

# Seneca County Juvenile and Probate Court 2015 Annual Report



# Our Mission



- We promise to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the State of Ohio and the purposes of the Juvenile and Probate Court system. We promise to serve the citizens of the community with dedication, integrity and professionalism. We will strive to assure the safety, security and best interests of those we serve to the best of our abilities.

# About the Judge



- The **Honorable Judge Jay A. Meyer** was elected by the Seneca County Voters to serve as their Juvenile and Probate Judge in 2008. Public service is a core family value that was passed down to him by his parents, the Honorable Gerald D. Meyer (Seneca County Juvenile and Probate Judge 1978-1998) and Jo Ann Meyer.
- Judge Meyer is a graduate of Tiffin Columbian High School. He received his B.A. from Ohio Northern University, and went on to earn a Juris Doctor from Ohio Northern University. After Law School, Judge Meyer served as an Assistant County Prosecutor for Seneca County and worked with the Seneca County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) to pursue parents who failed to pay child support and the Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services (SCDJFS) to prosecute those who would cheat the welfare system.
- In 1998, Judge Meyer went into private practice working for the Shuff Law Offices until he became a partner in 1999. During his 10 years as partner of the law firm of Meyer & Kerschner, Judge Meyer focused primarily on business/institutional representation, litigation and probate.
- Judge Meyer and his wife, Heidi, have four children.

# About the MAGISTRATE

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## **DONALD S. BENNETT**



- Magistrate Bennett was appointed by Judge Meyer in June of 2009. Prior to appointment to the Court, Magistrate Bennett was in private practice for 20 years, concentrating in the areas of juvenile, domestic, and criminal trial practice.
- Magistrate Bennett is a graduate of the University of Toledo College of Law and holds a Bachelors Degree in Social Studies from Oakland University. Prior to earning his Law Degree, Magistrate Bennett was a high school educator in Michigan.

# About the COURT MEDIATOR

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## **Tiffany E. Cavanaugh**

- Tiffany E. Cavanaugh, Attorney at Law, serves as the Court Mediator for the Seneca County Juvenile Court. Mrs. Cavanaugh received her Juris Doctor degree from the Ohio Northern University Petit College of Law in 2006 and received her undergraduate degree in Journalism with a minor in Business Administration from Ohio Northern University in 2003. Prior to becoming the Court Mediator, Mrs. Cavanaugh was an associate in the Business Litigation section of the Toledo, Ohio based law firm of Eastman & Smith Ltd. During her legal career, she participated in several mediations and gained experience negotiating settlement agreements involving multiple claims and parties. Mrs. Cavanaugh completed the following classes required by Supreme Court of Ohio to become a qualified mediator:
  - Basic Mediation Training
  - The Uniform Mediation Act Training
  - Domestic Abuse Issues: Training for Mediators and Other Professionals
  - Specialized Family & Divorce Mediation Training
- Mrs. Cavanaugh is originally from Tiffin, Ohio, and currently resides in Holland, Ohio with her husband and two children.

