



On Balance

A publication of Dane County's Department of Human Services
and the Dane County Juvenile Court Program

March 2006
Volume X, Number 1

7th Annual JUVENILE COURT RECOGNITION AWARDS

And the Winners are....

More than 100 people gathered at the Lussier Heritage Center on February 7th to honor Dane County Juvenile Court award winners.

This year's **Peter Rubin Award** was presented to **Mary Kasperek**, now an Assistant Corporation Counsel but formerly a Dane County social worker for more than 10 years.

Five of those years were in



*Rubin Award
Winner Mary
Kasperek*

the role of permanency planning social worker where she provided invaluable assistance to staff colleagues. Mary consistently went above and beyond job expectations, to the great benefit of families and children. She worked far more than 40 hours a week—while attending law school—without ever complaining. Mary's strong philosophy that honored families while also recognizing a child's need for permanency remains a great influence on how the Department currently does its work.

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New Alternative Elementary Educational Program

By **Dennis Whitish**, Madison
Metropolitan School District

Madison Metropolitan School District approved funding for a new program this school year. Landmark Elementary Alternative Program, referred to as LEAP, is housed at Marquette Elementary School. Students who are having significant behavioral/emotional problems in school and who are receiving special education programming qualify for referral. Support staff who make a referral to this program must demonstrate that interventions at the student's home school have been tried without success and that the student isn't making progress emotionally and academically.

The program is divided into two classrooms. A teacher serves kindergarten through 2nd grade and has a capacity of between 6 and 8 students, depending on the presenting behavior problems. Another teacher works with students in

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Subculture Corner

By **Stephen Blue**, DCDHS
Delinquency Services
Manager

On November 21, 2005, Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk and a host of community leaders gathered to release the Dane County Youth Gang Prevention Task Force Proposed Community Response Plan. Those in attendance included : Madison School Superintendent Art Rainwater, Dane County United Way Executive Director Leslie Ann Howard, Assistant Madison Police Chief Randy Gaber, Juvenile Court Administrator Jim Moeser and County Board Supervisors David DeFelice and Richard Brown, .

The County Executive thanked the Dane County Youth Gang Prevention Task Force for its thoughtful and thorough proposed plan. She felt it combined data and anecdotes in a way that paints a vivid and accurate picture of the gang challenge that Dane County faces.

Since that time, the Dane County Youth Gang Prevention Task Force Executive Committee has met twice to continue implementation efforts on the

proposed Plan. The top five priorities were identified and next steps action plans are under way. The new enhanced Dane County Youth Gang Prevention Task Force should meet sometime in mid-March, 2006. The concept in the plan document, called "SAGE", has now been renamed "GAIT" (Gang Assessed Action, Intelligence, Intervention Team). The Team held its first orientation meeting recently.

The GAIT initiative is being developed to assess, gather, coordinate and disseminate information related to youth gangs on behalf of the Children Youth and Families Division of the Dane County Department of Human Services.

Each DCDHS Delinquency Services unit (county-wide) will designate at least one social worker or social service specialist to be part of a specialized unit on gangs. Participants in the Gang Specialist Unit (GAIT) initiative will attend bi-monthly meetings and receive special-

ized gang-related training.

GAIT members will coordinate with the Dane County Neighborhood Intervention Program (NIP) Gang Squad workers to exchange crucial gang-related information. This information will then be filtered down to the units. The GAIT workers will be a point of contact in their respective offices for gathering information and will act as a resource for their units on topics related to gangs.

Mike Edler has recently been hired as a LTE Gang Squad worker at Neighborhood Intervention Program. Mike is a retired Madison police officer with 27 years on the force. A full-time Gang Squad worker will be hired as well. Also, through efforts by Project HUGS, a resource in the community has been developed which will offer free tattoo removal for gang involved youth who wish to move on with their lives. More to come....

Youth Spotlight: Catching Up With Former Spartan Hoopsters David DuBois and Jonte Flowers



This edition of the Youth Spotlight is shining bright on two former members of the Madison Spartans Youth Basketball program.

Madison Spartan basketball has been part of the Dane County Neighborhood Intervention Program since 1988. While most of our participants play for the joy of the game and the positive social outlet, many of our players are on rosters of area high schools.

The two young men featured in the Spotlight are outstanding examples of the growing number of Madison Spartan basketball players on college rosters.

