

Letters from Proponents

June 23, 2009

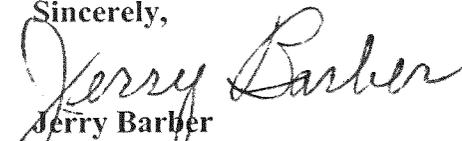
State of Illinois Commission
on Government Forecasting
and Accountability

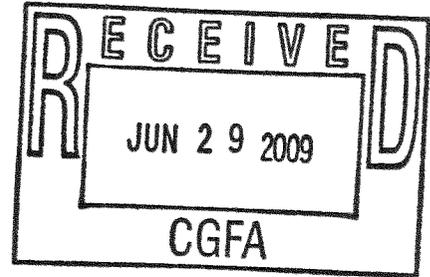
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

I read the coverage story by The Telegraph newspaper in Alton, IL of the hearing required to be held when such a facility as Pere Marquette Youth Center has been proposed to be shut down. After looking at the evidence, there is only one thing that should come from it. Shut the facility down as soon as possible. It almost makes me ill that our state government has been allowing over \$200,000 per resident to be spent in services for these residents when a viable option exists at the Warrenville facility. As is probably to be assumed, the economic stake holders were at the hearing supporting its remaining open. The political stake holders were there as well supporting the remaining open option. Of course, Senator Demuzio and Rep. Beiser, among others, are almost obliged to show support or face negative consequences in their next reelection bid. This way they can tell their constituents that they "tried there best." Please take this very small step toward getting our state financial house in order.

Sincerely,

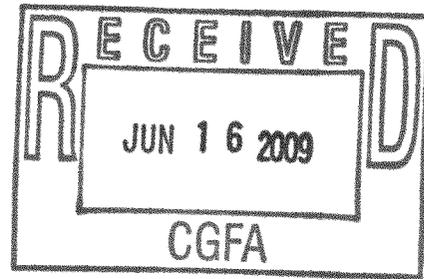

Jerry Barber
32 Charles Drive
Glen Carbon, IL 62034



Letters from Opponents

June 12, 2009

Trevor J. Clatfelter, Deputy Director
Commission on Government
Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706



RE: Illinois Youth Center Pere Marquette Closure

Dear Mr. Clatfelter::

As a part of Governor Quinn's budget proposal, Illinois Youth Center Pere Marquette is slated to close in September 2009.

My name is Coena Royal-Curtis. I have worked at IYC Pere Marquette for 16 years. I hired on when the facility housed juvenile male offenders. At that time, we housed 79 male youth. In October 2004, we transitioned to work with juvenile female offenders. After working with young men for 12 years, I was hesitant about working with females. Working with the girls seemed hard at first due to them being so guarded because of trust issues and a lot of traumatic events. However, I soon found that I enjoyed working with juveniles, and gender was not an issue.

In 2006, IYC Pere Marquette became the model facility for the Department of Juvenile Justice. When we became a modified therapeutic community, it allowed us to "think outside the box." We were able to become creative in how we dealt with discipline, how we processed things with the girls, and how we rewarded the girls' progress. IYC Pere Marquette has always been considered small and unique, but it is the small population and the uniqueness of the programs and services offered that make this facility successful for the girls. According to the Department of Juvenile Justice, our mission is:

"Understanding that youth have different needs than adults, it is the mission of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice to preserve public safety by reducing recidivism. Youth committed to the Department's care will receive individualized services provided by the qualified staff that give them the skills to become productive citizens."

IYC Pere Marquette has lived up to this mission statement. Not only do we realize youth are different from adults, we realize juvenile female offenders are different from juvenile male offenders. We are securing public safety by reducing recidivism as well. Since 2005 we have reduced our recidivism rate to half. That is a great accomplishment. This means we are teaching the girls the necessary skills needed to successfully reintegrate back into their communities. The mission statement mentions individualized planning. Each girl has individualized treatment plans. All the girls here are treated as individuals, not grouped together. They all receive intensive counseling from qualified staff that care about their well-being. The academic program has also been successful in regards to the number of girls receiving their high school diploma and GED Certificates. Many of the graduates have the opportunity to study and take the ACT test. They are also given assistance in completing the FAFSA form for financial support. For the girls that need additional assistance, we have

qualified special education teachers. The academic program gives the girls additional assistance by assigning them tutors. Many of the girls have struggled in academics and sometimes would quit going to school. However, they get the support needed here, and we see them thrive.