# COURT PERSONNEL

Teresa Copp – Court Administrator/Director of Probation Services

Tori Yeast – Administrative Clerk

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## JUVENILE COURT

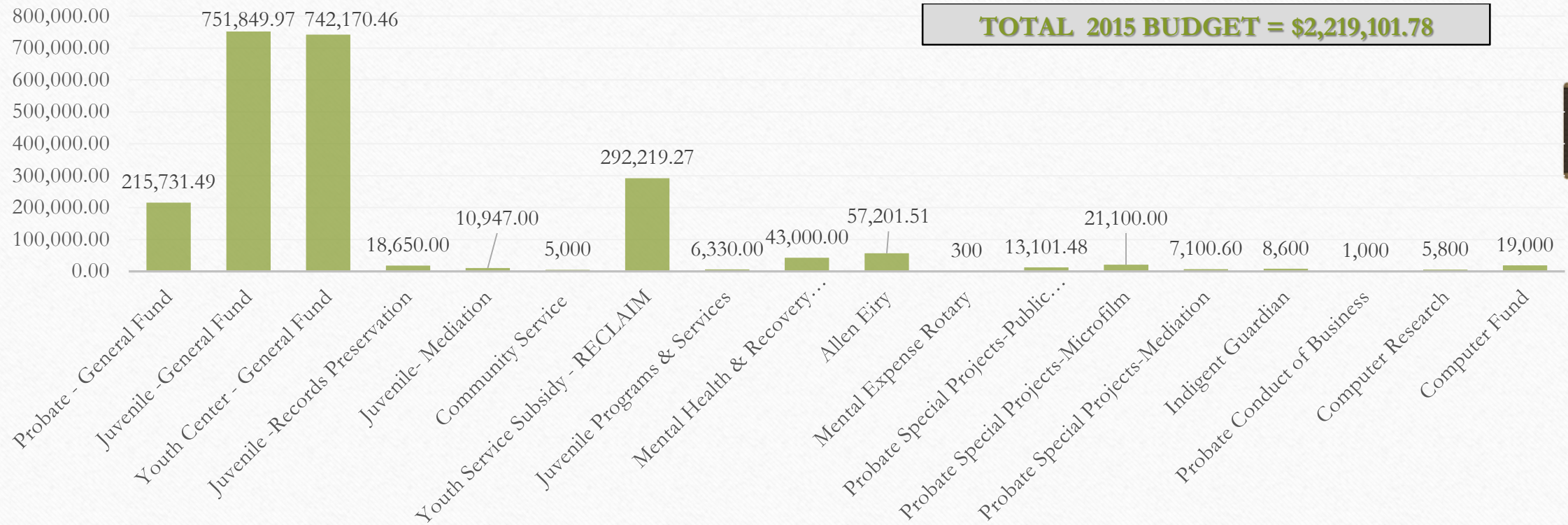
## PROBATE COURT

Beth Brown – Chief Deputy Clerk/Bailiff

- Rachel Briggs – Deputy Clerk
- Linda Frank – Deputy Clerk
- Sandy Gernert – Deputy Clerk
- Jenny Harris – Deputy Clerk
- Tracy Kerschner – Deputy Clerk

- Dana Eborg – Deputy Clerk
- Samantha Gruss – Deputy Clerk
- Amy Littlejohn – Deputy Clerk
- Beverly Foos – Public Guardian
- Brenda Eisenhower – Asst. Public Guardian

# Annual 2015 Appropriations



# PROBATE COURT



# PROBATE COURT

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## What is Probate Court?

Every county in Ohio has its own probate court, which handles wills, administration of estates and trusts, adoptions, marriage licenses, name changes, and appointments of guardians for minors and incompetent adults. [Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 2101.24]

Seneca County's Probate Court was established in 1851. William Lang was the first Probate Judge serving From 1851 – 1855. He wrote *History of Seneca County: From the Close of the Revolutionary War to July 1880*.



# PROBATE COURT CASE BREAKDOWN - 2015

Marriage Licenses Issued =

316

	OPEN	CLOSED
Estates	271	278
Minor Guardianships	1	8
Incompetent Guardianships	20	27
Trusts	2	3
Civil	26	25
Adoption	10	9
Mental Illness	11	10
Minor Settlement	0	0
Name Change	27	26
Conservatorship	0	2
Wrongful Death	0	0
Delayed Birth Registration	9	7
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>377</i></b>	<b><i>395</i></b>

# Seneca County Guardianship Program

- The **Seneca County Guardianship Program** provides guardianship and conservatorship assistance to indigent incompetent elderly. This life maintaining and life sustaining program would not be possible without the generous grant funding provided by the Allen Eiry Fund.
- The Allen Eiry Fund was created in 1983 in Mr. Eiry's name for the benefit of elderly citizens in Seneca County.



# GUARDIANSHIP TRAINING

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- Modified Superintendence Rule 66 implemented by the Supreme Court of Ohio went into effect June 1, 2015. The new rule significantly impacts guardianship training requirements. All guardians of adults are now required to receive six (6) hours of fundamental training followed by three (3) hours of continuing education each year thereafter. Unless exempt by the Seneca County Probate Local Rule 66.