David DuBois is a freshman forward at University of Idaho – 2005 graduate of LaFollette High School. He was a WI State Journal first team All-City selection his senior season and a first team All-Big Eight Conference selection his junior and senior seasons, an AP All State third team selection and a WBCA honorable mention

All-state selection. He played in the 2005 WI Basketball Coaches Association Division 1 All-Star game and averaged 24.7 points and 6.5 rebounds per game in Big Eight Conference action his senior year, scoring 30+ points on 6 occasions. David finished his high school career as a 3-year starter with 1,208 points and 456 rebounds in 72 games.

Jonte Flowers, now a sophomore guard at Winona State University – 2004 graduate of LaFollette High School. A first Team All-State basketball selection, he was also honored as WI State Journal and Capital Times All-Area Player of the Year, Conference Player of the Year, First Team All-Conference Basketball, and first team All-City Basketball. He



also participated in State All-Star Games in basketball, was named first team All-State Football, first team All-Conference Football, first team All-City Football and participated in the State All-Star Football Game.

WHAT LIFE LESSONS

HAVE YOU LEARNED PLAYING BASKETBALL?

David: *Self responsibility, hard work ethic, and how to get along with other people.*

Jonte: *Never take anything for granted. Always do things to the best and fullest of your ability.*



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUTH WHO DREAM OF PLAYING

AT THE MAJOR COLLEGE LEVEL?

David: *Work hard and don't let anybody tell you that you can't make it. You have to be dedicated to the sport you want to play; you have to make sacrifices.*

Jonte: *Always work hard both on and off the court. And always dream of playing in a major college level.*

WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF BASKETBALL?

David: *Video games, watching*

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Awards

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Long term county employees and recent retirees **Randi Celusta** and **Dale Klubertanz** shared the **Ervin Bruner Award**. Randi served juveniles and their families for 37 years, first as a Dane County social worker and then with the Juvenile Court Program. As manager of the Juvenile Reception Center and Home Detention program, Randi inspired her employees to be compassionate to all youth and families. Randi always maintained a caring and calm attitude. She also served on countless committees and was a leader of the WI Juvenile Court Intake Association.

Dale began working for the Juvenile Court Program in 1978, initially as

a Juvenile Court Worker at the Shelter Home. Although he consistently took on other jobs and responsibilities, the leadership Dale provided for 9 years as Shelter Home Director stands out. While effectively balancing the many challenges of operating a facility and working with nearly 2000 youth, Dale always maintained a positive demeanor and approach. The Juvenile Court Program and the youth it served all benefited from Dale's consistency, commitment, and creativity.



*Ervin Bruner Award Winners
Randi Celusta and Dale Klubertanz*

The George Northrup Award was given to **Janice Balistrei**, Assistant State Public Defender. Despite health concerns, Janice continues to dedicate herself to working aggressively and assertively with youth who need legal representation. She demonstrates caring and commitment, while at the same time holding high expectations for them.

Janice's ability to connect and build rapport with youth allows her to represent them with distinction. She has earned the respect of peers and colleagues throughout the juvenile justice system.

Outstanding Service Award co-winners were **Sandy Marrier** and **Diane Jiminez**. A 10-year Juvenile Court Program employee, Diane Jiminez has worked with nearly 2,000 youth. In addition to her work at Juvenile Shelter Home, over the years she has provided foster care

for more than 25 girls. Diane has a special touch when communicating with youth. She "gives it to them straight" and has a consistent

message; she is constantly committed to making a positive difference in their lives.

As Director of Coventry House for 31 years, Sandy Marrier put her heart and soul into giving young women a chance for the future. Until her retirement last spring, she provided

teen girls in Dane County a special home that combined nurturing and treatment. Although many girls placed in Coventry had exceptional needs, Sandy never pathologized them. To her they were children, first and foremost. Consistency, realistic expectations, caring, and fun worked wonders. It is to Sandy's credit that most Coventry House residents have grown up to become successful women.

Outstanding Achievement Award winners were **Rashad Anderson** and **Ashley Smith**.

Rashad, 15 years old, has overcome significant challenges to help himself and his younger siblings become more stable and safe. Despite having



*Janice Balistrei
received the George
Northrup Award*



*The Outstanding Service
Award went to Sandy
Marrier and Diane Jiminez*

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LEAP

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grades 3 – 5 and also has a capacity of between 6 and 8 students depending on presenting behavior issues.