When speaking of the closure, it is often brought up that it will help the budget. What I do not understand is right now the Department of Juvenile Justice has six (6) juvenile male facilities and two (2) juvenile female facilities. The budget proposal is to consolidate the two female facilities (IYC Pere Marquette and IYC Warrenville). Why not consolidate two of the juvenile male facilities to save money? Why only have one juvenile female facility? I am aware it was done in the past, but now the juvenile facility up north (IYC Warrenville) houses medium to maximum girls, and IYC Pere Marquette down south houses minimum to medium. There appears to be more success in rehabilitating the girls when you keep the minimum from the maximum.

As I mentioned in one of the paragraphs above, becoming the first modified therapeutic model allowed IYC Pere Marquette to be creative. We started community service projects for the girls. The girls participated in the United Way Community Christmas. This project allowed them to help sort and wrap gifts for community agencies to give to their clients who would normally not have a Christmas due to monetary issues. The girls also participate in Adopt-a-Highway. The girls adopted a part of the highway that they cleaned and beautified by planting flowers. In addition, the girls participated in an Equestrian Program at a nursing home. In this program the girls groomed horses that were used as therapy for the residents of the nursing home. All these activities, in my opinion, have been therapeutic for the girls because the girls have an opportunity to give back to the community.

Along with the community service projects, IYC Pere Marquette allowed the girls to participate in community day release programs. IYC Pere Marquette identifies activities that would be entertaining and educational for the girls to do. Many of the girls have had limited access to cultural events, and this way they are enlightened and entertained. Last year and this year the girls were invited to the Principia College Dance Recital. The girls really enjoyed being on a college campus and watching the performance. Recently, the girls were taken on a field trip to learn about the City of Alton's history. They went to historical sites and to the museum. Considering some of the girls have not experienced a formal gala. Last year IYC Pere Marquette had a gala for the girls. Formal dresses, shoes, and jewelry were brought in for the girls by staff. The theme was "One Moment in Life." The girls were taught proper etiquette and were served a five-course meal. Many of the girls state they had never worn a formal gown, and they felt really pretty. We are planning another gala for the girls who were not here when we held the first one. This event was very rewarding for the girls. If IYC Pere Marquette does not close, we have other projects such as this planned.

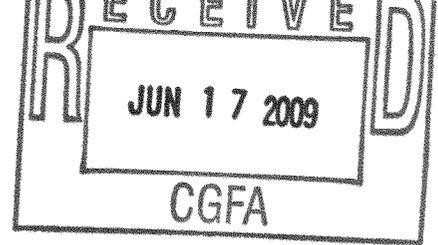
In regards to funding for IYC Pere Marquette, our funding is for 40 girls, but right now the facility is only housing 20 girls because we do not have enough security staff to keep both housing units open. When you are paying resources for one number of youth and you have less, it makes it appear that to fund the program is more costly. However, if two more security staff were employed at IYC Pere Marquette, the facility could open the other dormitory and could receive the maximum number of 40 girls. This in itself would decrease or balance out the cost.

My final thought or concern is where do we go from here? If IYC Pere Marquette closes, I am aware that we are being offered jobs elsewhere. What I do not understand is why we are being offered positions that will cause us to have to uproot our families and relocate or cause us to have to drive over an hour (or more) one way. This is a concern because there are vacancies at other facilities that are closer, such as Southwestern Correctional Center in East St. Louis, Illinois. I am not complaining because I guess things could be worse, but current job openings that we have been given to choose from is causing some staff to have to make decisions that will have a significant affect on their families. This really concerns me.