# JUVENILE COURT

# JUVENILE COURT

**The Seneca County Juvenile Court handles the filing and processing of the following types of matters:**

Juvenile Delinquency and Unruly

Juvenile Traffic

Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency

Paternity

Custody and Child Support

Some Adult Criminal Cases

The Juvenile Court System was created in 1906, The Honorable Hal W. Michaels was serving as Probate Judge during this time and then held the dual judgeship of both Probate and Juvenile Court. At age 29 he was the youngest judge to be elected. He served as Judge from 1903-1909.



# JUVENILE COURT CASES - 2015

	FILED	CONCLUDED	DIVERSION
Delinquent	312	315	10
Traffic	203	202	
Abuse/Neglect/Dependent	17	18	
Unruly	55	58	6
Adult	11	12	
Permanent Custody	7	3	
Change of Custody	143	157	
Support Modification	477	457	
Parentage	15	15	
UIFSA	8	7	
Other	13	13	
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>1261</i></b>	<b><i>1257</i></b>	<b><i>16</i></b>

# JUVENILE COURT

## *-Court REHABILITATION PROGRAMS-*

- **Strengthening Families Program**
- **Family Intervention Court**
- **Community Service**
- **Restitution Work Program**
- **Youth Center Counseling**
- **Ankle Monitoring**
- **CARTEENS**
- **Nicotine Prevention**
- **Substance Abuse & Alcohol Education**
- **Anger Management**
- **Reality Works**
- **PACE Program**
- **YES Shoplifting Program**
- **Diversion Program**



# Program Descriptions:

**YES Program** – an educational rehabilitative program offered to juveniles for first time petty theft/shoplifting offenses

**Family Intervention Court** – specialized docket program certified by the Supreme Court of Ohio designed to help families break mental illness and/or substance abuse cycles causing continued contact with the court system

**Community Service Program** – juvenile is able to complete court ordered community service hours

**Restitution Work Program** – allows youth to work for state minimum wage with their compensation being paid directly to their victim

**Youth Center Counseling** – Residents have the opportunity to participate in mental health counseling during his/her time spent at the Seneca Co. Youth Center

**Ankle Monitoring** – alternative incarceration concept that allows participants to remain in the community rather than being incarcerated

**4-H CARTEENS Program**—  
a teen facilitated traffic safety  
program for first time juvenile traffic  
offenders

**Nicotine Prevention Program** —  
designed to educate youth on the  
harmful effects of smoking  
cigarettes and smokeless tobacco

**Substance Abuse & Alcohol  
Education Program** — designed to  
educate youth on the harmful effects  
of using drugs and consuming  
alcohol

**Anger Management Program** —  
gives youth an opportunity to learn  
strategies and techniques to control  
anger

**Strengthening Families Program**—  
evidence-based family skills training  
program to improve parenting skills,  
family relationships, and reduce  
problem behaviors, delinquency and  
alcohol and drug abuse in children.

**Reality Works** —  
interactive technology used to  
educate youth on topics such as fetal  
alcohol syndrome, prenatal drug  
exposure, shaken baby syndrome,  
and pregnancy prevention



**Diversion Program**—  
attempts to divert first time non  
violent offenders from the juvenile  
justice system

**PACE Program** —  
academic tutoring offered in  
partnership with Heidelberg  
University





## JUVENILE COURT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Seneca County Juvenile Court works closely with area higher education institutions to provide internship opportunities to qualified students.

In 2015, *five students* logged 603.25 *hours* as part of the Juvenile Court Internship Program. The students that completed these hours were from Heidelberg University, Tiffin University, and University of Cincinnati.

# PROBATION SERVICES

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT**  
**PERSONNEL**

**Teresa Copp** - Director of Probation Services

**Jim Jarrett** – Director of Intensive Probation and Co-Coordinator of Family Intervention Court

**Kendra Shearer** – Probation Officer

**Linda Cohen** – Probation Officer

**Jason French** – Probation Officer

**Jay Rishty** – Probation Officer

**Rachael Conner** – Community Service/Restitution & Diversion Officer  
Co-Coordinator of Family Intervention Court  
Probation Officer



# ABOUT OUR PROBATION DEPARTMENT...

The Seneca County Probation Department is largely funded by RECLAIM Ohio.

