1031 | Total: | 11138 |
| Average # of hours sentenced per offender | 15.4 | 22.7 | 22 | 20 | 28 | 20 | 18 | Average: | 20.87143 |
| Average age of offender | 15.6 | 15.95 | 16 | 17 | 15.6 | 17 | 17 | Average: | 16.30714 |
| % Males | 53% | 76% | 61% | 76% | 76% | 75% | 76% | Average: | 70% |
| % Females | 47% | 24% | 39% | 24% | 24% | 25% | 24% | Average: | 30% |
| \$ Restitution Paid | \$100 | \$0 | \$0 | \$230 | \$0 | \$0 | \$160 | Total: | \$490 |
| Apology letters written | 10 | 17 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 4 | Total: | 54 |
| Educational classes sentenced | 8 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 10 | 3 | 4 | Total: | 43 |
| # of offenders who signed up as volunteers | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | Total: | 15 |
| Most Common Charge | UPM (37%) | Criminal Trespass/Criminal Mischief | UPM (48%) | UPM (28%) / Petit Larceny (28%) | UPM (16%)/Petit Larceny (16%) | UPM (39%) | UPM (41%) | | |
| Second most common charge | Petit Larceny (8.5%); Criminal Mischief (8.5%); and making graffiti (8.5%) | UPM | Petit Larceny (30%) | Trespass (13%) | Reckless Endangerment 2nd (8%); Harassment (8%); Endangering the welfare of a child (8%); and Unlawful Possession of | Vehicle and Traffic Infractions (22%) | Vehicle and Traffic Infractions (32%) | | |

Breakdown of Offender Statistics

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Total cases heard | 21 |
| Total number of charges heard | 34 |
| % Male | 76% |
| % Female | 24% |
| % Successful completion | 100% |
| Total hours sentenced | 381 |
| Average hours sentenced | 18 |
| Total apology letters sentenced | 4 |
| Total educational classes sentenced | 4 |
| Average age of offender | 17 |
| Most common charge | Unlawful Possession of Marijuana (UPM) |
| Second most common charge | Vehicle and Traffic Infractions |

Community Service Hours

| Volunteers/Participants | Formula | Total Hours based on 12 cases heard |
|---|--|--|
| Attorney Mentors | 3hrs/case x # of cases | 63 |
| Jurors | Approx. 10 jurors per case x # of cases heard | 210 |
| Youth Court Members | 4 attorneys (3 hours/case), plus 1 victim advocate (2 hours/case) plus 3 other roles (1 hour/case) x # of hearings | 357 |
| Participation in Government | (1) student completing Participation in Government Hours | 20 |
| Offender Hours | Total hours sentenced + total jury duties sentenced | 381 |
| Total # of Community Service Hours | | 1031 |

Community Service Sites

1. Adopt-A-Highway roadside clean-up
2. Bethlehem Community Clean-up
3. Bethlehem Lacrosse Club
4. Bethlehem Middle School Community Garden
5. Bethlehem Middle School Musical
6. Bethlehem Senior Services
7. Bethlehem Outreach Services (Food Pantry)
8. Bethlehem Opportunities Unlimited (BOU) Spelling Bee
9. Bethlehem Town Park (Eggstravaganza)
10. Bethlehem Town Park Bike Expo
11. Bethlehem Youth Court – fundraiser assistance
12. Bethlehem Youth Court – Law Day event
13. Capital City Rescue Mission
14. Capital Region Ortho – Bone and Joint Center
15. Center for Community Justice
16. Delmar Dash
17. Empire State Museum
18. Grassroot Givers
19. Guilderland Center
20. Marilac Family Shelter
21. National Night Out
22. Policy Research Associates – Returning donated cans as fundraiser
23. Ravena Seniors Project
24. Rhino’s Youth Services
25. Solid Rock Church
26. St. Peter’s Hospital
27. Teal Ribbon Run/Walk
28. USPS Stamp Out Hunger

Educational Classes:

Drug and Alcohol Class (February and July)
Decision Making Class (July and December)