I am not certain of what I can say to persuade you to support Illinois Youth Center Pere Marquette and go against closing this facility. The grounds here are beautiful. In my opinion the look of our facility plays a significant factor in the girls' journey to be rehabilitated because the facility does not look like a juvenile correctional facility. Our facility looks like a historical campsite with dormitory living space. IYC Pere Marquette has a family atmosphere. Many parents of the girls that are here often tell us they are glad that their child was sent to our facility. Do not get me wrong. They would prefer their child did not get into trouble, but their being at IYC Pere Marquette puts their minds at ease. Even after many of the girls are granted parole, they still call staff here when they need support. Even the girls' parents call staff to get assistance in seeking additional resources for their child. I cannot say enough about what good I believe we do for the girls. I hope from the writing of this letter, you can see how we are making a difference and upholding the mission of the Department of Juvenile Justice. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Coena Royal-Curtis
Counselor



Dear Director Long:

We are writing in response to a report dated May 15, 2009 which Director Kurt Friedenauer sent to you. In this report, Director Friedenauer made it sound as if IYC-Pere Marquette was crumbling to the ground in ruins; this is simply not true. We would like for you to get a realistic picture of our facility before you decide whether or not we should close.

The report stated that the population growth for juvenile females has been on the decline. On the surface Mr. Friedenauer's statement seems to be correct; however, there appears to be an increase in the number of juvenile females being held in county juvenile detention centers. Could this decreasing trend in juvenile female incarceration be due to the increased profitability of the county juvenile detention system, thereby keeping the funds in the hands of counties and out of the state correctional facilities? Are we sending more violent offenders to be housed in community detention centers and is there adequate supervision in those facilities for these more violent youth?

According to Mr. Friedenauer, on May 11, 2009, IYC-Warrenville had a population of 77 and IYC-Pere Marquette had a population of 22. He also says IYC-Warrenville's ideal capacity is 86 and a rated capacity of 108. The current population of 97 youth will be over the ideal capacity and gives little room for increase should the juvenile female population rise. It is true that IYC-Pere Marquette has a small population; however, we could have served more youth had the Department of Juvenile Justice hired three more youth supervisors to replace those who had left the State's employment for varying reasons. With the hiring of these three youth supervisors, the now vacant dormitory could have been opened and the number of youth served could have doubled. With more youth served, the per capita costs would have been far less.

Also concerning "few major repairs not being conducted within the last five years" as Mr. Friedenauer states, if the facility was in such disrepair, why is it that the framers of the Department of Juvenile Justice chose IYC-Pere Marquette to become the model facility for the entire Illinois Juvenile Justice System? Whose responsibility should it have been to have these repairs completed? When was the Illinois Capital Development Board Survey completed? It has been stated by the Springfield Journal Register that the repairs on the Governor's mansion would exceed \$12 million. The sum of \$1.2 million seems small in comparison.

On page one of the report, Mr. Friedenauer states, "Within the current closure plan, the same drug treatment services will be provided for youth occupying one housing unit consisting of two wings at IYC-Warrenville." If this is true why was IYC-Pere Marquette chosen as the pilot program site for the entire Department of Juvenile Justice? We believe the tranquil surroundings of IYC-Pere Marquette was a strong factor in the decision to begin a modified therapeutic community in such an area. The location promotes relaxation and reflection which is essential to the healing process these girls require.

Mr. Friedenauer further states, "In fact, based on both the Department of Juvenile Justice and Department of Corrections FY10 budget request, there are enough positions available throughout the agency to ensure that each of these 45 staff is offered a position within *close proximity to their home residence*." It is true we were given several choices within our job classification; however, all of these choices necessitate our seeking housing or relocating our families since they are not within driving distance of our homes. Mr. Friedenauer also states, "...the Department of Juvenile Justice FY10 budget request includes 16 additional educators to be disseminated throughout the juvenile justice facilities, some of whom could be placed at IYC-Warrenville." In fact, there were no educator positions made available on the lists from which we were given to choose.

It is true we have had to move out of the facility in the event of flooding. But, it was only in the years 1973, 1993, and 2008 that the flooding was so severe it necessitated our moving the youth to other facilities. Two of those years, 1973 and 1993, staff was moved with youth and continued to provide services. The sole difference was the location in which the services were delivered, which was in the general vicinity of IYC-Pere Marquette. Due to a change in policy, it was only in 2008 that youth were removed from the general area of IYC-Pere Marquette and moved to IYC-Warrenville with staff not being moved with them. An access road could easily be established by extending the Ski Lift Road to Powerline Road. This would give adequate access in the event of another major flood and would not require a great deal of effort since a previously existing road could serve as a base. The report also states, "Storm water is a major concern due to the site being partially located in a flood plain between steep bluffs." In the past eleven years, there has only been one incident where storm runoff has been a major problem. Who can predict storm damage in any location?