## *WHAT IS RECLAIM OHIO?*

RECLAIM stands for **Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors. It is a funding initiative which encourages juvenile courts to explore community-based options to meet the needs of juvenile offenders and youth at risk of offending.**

# RECLAIM FUNDS IN ACTION...

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## RECLAIM Grant funds pay for the following programs:

- Program Administration
- Diversion
- Probation
- Restitution/Community Service
- Monitoring/Surveillance
- Educational Services

## HOW WE USE OUR RECLAIM GRANT FUNDS:

### Program Administration:

Used to pay a portion of yearly salaries for two employees. Administration is responsible for supervision and training of the Probation staff, and manages the resources funded under the grant; supervises cases reviews/assessments

### Probation:

*\*Funds provide the salaries of 3 full-time Probation Officers*

*\*Served 170 adjudicated youth in FY 2015*

Used to provide supervision and case management of adjudicated youth with the goal of reducing subsequent delinquent behavior

### Diversion:

*\*Funds provide the salary of 1 full-time Officer*

*\*Served 32 youth in FY 2015*

Used to deliver informal supervision to first-time offenders in hopes of helping them avoid an official court hearing

### Restitution/Community Service:

*\*Funds provide the salary of 1 full-time Officer*

*\*Served 158 adjudicated youth in FY 2015*

This program addresses youth that are in need of completing court ordered restitution and community service hours

### Monitoring/Surveillance:

*\*Served 32 adjudicated youth in FY 2015*

This program uses ankle monitors to closely track youth who require intensive supervision

### Educational Services:

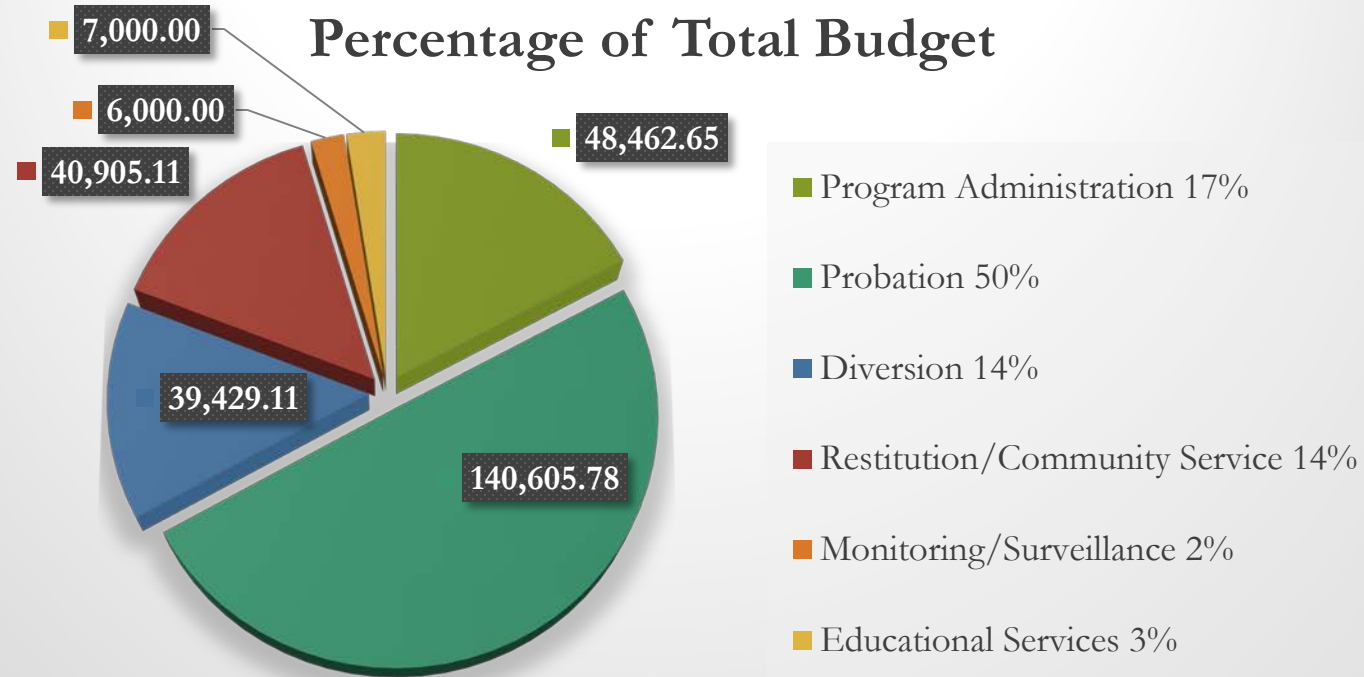
*\*Served 84 adjudicated youth in FY 2015*