There is more structure in LEAP than in the traditional elementary classroom with more support staff and more curriculum modifications. Along with two teachers, there is a full-time school psychologist and 4 SEAs (special education assistants).

LEAP operates on a three level system. The students enter on level 1 and must have 5 days where their behavior is at 85% of expectation. Once they are able to reach this point, they move on to level 2 where they must reach 90% appropriate behavior for between 17 – 20 days. Once this is achieved, the student is ready to move on to level 3, which is a transition level. During the transition level, the student begins to transition back to the

home school. The amount of time it takes for a student to return to the home school will be determined by the LEAP teachers and the student's home school support team. When the student is consistently successful at both LEAP and his/her home school, the time at LEAP decreases until the student is spending the entire day back at the home school. Any verbal or physical aggression sends a student back to level 1.

Prior to the creation of LEAP, students exhibiting extreme behavioral/emotional problems had few options when they weren't successful in their home school environment. As schools struggle to program for students with behavioral and mental health issues, this is a welcome resource for Madison elementary students, their families and school staff.

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many strengths, Rashad became involved in the juvenile justice system. To his great credit, Rashad worked hard to change his life's direction. Now in a stable living situation, he is getting good grades and positive reports from teachers and staff. Rashad deserves recognition for his current accom-



Rashad Anderson

plishments. He is beginning to think about college in the future.

Ashley, age 16, is described as "an incredible woman, student, citizen and person." She has overcome numerous barriers and roadblocks and takes advantage of positive opportunities to achieve.



Ashley Smith

Since 1997 Ashley has lived in different foster homes, attended various schools, and worked with many social workers. Ashley has sought out and developed many positive relationships, earned good grades, and volunteered countless hours with the Green County Humane Society. In addition to attending school, she is working and saving for college.

On Balance is a publication of Dane County's Department of Human Services and Juvenile Court Program.

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DMC – The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly

By **Dave Thorson**, Dane County Human Services

When it comes to Disproportionate Minority Contacts with the criminal justice system, there isn't much "good" to be found. There is unfortunately more than enough of "bad" and "ugly" to go around. At best the number of African American youth who find themselves incarcerated is distressing. Some would call the numbers alarming, others disgraceful. In 2003, African American youth comprised 8% of the total youth population in Dane County, however they were 32% of the total number of youth referred for juvenile delinquency charges and nearly 29% of the Dane County youth sent to Juvenile Corrections. Dane County mirrors the rest of the state in needing to find a way to interrupt this trend.

We know that youth who do not experience school success, or have no positive attachments at school, are statistically more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. The dropout rate for African American students in Madison is truly depressing - reported at just under 25%. In 2004 there were 455 freshman African American HS students

enrolled in Madison. That same year there were only 244 African American senior students, around 44% of the freshman total. The white student population however remained nearly unchanged comparing these same 2 years. Additionally, three years earlier in 2001 there were 417 ninth grade African American HS students enrolled and this same group as seniors in 2004 totaled only 244. The schools however report only around 100 African American students dropped out in 2004. Where then did the other around 100+ African American students go if they didn't drop out? Recognizing that addressing this could be a way to impact the larger issue, there are currently separate efforts by the Dane County Department of Human Services, Juvenile Court, and the Urban League to address the disconnect many African American students experience in our schools.

Right Track ADDS was established via a prevention/early intervention grant received by Dane County Human Services. ADDS stands for assessment, deflection, deferment, and stabilization. A Program Leader from the Neighborhood Intervention Program

spearheads this effort. Referrals come primarily from DCDHS social workers, schools, and law enforcement. The focus is on middle school age minority males. Groups have been run at Sherman MS, NIP, and in Cross Plains, Sun Prairie, and DeForest. There will likely be a group this spring at Sennett MS as well. The groups follow a curriculum that emphasizes anger management, impulse control, goal setting, and positive peer relationships. There has already been a discernable reduction in suspensions and other school discipline for the youth involved as a result of their participation in this group. Steve Varsos, a Program Leader with NIP, is the primary group leader and the coordinator of this program.