On page five of the report, Mr. Friedenauer states the classrooms are covered with wood paneling and the dorms are made of similar construction. He is correct in that the walls are of similar construction, but they are made of concrete blocks not wood paneling. The only wood paneling in the educational wing of the carriage house exists in the library and the Educational Facility Administrator's office. In discussing the adequacy of the administration building the report states, "A dedicated training room does not exist in the building." It is true such a space does not exist in the administration building, but those facilities are located in the educational wing of the carriage house building.

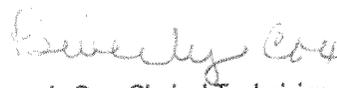
The report states, "Public visitation is uninviting and lacks privacy." If this is truly the case, why do so many individual's praise IYC-Pere Marquette for the beauty of the facility and make special arrangements to come for a visit. Many administrators make it a point to visit and partake of our dining facilities.

As you can see, there are many falsehoods in the report given to Mr. Long. Please feel free to visit the facility and check out the grounds for yourself. We would love to have you come see our beautiful, historical facility and the good work that is being done to facilitate these young ladies reintegration back into society as productive citizens.

Sincerely,



Cindy L. Gochenour, Special Educator



Beverly Cox, Clerical Technician

Director Dan Long
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Director Long:

On March 18th, the employees at IYC-Pere Marquette were informed the facility would be closing as part of Governor Quinn's budget proposal. Being established in 1961, this facility has a long history of serving the State of Illinois as an institution for the rehabilitation of troubled youth. In 2004, the framers of the Department of Juvenile Justice decided IYC-Pere Marquette would be the perfect place to begin to utilize the strategies and techniques they wanted to implement in an effort to better serve the youth of the State of Illinois. They further stated that there was no downstate facility devoted to juvenile females and this placed an undue burden on the families of the females; therefore, the facility would be changed from housing juvenile males to juvenile females. Pere Marquette became the model program for what would become the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. The officials for the Department of Juvenile Justice are now proposing closing IYC-Pere Marquette and moving the young ladies housed there to IYC-Warrenville.

Department officials have stated they will save \$2.7 million by closing IYC-Pere Marquette. In reality, their own projections indicate their budget will increase by 2.3%. Where did all the savings go; what happened to those dollars? What is the monetary benefit of closing the facility which was the pilot program for the entire Department of Juvenile Justice? Pere Marquette has been described as a modified therapeutic community with an emphasis on drug and alcohol treatment. Up through October 2007, the program had been paid for through a grant known as the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment grant. The grant could have been resubmitted but was allowed to expire. Since October 2007, the program has been funded through tax dollars which adds \$400,000 additional dollars to the operating costs of IYC-Pere Marquette. At this time, only three of the eight facilities dedicated to juveniles are located in Southern Illinois. If IYC-Pere Marquette closes, there will no longer be a facility dedicated to juvenile females and only two for juvenile males.

It is true IYC-Pere Marquette has a small population of youth housed at their facility. However, this was the design of the Department of Juvenile Justice. The framers of the department envisioned smaller youth to staff ratios in an effort to build positive relationships with the youth, thereby giving these young, impressionable young ladies the tools they need to become productive citizens. In just two short years the recidivism rate at IYC-Pere Marquette has dropped from 41.3% to 22.8%. There have been 184 young ladies pass through IYC-Pere Marquette since 2005. Of that total, only three have gone on to become inmates in the Illinois adult system. Twenty five of these youth have attained a GED or a high school diploma. Given these statistics, it appears the program will save the taxpayers in reduced incarcerations in the future. The officials for the Department of Juvenile Justice say the youth will receive the same level of care at IYC-Warrenville as they do at Pere Marquette. The youth to staff ratio at Pere Marquette is 1 to 2.47. How will these youth receive the same one-on-one assistance in a larger institution, with a larger population, than they now receive at IYC-Pere Marquette? A strong bond

between the young ladies and their families is encouraged at Pere Marquette. Is there no longer a need for a facility for juvenile females in downstate? Warrenville is located 32 miles west of Chicago. Is it no longer a burden on the young ladies families to travel extreme distances to visit their children? Families from downstate will be forced to travel several hours to visit their children. How is traveling such long distances going to aid in creating those strong bonds? Is a facility for juvenile females no longer needed in downstate?

