

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice wins national award for family engagement**



*Dr. Omar Jamil (Illinois PbS State Coordinator), Heidi Mueller (Director, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice), Ann Kuehnel (Special Education Resources Coordinator/Liaison Re-Entry, IYC Pere Marquette), James Smith (PbS Coach), and Dr. Anita Bazile (Assistant Superintendent of Programs, IYC Pere Marquette) at PbS Awards gala on August 11, 2023.*

**CHICAGO** – The [Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice](#) (IDJJ) announced today that the Illinois Youth Center (IYC) Pere Marquette in Grafton was awarded the 2023 [PbS Barbara Allen-Hagen \(BAH\) Award](#). The BAH award is a national award presented annually to one juvenile corrections facility and one juvenile detention facility. BAH recipients must show exceptional progress in their achievement of a self-identified area of growth.

This year's BAH Award for a corrections facility was presented to IYC Pere Marquette for their exemplary work in connecting families with their youth who are currently under the care of IDJJ. Officials from IDJJ accepted the award at the [Performance based Standards \(PbS\)](#) awards gala held in Philadelphia on August 11, 2023.

PbS partners with juvenile justice facilities to integrate research into practices that “improve conditions and quality of life in our nation’s juvenile facilities.” PbS offers research-based standards and performance measures that focus on making facilities safe, making programs effective, and achieving positive outcomes.

The BAH award was established in 2007 in honor of the retirement of Barbara Allen-Hagen, who worked

**Healthy kids, strong families, safe communities**

for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and dedicated her career to improving the quality of life in facilities for youths.

“I am proud of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and the Illinois Youth Center (IYC) Pere Marquette for their hard work and commitment to providing the support and guidance our youth need and deserve,” **said Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton**. “Being recognized as the 2023 PbS [Barbara Allen-Hagen \(BAH\) Award](#) recipient, IYC Pere Marquette is shining a light on ways to utilize compassionate, integrative practices to positively impact and improve the lives of our youth.”

Staff at IYC Pere Marquette have expanded connections with families of youth under the care of IDJJ by increasing in-person and virtual visiting hours, involving families more intentionally with therapeutic and educational plans for youth, and hosting family day events for families to enjoy food and fun with their children.

IDJJ **Director Heidi Mueller stated**, “IYC Pere Marquette is a special campus and has long been a shining example of how successful IDJJ can be when community partners, families and IDJJ staff collaborate to provide opportunities and support for our youth. I am so proud of my IYC Pere Marquette team for the consistent, thoughtful work they have done to expand our work with families, engage with families and partners, and redefine our ideas of what family means for our kids. IYC Pere Marquette already embodies much of IDJJ’s [21<sup>st</sup> Century Transformation](#), and I am thrilled that the IDJJ team and community partners who work with us are getting recognized for being national leaders.”

IYC Pere Marquette is the second IDJJ campus to receive the Barbara Allen Hagen Award within the last two years. IDJJ’s Illinois Youth Center in Warrenville also won the award in 2021.

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**The [Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice \(IDJJ\)](#)** was created by statute in 2006 with the mandate of safely housing and rehabilitating youth committed to its custody. The mission of IDJJ is to promote community safety and positive youth outcomes by building youth skills and strengthening families.