The PACE program targets youth that are struggling in school by providing contracted tutoring services through Heidelberg University



# FY 2015 Reclaim GRANT

Total FY 2015 Budget = \$282,402.65



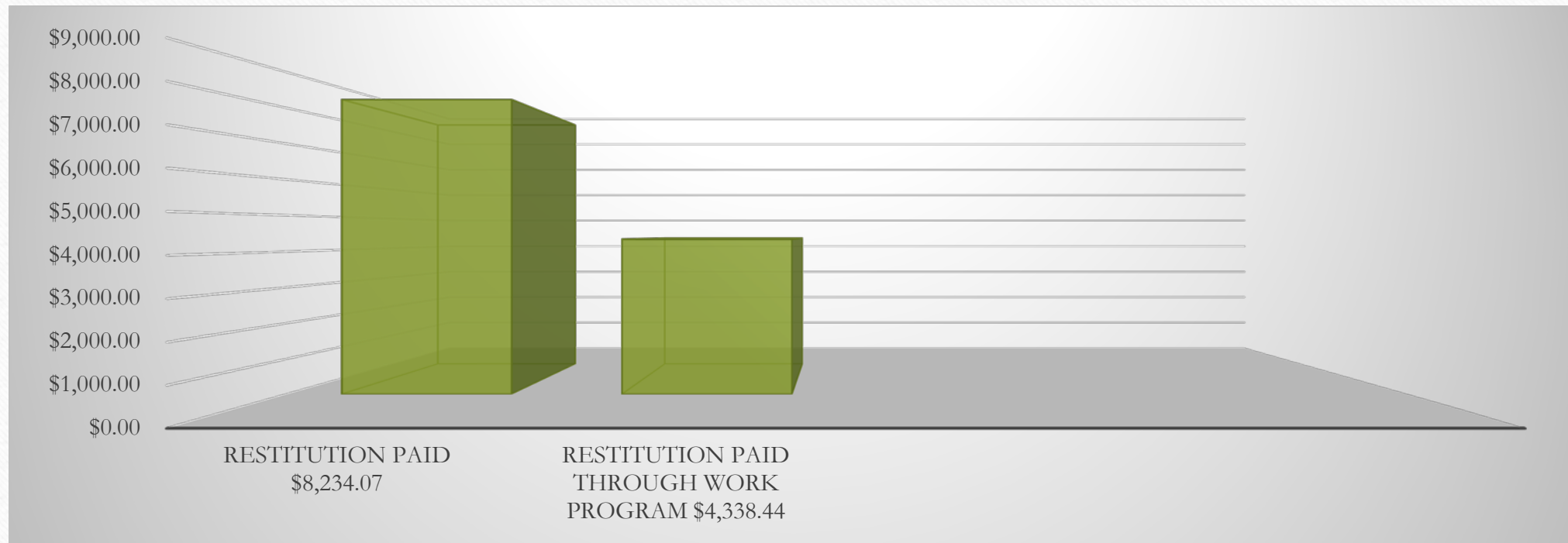
# Did you know...

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As part of the Restitution/ Community Service Program, Seneca County Juvenile Court offers youth an opportunity to participate in a **Work Program**. The **Work Program** allows the youth owing victim restitution a chance to earn an hourly credit of \$8.10 (state minimum wage) to be paid to their victim. Youth can earn up to a maximum credit of \$1,000.00.