What happens to the families of the staff who have given such a stellar effort to implementing the strategies and techniques the framers of the department had envisioned? If staff is offered the opportunity to move to other facilities outside this area, they may have to uproot their families, or worse yet, separate from their families; while others may have to join the unemployment lines. Those on the unemployment lines will not be paying the taxes that they current contribute to the State of Illinois, nor will they be contributing to the economies of the counties in which they now reside. Some may even find themselves in need of public assistance. How will this serve the state in closing the deficit gap it currently faces? The unemployment rates in the counties from which the majority of the employees of IYC-Pere Marquette reside, exceed both the current national and state rates of 8.1% and 8.6% respectively. Dupage County, where Warrenville is located, has an unemployment rate of 6.5%. If Pere Marquette closes, won't this just be contributing to an already dire situation?

If the way we have treated incarcerated youth in the past has been inadequate for their rehabilitation, and we have finally come by a system that is reducing recidivism, why are we considering taking them out of that smaller more personal environment and placing them in a larger more impersonal one? For your pleasure, we are enclosing a brief history of IYC-Pere Marquette and how it came to be.

Sincerely,


Cindy L. Gochenour, Special Educator


Beverly Cox, Clerical Technician

Director Dan Long
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Director Long:

As part of Governor Quinn's budget proposal, IYC-Pere Marquette is slated to close by September, 2009. IYC-Pere Marquette was designated as the model facility for the new Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. The proposal is to consolidate the operations at IYC-Pere Marquette at the Warrenville Youth Center in DuPage County. Once again, downstate loses. There are currently only three facilities in downstate Illinois to house youth; two of them are for juvenile males and only one dedicated to juvenile females. This would throw an undue hardship on families who will have to travel several hours to northern Illinois to visit their children. Building strong family relationships is one of the focuses of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. Also, the care doesn't stop when the youth leave the facility. Many youth and parents have called back into the institution to request assistance or just let staff know how they are doing. The youth are also tracked once they leave to ensure they are properly adjusting to life on the outside.

Currently, 14.4% of the workforce at IYC-Pere Marquette resides in Calhoun County in southern Illinois. Calhoun already has an unemployment rate of 10.5%, which is higher than the state average of 8.6% and the national average of 8.1%. The majority of the employees come from Jersey and Madison counties which also have unemployment rates much higher than the state and national averages. Dupage County has an unemployment rate of 6.5% which is well below the state and national averages. Throwing people onto entitlement programs and unemployment lines will only contribute to the economic downturn that we are now experiencing. People who are out of work cannot assist the State of Illinois to pull itself up out of the deficit it faces. If people are not working, they will not be paying taxes and contributing to the economy. DuPage County is located in northern Illinois. Once again, southern Illinois is left with no economic benefit while services move north. The closing of the facility would not only be detrimental to the employees and the youth they serve but also to vendors who supply the facility; again, contributing to the downturn in the economy.

According to Ms. Januari Smith, communications manager for the Illinois Department of Corrections, the girls from Pere Marquette will receive the same level of care and resources at Warrenville as they now enjoy at Pere Marquette. In actuality, this is not true. Due to the small and unique nature of IYC-Pere Marquette, the youth are given far more personal one-on-one attention that large institutions cannot provide. Healthy professional relationships are encouraged with the youth in an effort to connect them with positive role models. The larger the

institution, the more difficult this becomes. At IYC-Pere Marquette, youth are strongly encouraged to further their education and are given the assistance necessary to choose a suitable career path. Such assistance includes writing letters to colleges and universities and aiding youth in researching available career opportunities. At least three girls have attended college upon leaving IYC-Pere Marquette. Time constraints limit this kind of assistance in larger institutions.

