

Ferris School Recognized as 2021 Finalist for National Juvenile Justice Award

WILMINGTON – Delaware’s Ferris School has been selected as finalist for the 2021 PbS Barbara Allen-Hagen Award in the juvenile correction program category.

This prestigious annual award, through the national continuous improvement program Performance-based Standards (PbS), is given in three categories: correction, detention, and community residential programs. Programs are recognized based on practices that exemplify commitment to the PbS goal of facilitating positive outcomes for youth, staff and families, and mission of treating all youth in custody as ‘one of our own.’ This is the fourth time since 2017 a Delaware Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (YRS) program has been recognized as a finalist, with Ferris School, Stevenson House Detention Center and Grace Cottage previously taking home awards in each of the three categories.

“Being selected as a finalist for the Barbara Allen-Hagen Award is a true honor as it once again places Ferris School as one of the top juvenile secure care facilities in the country. I am so proud of Superintendent Tanya Banks, Assistant Superintendent George Iannetta and the entire Ferris team for their dedication and passion to helping youth and staff continue the rewarding work of juvenile rehabilitation while grappling with an unprecedented pandemic,” said **Josette Manning, Cabinet Secretary of the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, which oversees the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services.** “I wish the team the best of luck as PbS works through the selection process to choose 2021 winners.”



In 2020, programming highlights at Ferris School included a block party to thank staff for their dedication during the pandemic. In this photo, Ferris School Superintendent Tanya Banks and Ferris School Program Manager Ashley Morse pose for a photo.

All of YRS' programs voluntarily participate in the Performance-based Standards (PbS) program, which is a national data-driven improvement model that focuses on quality improvement and best practices. The PbS selection committee, made up of youth professionals, researchers, and leaders, will choose the 2021 Barbara Allen-Hagen Award winners over of the next few weeks.

"As the lead juvenile justice agency serving youth ordered to our care through the judicial system, the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services works tirelessly to coordinate supports to address the needs of youth and factors that contribute to delinquency," said **John Stevenson, director of the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services**. "As someone who began his career in juvenile rehabilitation at Ferris School, I am unbelievably proud of the staff for this recognition. Our work is not easy, but it is a calling, and celebrating moments like this is so important."

Ferris School, a Level V secure care rehabilitation facility, is an American Correctional Association accredited treatment facility providing services for youth. Ferris School offers a structured learning environment that integrates all elements of rehabilitation: Education, programming, treatment, and

therapeutic clinical programs. Offerings for youth also include a one-of-a-kind lacrosse program, music production, religious programming, and on-site student job training. In 2020, some of the programming highlights included adapting to remote education to allow youth to complete credits and graduate; encouraging COVID-19 precautions like masking and social distancing to protect staff and youth; facilitating weekly virtual video calls for youth to see their families; improving coaching and staff support; and facilitating morale boosting activities for staff. Morale activities included a block party to thank staff for their dedication during the pandemic; the Ferris Prize Patrol, where staff recognized their colleagues for exceptional work; and the Ferris Unity Board, where staff and youth shared positive experiences.

“I know the pandemic has been extremely difficult, but we were able to move forward through the comradery and commitment to youth success,” said **Tanya Banks, Ferris School Superintendent**. “I want to thank my team for their unwavering commitment and creativity in adapting in COVID and helping our youth on their rehabilitative journey. Being selected as a finalist once again for the Barbara Allen-Hagen Award is an incredible honor that we do not take lightly.”

For more information on the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, visit our website:



In 2020, Ferris School organized a block party to commemorate the hard work and dedication of staff. This photo features Ferris School Assistant Superintendent George Iannetta and Rev. Mark Gardner, Ferris School

Volunteer Coordinator and
Chaplain.

<https://kids.delaware.gov/yrs/yrs.shtml>

Delaware's Barbara Allen-Hagen Award Winners

Stevenson House Detention Center in Milford (detention) – 2019

Grace Cottage in Wilmington (community residential) – 2017

Ferris School in Wilmington (correction) – 2017

Media Contact: Jen Rini, jen.rini@delaware.gov