Jeff Ward is the full time leader of the DMC effort at Madison East HS (in conjunction with the minority services coordinator and others at the school). The program (administered through Juvenile Court) is called Youth Peaceful Options Program or Y-POP. This program started in the summer of 2005 targeting primarily incoming freshman who were identified as at risk for behavioral or truancy problems. There have been a total of 62 kids referred to the program. Of these, 25 are enrolled and around 10 participate in the weekly group. Getting permission from parents has limited enrollment to some extent. Currently Jeff runs

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a group 7th hour which focuses on conflict resolution and getting the members involved in positive school activities. Some of these activities include making banners, being office runners, and participating in a Holiday Joy Drive. There is hope that successful completion of the group could result in granting of HS credit at some point in the future. Mr. Ward has observed what he believes to be too many African American students who have been socially promoted and entering high school without adequate study skills or an understanding of why they need to make a commitment to attending class. Thus some of his work is at the basic level of helping students set goals and understanding the value of a high school diploma. Success will be measured by examining both attendance and suspension rates of those youth involved. This grant is set to expire in May 2006. There is hope, however, that it will be extended. The need certainly is there.

Madison Memorial has a half time DMC coordinator. Jerry Overstreet has led the Youth Choosing Alternative Voices program since its inception in August 2005. This grant position (administered by the Urban League) also will expire at the end of this school year unless it is extended. Approximately 30 kids are enrolled in the program. Mr. Overstreet spends considerable

time helping resolve conflicts in an effort to avoid the necessity for law enforcement involvement. He has put a lot of energy into mitigating girl fighting at Memorial. There is also a group component to this program that follows the Positive Adolescent Choices Training format. This coed group, which meets after school, is usually attended by around 15-18 youth and focuses on violence-risk education, anger management, and pro-social skills training. Role playing, modeling, group discussion,

videos, activities, and other assignments comprise the bulk of the group's activities. Club TNT (Today Not Tomorrow) is part of the DMC effort and is assisting with producing a DVD on conflict resolution/gang prevention specific to Memorial HS students. There is unfortunately not nearly enough time in a 20 hour week to do all of the things that need to be done. There is limited time to try and engage parents or connect with neighbor-

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Youth Spotlight

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TV, and sleeping.

Jonte: *Playing video games, hanging out with my friends, and listening to my music.*

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?

David: *Fettucini Alfredo*

Jonte: *Homemade mac and cheese*

FAVORITE CD?

David: *Jaheim - Still Ghetto*

Jonte: *Late Registration by Jay-Z*

FAVORITE MOVIE, OR ONE THAT MADE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON YOU?

David: *He Got Game; Coach Carter; Four Brothers*

Jonte: *Glory Road*

IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH ANYONE,

WHO WOULD IT BE?

David: *Michael Jordan or Jessica Simpson*

Jonte: *John Wooden*

AS A FORMER MADISON SPARTAN PLAYER, WHAT IS YOUR BEST MEMORY?

David: *Playing at Nationals in Florida and beating Albany City Rocks*

Jonte: *Hanging out with the guys in Tennessee and playing in the national tournament.*

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR ADULTS WHO WORK WITH YOUTH?

David: *Try to connect with them at their level and try to see situations from their perspective.*

Jonte: *Be a positive role model.*

GET THE FACTS ON.... METHAMPHETAMINE

Do you know what the following terms have in common? *Crystal, crank, tweak, ice, speed, glass, meth, black beauties.*

They're all slang for methamphetamine, considered by many to be the most addictive of all illegal drugs.

Because it's cheap, easy to make, and produces a long-lasting high, meth has become the drug of choice for a new generation of users. Today's methamphetamine is far more potent than that sold in the past. In the short term, it can cause anxiety, euphoria and depression. Long-term effects include paranoid or delusional thinking, permanent brain damage, and stroke or heart failure. In addition to the physical effects of exposure to chemicals, children living in homes with meth labs may experience severe neglect or abuse.

Methamphetamine abuse has been spreading across the country at an alarming rate. In response, Wisconsin is developing a statewide Drug Endangered Children (DEC)

Program. Although Dane County has experienced a lesser problem than northwestern Wisconsin, there's concern that this epidemic will spread to our area. Local efforts are being made by law enforcement, Human Services, and others to develop strategies and coordinate a response to methamphetamine use in the Dane County.