It has been stated in the budget proposal that IYC-Pere Marquette is an underutilized facility. It has only been underutilized by those in power who could have sent more girls to the facility. IYC-Pere Marquette has a capacity for 43 youth; currently, they house only 17. This is not the fault of the program or staff. As Senator Demuzio stated in a recent Alton Evening Telegraph article, "...if it comes down to simply a matter of the size of the population, then they could change the model and house additional girls." With as few as two to three additional staff, the second dormitory could be reopened. When IYC-Pere Marquette was changed to a female facility rather than a male facility, those in power kept telling us Pere Marquette would only house the youth with less severe issues. In reality, they have sent youth to IYC-Pere Marquette who they knew would be hard to handle and had more severe mental issues than Pere Marquette was designed to handle. In spite of this, the recidivism rate for IYC-Pere Marquette continues to drop. With continued flexibility of staff and modification of programming, the recidivism rate dropped from a high of 41.3% in 2006 to 22.86% for 2008. Since 2005, 184 youth have come through IYC-Pere Marquette with only three having gone on to the adult system in Illinois. This speaks of the determination and dedication of staff to accomplish the goals for the Department of Juvenile Justice.

It is our understanding that this facility was always to be utilized for troubled youth. By closing the facility, what will become of the grounds and how will it be utilized to assist troubled youth? What will become of IYC-Pere Marquette and the vision of its original owner? Please allow us to continue our mission of assisting young ladies to become productive citizens for the State of Illinois.

Sincerely,


Cindy L. Gochenour, Special Educator


Beverly Cox, Clerical Technician

Director Dan Long
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Director Long:

On Wednesday, March 18th, we were informed that as part of the Governor's proposed budget, our facility was slated to close by September, 2009. We would like to express our perceptions of the facility from the employee's point of view.

The mission statement for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice is as follows:

Understanding that youth have different needs than adults, it is the mission of IDJJ to preserve public safety by reducing recidivism. Youth committed to the Department's care will receive individualized service provided by qualified staff that gives them the skills to become productive citizens.

This is the mission statement which every employee sees as they sign in each morning to begin their duties. It is a reminder of why we are here and what our goals are for the Department of Juvenile Justice. IYC-Pere Marquette is spearheading this mission. Due to our unique physical structure, IYC-Pere Marquette was designated as the model facility to focus on smaller populations with positive incentives for good behavior. The youth are not treated as objects, but as a whole child. Their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual healths are all considered in their treatment. Their treatment plans are dealt with on an individual basis with each youth receiving the treatment they need, rather than a cookie cutter approach. The staff at IYC-Pere Marquette aim to equip each youth matriculating through the facility with the tools they will need to become productive citizens. They are encouraged to use these tools they have been taught to become contributors to society rather than continuing to be a drain on the system. We were told to "think outside the box" and in doing so, we have developed a facility we feel is unique. We were continually told we were just what the framers of the Department of Juvenile Justice had envisioned.

We have provided opportunities for our population that does not exist in the larger facilities. Some of these opportunities include community service, a summer gala event, off grounds educational opportunities, Black History month activities, and opportunities to showcase the youth's talents in the arts. The youth are encouraged to give back to society by wrapping Christmas gifts for the United Way program and by assisting in animal care at a facility for developmentally impaired residents. We believe one of the most memorable events is the summer gala where young ladies, who obtain the highest level of behavior for an extended period of time, are taught the importance of

proper etiquette and given the experience to be a part of a formal event. This takes place at no cost to the department since staff volunteer and donates all of the items needed to hold the event. The young ladies who exhibit positive behavior are also allowed to attend off grounds activities such as a dance recital held at Principia College. Recently, the ladies were given an educational tour of Alton in which youth were allowed to learn of the historical value of the town. Many of these experiences would not have been afforded the youth if they had not been in a facility like IYC-Pere Marquette. It is because of our small and unique nature that we are able to offer this type of programming. Youth are given the opportunity to display their artistic abilities by participating in the annual Christmas program where they perform for staff and their parents. They also are immersed in Black History during the month of February with various speakers and activities such as the Black History trivia contest, etc. The former confinement area has been converted into an area where girls who have shown exemplary behavior are afforded a "weekend retreat" to be pampered for the weekend. This is an example of the focus shifting from negative consequences for poor behavior to positive consequences for good behavior.