# Restitution Paid To victims FY 2015



# COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDED BY JUVENILES

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
5,858 hours	5,921 hours	6,734 hours	5,467 hours	5,223.75 hours



6,661 hours





# YOUTH CENTER

# ABOUT the youth center....

- Construction on the 24-bed facility began on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.
- The Youth Center opened its doors on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The opening allowed the county to discontinue use of the 1950's orphanage building that previously housed the Center.
- The Ohio Department of Youth Services contributed \$1,878,000.00 and Seneca County contributed \$1,252,000.00 to cover the cost of the project.



# YOUTH CENTER Staff....

Ben Yourkvitch – Director  
Greg Selhorst – Operations Manager  
Sarah Canalos – Program Manager

## Other Positions Include:

2 full time Activities Supervisors

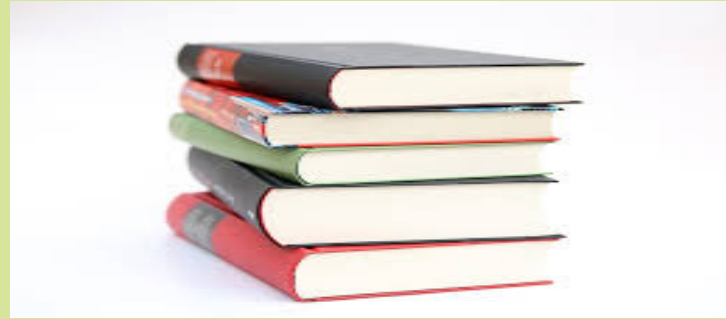
2 full time Head Supervisors

4 full time Shift Leaders

8 full time Juvenile Corrections Officers

Numerous part time Juvenile Correction Officers (based upon need)

# EDUCATION at the youth center...



- North Central Ohio Educational Service Center (NCOESC) provides all educational services for the youth at the Youth Center.
- All of the youth are required to attend school while detained. This includes a minimum of 5.5 hours per weekday during the school year and a minimum of 2.5 hours per weekday during the summer.
- Residents receive individual work assignments from their respective schools. Basic skills in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies are available through electronic education programs.



- *Along with school, youth in detention are kept active from breakfast until bedtime. The Youth Center offers an array of programs and each youth attends approximately 20 hours of programming per week. Some of programs offered include:*

\*Drug & Alcohol Education/Awareness

\*Life Skills

\*Job Application & Resume Education

\*First Aid/CPR

\*Arts & Crafts

\*Guest Speakers

\*Physical Education

\*Activities to Work on Self-Esteem, Anger Management, Trauma, and Peer Pressure



# 2015 YOUTH CENTER INTAKE STATISTICS

<b>Felony Offenses</b>	<b>57</b>
Misdemeanor Offenses	239
Other (status, tobacco, alcohol)	13
Seneca County Intakes	164
Other County Intakes	146
Seneca County Sentencing	125
Other County Sentencing	66
Average Daily Population	15.6
Average Monthly Intakes	25.83
Average Length of Stay (days)	17.06

# Partnerships and Relationships

The Seneca County Juvenile and Probate Court have many wonderful partnerships and relationships that work together for the benefit the residents of Seneca County. The list below is not all-inclusive.

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- COMMUNITY ACTION FOR REDUCING SUBSTANCE ABUSE (CARSA)
  - FIRELANDS COUNSELING AND RECOVERY SERVICES
  - SENECA MENTORING YOUTH LINKS (SMYL)
  - TIFFIN PARK AND RECREATION
  - SENECA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT
  - MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD OF SENECA, SANDUSKY AND WYANDOT COUNTIES
  - SENECA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES
  - ALL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICTS
  - AREA COUNSELORS AND COUNSELING SERVICES
  - HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY
  - TIFFIN UNIVERSITY
  - SENECA COUNTY FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST COUNSEL
  - FIRST CALL FOR HELP
  - THE OHIO STATE EXTENSION SERVICE
  - UNITED WAY
  - OTTAWA, SANDUSKY, SENECA COUNTY JOINT SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
  - TIFFIN COMMUNITY YMCA
  - COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA)
  - ST. FRANCIS EARTH LITERACY CENTER
  - CAMP GLEN
  - CAMP FIRE BOYS AND GIRLS
  - FOSTORIA COMMUNITY YMCA
  - PATCHWORKS HOUSE