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A copy of the Drug & Alcohol Program Annual Report is available for review through the Chief Financial Officer, whose office is located in the Administration Building on the George Junior Republic campus.

## VETERAN STAFF PROMOTION SPOTLIGHTS 2019

Some things get better with age and George Junior Republic (GJR) staff are no exception. As a company, George Junior Republic in Indiana has one of the highest retention rates in the field of social work. Besides retaining staff, George Junior Republic also likes to develop and advance staff during the course of their professional careers. Over the past few months, three veteran employees reached new milestones (and titles) in their roles at George Junior Republic in Indiana.

### VICE PRESIDENT OF GEORGE JUNIOR REPUBLIC IN INDIANA

Brandy Stark has been employed by George Junior Republic in Indiana for over ten years. Stark began her work as an independent living case manager and therapist in the home-based program. With a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in social work, and a clinical social work license, she later became credentialed in family functional therapy and trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy. In 2011,

she advanced to clinical supervisor, oversaw home-based programming in the southern part of Indiana and completed the IARCA (Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy) Institute for Excellence Leadership program through Butler University. She was then promoted to the director and helped in the expansion of services, including the older youth, comprehensive, and group home program services. During this time states Stark, "there were increasing

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*George Junior Republic Supervisors and Administrators (L-R) Shannon Smith, Daniel Vinson, Janna Mallay, Alisa Cox, Ginny Hardin, Brandy Stark, and Abby Herman.*

## GEORGE JUNIOR REPUBLIC IN INDIANA THANKS DONORS

(APRIL 2018 – JANUARY 2019)

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## GRESSEL REPLACES LOSASSO AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



George Junior Republic's Board of Directors is pleased to announce Nathan M. Gressel as the new chief executive officer of George Junior Republic and Affiliates. Previous CEO Richard Losasso stayed on through February in order to support the transition.

Mr. Gressel has spent ten years in leadership positions at Beacon Light Behavioral Health System in Bradford, Pennsylvania, including serving as the executive director. During his tenure, he was responsible for all clinical service lines and the provision and oversight of all fiduciary responsibilities, including a \$26 million operating budget and 600 staff members in 21 Pennsylvania counties. Under his leadership, Beacon Light's service delivery system expanded to include Joint Commission accredited services. In addition to serving as executive director at Beacon Light, Mr. Gressel has served on a number of children and youth services committees and has led various strategic initiatives.

"I am looking forward to working with George Junior Republic's team of professionals. Additionally, I am excited to look at new opportunities for the agency while carrying on the mission of the organization," states Gressel.

Established in 1909, George Junior Republic has served over 60,000 youth on the 500-acre campus in Grove City, Pennsylvania. In addition, 1,300 youth and families are served each day through services provided by affiliate organizations George Junior Republic in Indiana and Preventative Aftercare, Inc., and through a partnership with the Colorado Boys Ranch.

Gressel, as the new chief executive, will oversee operations for George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania, George Junior Republic in Indiana, George Junior Republic Realty, Preventative Aftercare, Inc., and Republic Risk Retention Group, as well as the parent company, George Junior Republic.

The search for George Junior Republic's chief executive officer began in the fall of 2017 and was led by the national search firm Lambert & Associates.

demands for best practice approaches in trauma-informed care and substance abuse." Earlier this year, Stark was promoted to vice president of George Junior Republic in Indiana. "I am excited to serve as vice president and will continue to broaden my scope of work and engage with organizations and communities for the betterment of children and families across the state." Brandy is not only well respected for her leadership inside George Junior Republic but is also a valued asset in larger statewide organizations and will be serving on the IARCA board of directors this year.

From administrative staff, clinical staff, and the supervisory team, employees expressed how much they have appreciated Stark's leadership over the years. One employee stated, "Brandy is a true professional and is a role model for all of the employees at this agency. She is very much deserving of this promotion." Another employee who received extra supervision from Brandy while completing her social work licensure stated, "I really appreciate Brandy taking the time to staff cases and answer questions. She is very understanding and compassionate." A veteran home-based worker noted, "Brandy was my supervisor when I first started at George Junior Republic in Indiana six years ago. I was very new to this field of work and very nervous about how to manage my time and how to appropriately incorporate self-care into my stressful and hectic work schedule. I would not still be here in this position had it not been

for Brandy's guidance, support, advice, and positive attitude. I still, to this day, tell everyone that she is the best supervisor I have ever had."

