

CAYSA CHRONICLES



NEW YORK CAYSA CORRECTIONS AND YOUTH SERVICES ASSOCIATION



The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision offers its employees many opportunities for professional development and growth through regional and statewide symposiums and single day events. NYCAUSA's five regions bring fresh topics to their members every spring in a series of one day programs. NYS Minorities in Criminal Justice (NYSMICJ), an affiliate organization, also brings regional programs to its members. A recent program held in Region 3 near Albany was a big success. One of the workshops focused on leadership skill development, a critical workplace skill.

Led by Kathleen McLean of the McLean group, the workshop centered on Emotional Intelligence, a

concept borne out of the work by Daniel Goleman in the 1990's. Emotional Intelligence, EQ for short, is the basis for social and emotional learning, the foundation for today's workplace.

EQ's five components include self-awareness, self-regulation, internal motivation, empathy and social skills. Each component is linked to the other and serves as the building blocks to transform one's thoughts and behaviors. The workshop provided participants with strategies to reframe their thoughts and identify different approaches to problem solving. For example, if someone cuts you off on your daily commute and your go-to strategy is to curse them out or make a gesture toward them, turn it around, wish them a pleasant day and feel the difference a warm emotion leaves in you rather than the emotion of rage and anger.

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New skills take time to learn

Practice this over the course of a few weeks to acquire a state of balance. When your emotions are regulated, your health improves, your outlook on life improves and possibly your job opportunities improve. Alicia Smith-Roberts, newly appointed Assistant Commissioner, attended the

conference, and pointed out to workshop participants that DOCCS values individuals with a positive outlook who are solution focused and live their life balanced with Emotional Intelligence.

Leadership opportunities are everywhere. Using EQ concepts works equally well at home, at work or in any situation. How we react to a situation can shape

our day, our week and our career. We always have a choice in how we respond to an event or situation.



My first year in corrections: The value of the CAYSA 27th Annual Training Symposium

Robert Baker



Looking back at my first year as a teacher in the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, the 27th annual CAYSA Training Symposium at the Desmond Hotel looms large in my development as an educator in a correctional facility. In retrospect, the theme “Leading the Way” was quite appropriate as it led the way to my becoming more effective as an instructor.

When I began my career in DOCCS last spring I received training and was able to shadow some of the fine teachers I would be working with, however, I still felt less than fully prepared to teach a class in a correctional facility. In hindsight, the CAYSA symposium, coming approximately six months after I was hired was perfectly timed in that I was beginning to understand what I still needed to learn and was able to choose the workshops that suited my needs.

From the outset, one important feature of the symposium was during the free time available before and after the workshops. Networking with instructors from other facilities helped me gain insight and see the world of corrections in a new light.

When it came to the actual workshops, each had great value. Sharon Burstein’s talk was a great way to begin Symposium. Working in corrections bring you in contact with people of very diverse backgrounds and it can be challenging. Working with students who, in some cases, have no interest in advancing their education can be difficult. Her topic, “The Power of the Possible” was invaluable in helping me develop strategies on how to connect with individuals with varied backgrounds.

As someone who had little knowledge of gangs going into my current position, I found Michael D’Amore’s “Gang Awareness & Staff Safety” helped give me the knowledge to understand what I was seeing and hearing in the classroom. For example, what I thought was a simple design on a folder was

really a gang symbol and this knowledge allowed me to pass along information to the officers in order to help keep my facility safe.

Thursday began with a fascinating look at the latest drug trends. Jim Wesley helped open my eyes with his workshop “Drug Threats 2018: Statistics, Identification, Effects, Drug Testing.” I had almost no knowledge of fentanyl and had never heard of krokodil before. Now I have a better understanding of what to watch for in my students’ behavior as well as what can be done to help in the event of an overdose. In this era when opioid overdoses seem so prevalent, it’s good to know Narcan exists to help counteract an overdose if it should happen to someone near me.

Six months into this job, I began to recognize that working evenings and coming through those gates five days a week causes a certain amount of stress for both myself and my family. This is why I signed up for Linda Carignan-Everts’ workshop “Solutions for Managing Stress.” I was only a little surprised at how many of the top 10 life stressors affected me (7), but I was pleased at the seemingly simple ways to counteract these stressors. They not only helped me on the job but I brought these tips home and we use some of them in our family even now.

On a practical level Vendorama was a fantastic way to discover new resources for the classroom. On a spiritual level it was uplifting to find out about the Leatherstocking Honor Flight and hear the stories about this wonderful program for veterans. It made me glad to be at the conference and happy to donate to the cause.

All in all, looking back at my first CAYSA training symposium, I know I was fortunate to attend when I did and that it helped “lead” me to being a better teacher for NYS DOCCS.

Regional Elections



Consider running for a regional seat. More information to follow!!!



This issue of the CAYSA Chronicles featured several of the training options offered through our agency. Training is a crucial component to maintaining and expanding one’s skills and knowledge. Whether you have less than a year on the job or are a veteran employee, there is always something to learn or be reminded of.

Good, consistent training increases employee confidence, performance and productivity. Training also provides a network of opportunities to enhance your understanding of your role and value to the field of corrections.

Mark your Calendars

<u>Region</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Genesee Community College	March 15, 2019
2	Crowne Plaza, Lake Placid	June 7, 2019
3	Red Lion Inn, Wolf Rd, Colonie	May 10, 2019
4/5	SUNY New Paltz	May 10, 2019
6	Holiday Inn, Waterloo	May 3, 2019
NAAWS	Niagara Falls, NY	June 3-5, 2019
ACA Summer Conference	Boston, MA	Aug 2-6, 2019
NYSMICJ Annual Symposium	Albany, NY	Sept. 18-20, 2019
NYCAYSA Annual Symposium	The Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, Poughkeepsie, NY	October 23-25, 2019