Not all the educational opportunities afforded to the youth at IYC-Pere Marquette will be extended to them at a larger facility. Since the inception of the Department of Juvenile Justice, 25 young ladies have obtained their GED or high school diplomas while in the care of our facility. Currently as a part of our program, the youth who have attained their high school diploma or GED certificates have an opportunity to take the ACT test in preparation to return to the community and continue their education in an institution of higher learning. Youth planning to continue their educations beyond high school are provided the ability to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Assistance. Those youth qualifying for Special Education services are afforded those services from qualified staff. Due to shortages, these youth may not receive these services at all facilities.

The Department of Juvenile Justice was implemented because it was felt that youth have different needs than adults and should be treated as such. Now, they are attempting to close our facility and return to a treatment model from which they were trying to reorganize. In conclusion, this facility is providing the services that the framers of Department of Juvenile Justice envision and fulfilling the mission statement as written. Please help us to remain open so that we may continue to make a difference in the lives of youth who are at risk

Sincerely,


Cindy L. Gochenour, Special Educator


Beverly Cox, Clerical Technician

Dear Director Long:

We are writing to encourage you to support keeping IYC-Pere Marquette open. It is our understanding if IYC-Pere Marquette closes, the young ladies will be sent to IYC-Warrenville. It has been stated these young ladies will be receiving the same level of services they currently receive at IYC-Pere Marquette; this simply is not true. There are several educational services and opportunities offered to the young ladies that are not available at IYC-Warrenville. Though we are a small institution, we are accomplishing much in the lives of the youth entrusted to our care.

At IYC-Pere Marquette, the youth are given the opportunity to earn eighth grade diplomas, high school diplomas, and GEDs. In addition, they are afforded Title I services, Special Education services, the opportunity to take the ACT examination and assisted with filling out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Assistance) and completing college applications in order to facilitate their accessing higher education.

Many of our young ladies have attended alternative educational programs outside the public school systems. The credit earned at those facilities is not always included in their public school transcripts. At IYC-Pere Marquette, special efforts are made to locate these credits so they may be gathered into one location and the young ladies be given credit where credit is due.

Since IYC-Pere Marquette began taking young ladies in October 2004, forty-two have either received a GED or a high school diploma. Several of these graduates have had the opportunity to take the ACT exam. Since 2007 there have been nine ACT exams administered with two of them being Special Education students. Four additional students have been scheduled to sit for the exam on June 24, 2009. This exam is required by many institutions of higher learning as a prerequisite to entering their programs of study. Our first student to sit for the ACT exam received a score of 32, is enrolled in a college program, and is currently a part time employee with the Illinois Secretary of State's office. To our knowledge, the ACT is only offered to youth at IYC-Pere Marquette.

Of these forty-two graduates, fifteen were students receiving Special Education services. Special Education is a federally mandated program. The young ladies at IYC-Warrenville did not have Special Education services available to them for an extended period of time. They have just recently been afforded Special Education services while IYC-Pere Marquette has never been without Special Education services since they transitioned to females.

It is true; the girls of IYC-Pere Marquette have to be transported to IYC-Warrenville to sit for the GED exam. However, this is simply due to a change in department policy that requires a larger number of students be examined in any one testing session. Since the Department of Juvenile Justice has specified IYC-Pere Marquette be the pilot program for the entire department which requires a smaller population, they do not have the required number of students qualifying to take the GED at any one time.

As you can see, these young ladies will not receive the same level of services they currently enjoy if they are moved to IYC-Warrenville. With the recidivism rate dropping from a high of 41.3% in 2006 to 22.9% in 2008, it appears the services and opportunities extended to the youth at IYC-Pere Marquette are assisting the young ladies to become productive citizens rather than drains on society. Please consider supporting IYC-Pere Marquette's remaining open so they can continue to serve the citizens of Illinois in a positive manner. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Cindy L. Gochenour, Special Educator

Beverly Cox, Clerical Technician

06-23-09

Calligraphy

Skip Tracing and Debugging

BERTRAM A. MARSDEN

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Allen Myer; I hope and pray that you leave Godwin.
 Building in both several lakes for help by the State at Marquette
 Park and don't not lose it. It has been wonderful assist
 to help a number of Boys and now has several young ladies who
 are necessary. It is keep leave it done and no man open forever
 I pray! It has done excellent help people!

Yours

Rev B A Marsden D.D. V.M.T.
 Universal Life Press