As Brandy reflects on her time at George Junior Republic in Indiana, she stated. "I feel so blessed and fortunate to have made George Junior Republic in Indiana my professional home. I have grown to care for my co-workers as if they are my extended family. I am fortunate enough to witness the employees here grow both personally and professionally and I am so thankful I get to be part of their lives and adventures. I never imagined I would have the opportunity daily to work with such passionate and truly genuine people. I can very honestly say that looking back on my life, some of the best people I have ever met are my co-workers. I know we don't make the most money in this profession and the job can be really tough but I know every day that our team made a difference in a tough world."

When asked what the plans are for George Junior Republic in Indiana, she replied, "Currently we have 100 percent of our clinical staff trained in an evidence-based program. Into the future, I want every staff to continue training and become credentialed in the most up-to-date evidence-based approaches. This will assist us in helping families just as we have for the past 25 years. Families are changing and more affected by substance abuse than ever so our future goals consist of a lot of evidence-based substance

abuse training in order to help the children and families we serve."

## **MALLAY TO SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF OLDER YOUTH SERVICES AND ADDICTION**

Janna Mallay has a master's degree in social work and is a licensed clinical social worker. She began her tenure at George Junior Republic in Indiana in 2012 by providing independent living services at the Columbus group home. Due to her hard work and effort, she was promoted to treatment team coordinator. After the group home closed, Mallay took over a home-based position providing independent living and home-based therapy in several counties. In 2015, she was credentialed as a functional family therapist and later was credentialed in trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy and promoted to clinical supervisor. In recent months, through the tuition assistance benefit offered by George Junior Republic, Mallay obtained additional coursework and her (temporary) clinical addiction counselor license. Today, she is on track to receive her full license in 2019. With this additional specialization, she will be overseeing the organization's expansion and assisting other staff as they become credentialed in addiction treatment.

Mallay is passionate about older youth services (OYS) and addictions and combined programming to develop the group 'WeCovery' approximately one year ago. This teen group combined OYS and comprehensive clients by

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providing them with substance abuse prevention programming in a group setting. In January 2019, Janna was promoted to director of older youth services and addictions. With her new role, she will also provide clinical oversight to the staff and the supervisory team in the older youth services program. Regarding her new role at George Junior Republic, Janna, relayed "I have gathered amazing learning experiences and memories from each of my positions. In my opinion, George Junior Republic in Indiana has the best employees who I have treasured being a co-worker, colleague, and supervisor through the years. I am honored to move into this new position and am very excited about the possibilities

for the future programs and to help my team members continue to make amazing differences in families' lives."

### **COX PROMOTED TO CLINICAL SUPERVISOR**

Alisa Cox was hired in 2012 as an OYS case manager, soon thereafter; she earned a master's degree in social work and transitioned to the position of therapist. Upon earning her clinical license in social work (LCSW), she advanced into the position of clinical team lead. Alisa has extensive experience in the field of social work including equine therapy, substance abuse treatment, and trauma-focused cognitive behavior

therapy. Alisa was recently promoted to clinical supervisor and will be overseeing staff in Regions 15 and 18 that includes Scott, Clark, Harrison, Washington, Floyd, Ripley, Dearborn, Decatur, Ohio, Jefferson and Switzerland counties. "My time at George Junior Republic in Indiana has been rewarding," states Cox. "The organization has provided me with opportunity to grow as a professional and to share my expertise with a diverse group of people."



## **STAFF MEMBER CELEBRATES 25 YEARS SERVING INDIANA YOUTH**

On February 21, Jackie Petrie celebrated her 25th anniversary working at GJR in Indiana. Over the past several years, Jackie has worked primarily as a home-based case manager and visitation supervisor. As an involved member of the community she serves, she maintains connections with law enforcement, legal staff,

and other community advocates to collaborate and ensure community safety. What makes Jackie an outstanding employee is her deep compassion for those in need, dedication to excellence, passion for her work, and willingness to sacrifice personal time to ensure she is meeting the needs of others.