Some Signs of Meth Use:

- § Inability to sleep
- § Increased sensitivity to noise
- § Paranoid, unusual or secretive behaviors
- § Nervous physical activity, like scratching or picking
- § Unpredictable, aggressive or violent behavior
- § Irritability, dizziness, or confusion;
- § Increased heart rate or blood pressure
- § Presence of inhaling paraphernalia (razor blade, mirrors, and straws) or injecting paraphernalia (syringes, surgical tubing)



Meth is made and used in several forms including crystals.

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hoods. Jerry also makes himself available to teachers and other school staff to help build their cultural competence and consult with them on how best to successfully intervene themselves when they encounter conflict situations. Mr. Overstreet believes that the ideal would be to begin these programs at the middle school level so that they could follow at risk kids from there straight into high school.

The effort to impact Disproportionate Minority Contacts/Confinement needs to involve a multitude of systems. These programs in the schools must be part of a coordinated effort if we are to expect improvement. There is clearly much work to do in raising the academic success rate among African American students. These three programs which augment the ongoing efforts being continually made by the school system are only a start. It would be disappointing if the promising beginning winds up being for naught should the grant money not be there in the future. African American youth need to feel welcomed within schools and know that they have advocates there. It is critical for these three programs to ensure that whether they continue next year or not, their kids can identify other adults within the school with whom they have a positive connection. We owe these students nothing less.

Where Are They Now??? *On Balance* catches up with: Lisa Black

Some of you may remember Lisa Black from her time with the Dane County Department of Human Services, Children Youth and Families Division. Lisa completed her field placement at Metro Delinquency Intake during the fall of 2001 – spring of 2002. She then rolled into a position as a delinquency intake social worker with the same unit. Later in the summer of 2003 – December of 2003 she was a CPS social worker. Unfortunately she left the department in December of 2003 to pursue other employment opportunities. *On Balance* caught up with Lisa to find out what she's been doing and what plans she has for the future.

On Balance: What are you doing now?

Lisa: Currently I am working as a School Improvement Planner with the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD). When I left the department (DCDHS) in late 2003 I accepted a position as a SW at East High School doing district wide work. The following fall I accepted a new position as Minority Services Coordinator for Memorial High School. In the fall of 2005 I moved into my current position as a School Improvement Planner.

On Balance: What led to the different positions with MMSD.

Lisa: I like a new challenge and when the opportunities arose, I was eager to try something new.



*Former DCDHS employee
Lisa Black*

On Balance: What does a school improvement planner do?

Lisa: I work out of the assistant superintendent's office where I help facilitate the change process for schools. I help schools identify areas of strength and concern through data analysis. I then help schools select goals, objectives, strategies and timelines for improvement. We look at the areas of learning, engagement and relationships through this process.

On Balance: What are the most challenging aspects of your current position?

Lisa: The most challenging part of the job has been getting acclimated to the new position and not doing direct service with kids. I enjoy the challenge of learning a new job and looking at the system with a much broader perspective. Hopefully, I will impact the kids through the work that I do with the adults (helping them to see how their actions help serve the students).

On Balance: What goals do you

have?

Lisa: I would like to continue my professional and personal development. I also want to continue to nurture my love for learning.

On Balance: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Lisa: First off, I see myself working for the district (MMSD) in what role I do not know. I have been in three different positions in the past three years. I would like to be in a position where I am an advocate for kids and where I help ensure that the disenfranchised students' interests and needs are being met.

On Balance: What do you do in your spare time?

Lisa: In my spare time I like to spend time with family and friends; I enjoy reading, and watching sports. My favorite is college basketball and I love the ACC and the Badgers.

A note from Lisa Black:

I want to share how much I value the lessons and experiences I had with DCDHS. I feel privileged to have worked with such genuine and committed professionals, and I admire the work that social workers do with kids and families. I would love to hear from some of my former colleagues.

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New Director For Boys & Girls Club of Dane County

By **Dennis Whitish**, Madison
Metropolitan School District

Marcia Hendrickson became the new director of Boys and Girls Club of Dane County on November 15, 2005. Ms. Hendrickson came to Madison from Wisconsin Rapids where she was the Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club in Wisconsin Rapids for the past eight years. Ms. Hendrickson brings with her a background of working for non-profit agencies over the past 25 years. Experience working for the YMCA and the Red Cross has given her hands on expertise working with youth and families. Educated as a high school teacher, she switched to working for non-profit agencies and found the challenge rewarding. She has served on school boards and has also been on county boards prior to her move to Madison. While the Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club in Wisconsin Rapids, Ms. Hendrickson worked on diversity initiatives for that club, believing in and valuing cultural differences which she sought to implement in her work with the Boys & Girls Club.