***Congratulations Jackie on 25 years of dedicated service.***

# DONORS BRING HOLIDAY HAPPINESS TO OLDER YOUTH

Participants in the George Junior Republic in Indiana Older Youth program enjoyed a wonderful holiday party in December. Ranging in age from 16 – 20 years old, youth represented the counties of Bartholomew, Brown, Clark, Decatur, Dearborn, Floyd, Greene, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Johnson, Lawrence, Monroe, Ohio, Owen, Ripley, Scott, Shelby, Switzerland, and Washington. Each of the 80 youth-attendees received a Christmas gift given through the generosity of donors. Although

an additional 140 youth were unable to attend the party, they also received a Christmas gift. For many, this was the first time they had the opportunity to celebrate the holiday with other youth in similar situations.

The Older Youth program provides skills to youth aging out of foster care. Older youth in this program do not have homes to return to and George Junior Republic in Indiana works with these youth to teach them self-sufficiency skills in order to

lead them into successful adulthood. In 2018, George Junior Republic in Indiana served 800 youth and families.

On behalf of George Junior Republic in Indiana and the youth entrusted in our care, we would like to extend a special thank you to all the charitable donors in Indiana. Your generous donation and/or support afforded us the opportunity to provide Indiana older youth with a wonderful Christmas party filled with joy and cheer.



*(L-R) Former Older Youth Services youth participant Maeve Scott, Department of Child Services Director Terry Stigdon, and the Vice President of George Junior Republic in Indiana Brandy Stark.*

# THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

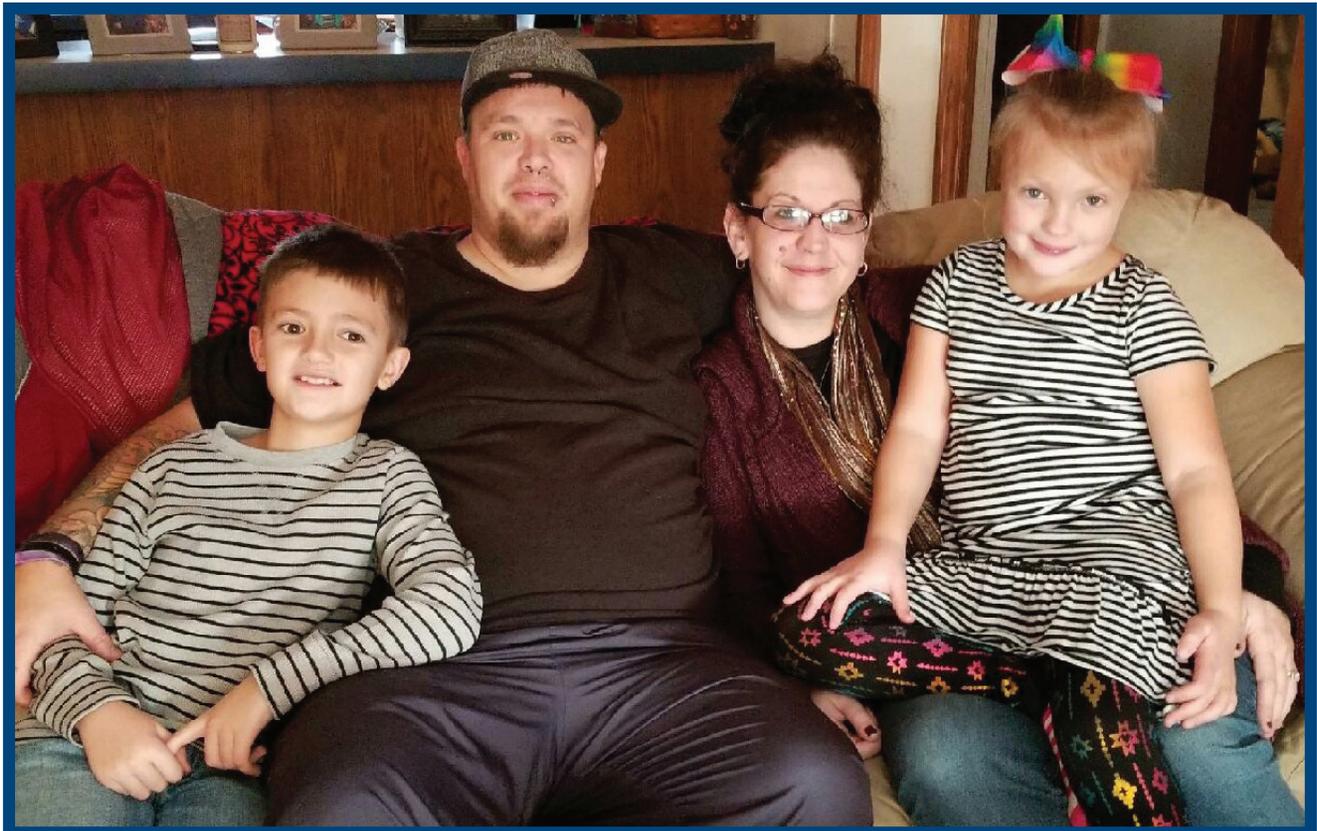
Relationships serve as a powerful force in life and can be underestimated as the key to lasting change; especially in situations that feel hopeless. For Dock Henry, when he was in the dark place of addiction, he did not know his life could be different. Recently, he shared that it was the relationship with his George Junior Republic in Indiana case manager Jackie Petrie, that made all the difference. "A lot of people look at addicts as bad people. When you see people as human beings, that is what changes people. Jackie never gave up on me. She showed me a path I did not think was possible