The Boys & Girls Club of Dane County started 6 years ago and while there were only 8 clubs in Wisconsin eight years ago, there are currently 29 clubs in Wisconsin. Nationally there are 3000 clubs

with over 3 million members. The Mission Statement for the Dane County chapter is: To inspire and enable all young people to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. With 1000 registered club members in Dane County, Ms. Hendrickson would like to see more youth become members. The club is open to any Dane County resident between the ages of 7 and 18.

A new 3 million dollar, 22,000 square foot facility is being built in the Allied Drive neighborhood and is scheduled to be opened by mid-June 2006. The new facility will have a full-sized gym, computer labs, areas for families to meet as well as rooms to offer more services to youth and families. With a current staff of 21 full and part-time support, volunteers are utilized to work one on one with members, run programs, tutor, play games, etc. Volunteers who want to share their skills are always welcome to apply. Volunteers are screened to ensure safety, which is of utmost concern to Ms. Hendrickson.

The list of educational and career development programs the Boys & Girls Club offers is extensive. There are school readiness programs such as Power Hour, a homework help and tutoring

program, Education 2 Elevate which targets math and reading skills, Project Learn which reinforces and enhances the skills and knowledge young people learn at school as well as Job Ready which educates club members on job readiness training that prepares members with employment skills. Technology clubs are offered, which teach members basic computer skills, as well as music making, photography and Web development experience. Sports, fitness and recreation are also offered at the B & G's Club. The South Side Raiders football team has a long history of providing quality football training for youth in the south Madison neighborhood. With two football teams and cheerleading squads, this team travels throughout the state.

Ms. Hendrickson is enjoying her recent move to Madison and looks forward to opening the new facility while maintaining the current facility at 2001 Taft Street. Outreach to underserved areas will be one of her objectives as she continues to meet and collaborate with various agencies in Dane County in order to serve the youth of Dane County.



Agency Spotlight: New Routes at Centro Hispano

By **Dave Thorson**, Dane County Human Services

Beginning in August 2004, Centro Hispano expanded their New Routes program for adults to include an adolescent component. There has been a growing concern that an increasing number of Latino youth are feeling alienated from our community. New Routes for adolescents was developed to try and intervene with this trend and provide a persuasive alternative to gangs.

Most of the youth in New Routes are high school age. Both boys and girls are welcome. Referrals come from Juvenile Court, DCDHS, schools, and parents. Since August 2004 the program has served 72 boys and 26 girls who are “system” involved, plus 251 other Latino youth who may be at risk for school or delinquency problems.

The program is led by Hector Alvarez. Hector has a BS in Psychology from his home country of Venezuela. While in Venezuela he did counseling for three years followed by an additional three years working with homeless youth. He also taught high school for one year. Hector came to Madison in 1999, and he worked for Lutheran

Social Services before being hired by Centro Hispano. Hector meets with all system-referred youth individually for an initial intake meeting. He then is available on a very limited basis to meet with kids individually on specific needs areas. He helps families understand how the school and court systems work so they can better assist their children when they encounter problems, as well as advocating with these systems on behalf of youth. Hector also attempts to help connect youth with culturally competent mental health services and teaches them skills to enable them to more successfully blend with the dominant Caucasian culture of our community. He is often able to assist them with community service hours.

Far too many Latino youth feel alienated from their school and community. Unfortunately, these kids often perceive that no group other than the gangs are making a concerted effort to attract them. New Routes strives to engage Latino youth in asset building and developing positive attitudes by organizing pro-social activities. They deliberately mix system youth with non-delinquent kids in an effort to promote positive interactions. At New Routes there is a Youth

Employment Club that meets once a month to help train and guide youth with job skills and acquisition. A youth talent show is held every other month. Since August 2004, Hector has facilitated a total of 15 different Leadership Projects, many involving volunteering in the community.

As with many programs, staff and budget limitations impact the ability to address the myriad of issues faced by Latino youth. They cannot meet individually with all the youth that could use that level of support. New Routes strives instead to build partnerships with families and improve communication with the various systems youth encounter.

To make a referral or receive additional information feel free to contact Hector Alvarez at 261-3018 or via e-mail at hector@centrohispanomadison.org.