and she made certain my rights were being followed through the Department of Children Services (DCS). For this, I owe my life."

Dock and his two children were involved with DCS for two years. One year ago, his case closed successfully and services provided by his case manager ended. Since that time, Dock has been able to maintain positive changes in his life, including three years of sobriety, full custody of his children and ongoing employment as a certified addiction and recovery coach through the Home with Hope

in Lafayette, Indiana. In addition, he also celebrated new milestones in his life this past year including getting married and doubling his recovery coaching caseload to over 43 clients.

He attributes his ongoing success to developing an empowered mindset. At the start, "I didn't feel like I had a choice to get high or not. For me to change, I had to realize that DCS did not take my kids. I gave them up because I wanted to get high. The selfishness of my addiction was very high in me." During his recovery period, he



*Doc Henry enjoys time with his wife and children.*

unfortunately experienced the loss of someone close to him, but with his commitment to a drug-free lifestyle, he was able to handle the loss without using drugs. This was a big deal. During this period, he began to realize he was not alone in his fight against addiction and realized there is hope. These, as described by Dock, were two pivotal concepts to lasting change.

As he began to manage his addiction, he found a sense of community by attending weekly Narcotics Anonymous meetings, working with and watching clients successfully graduate and get their children back, and working to develop a healthy relationship with his children; including assisting

with homework and attending events like daddy/daughter dances. By focusing on these positive events, he was able to stay on the right track. "I don't enter the devil's playground," Dock stated. "I realized my addiction does not need to consume the rest of my life. I was very close-minded and hateful before. Now, I have love. I understand others now. I believe it can be better for them too."

Although he continues to deal with some residual issues with his children, they are much happier today and tell him so. Dock understands their fragile nature and the risks of them becoming addicted. "I must continue educating them about how horrible and real

addiction is while protecting their childhood. He takes this role very seriously. "I don't want them to suffer what I had suffered, nor would I put my children through the experience again of having an actively using and addicted father."

Understanding drug addiction is now communicated on a national platform, Dock reflected on the addiction crisis. He wants to serve as an advocate and teach others how to turn their lives around. He also wants to show those suffering in addiction his example of change and let them know resources are available. "There is hope and help out there. Life does get better and I am living proof of that."



## INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCES AND CHILD ADVOCACY

*Fostering Positive Outcomes for Children & Families*

Vice President Brandy Stark is proud to serve as a member of the IARCA Board of Directors.



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*Mission Statement:*

George Junior Republic is dedicated to helping at-risk youth become successful, well-adjusted adults capable of achieving a higher degree of citizenship and a better understanding of responsibility to society, family, and self.