

# Child Support Report

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OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

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## A Race By Any Other Name

By Margot Bean  
OCSE Commissioner

This November, after months of carefully planned training, I competed in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Stockade-athon, the oldest major U.S. 15k Road Race. I reached my goals of finishing the race with no injuries and averaging less than 9-minute miles at the finish line, an achievement I compare, with satisfaction, to my results in a similar race over 10 years ago.

Comparisons are commonplace in the world of sports; however, a different sort of comparison came to mind while I was accelerating up the last of many hills: the similarities between running a rigorous race and my term as OCSE Commissioner.

So, as my departure from OCSE approaches, I want to share a few of my thoughts with you.

### Commitment to a Vision

To begin, both efforts—the race and the commissionership—required commitment from the start. I knew that following a well-planned workout schedule that included getting up early to run and pump iron would advance my chance for a successful race. Similarly,

when I started my term in July 2005, I knew

what it meant to develop and follow strategic plans and to work as part of our program's national partnership of Federal, State, Tribal, and local child support workers. After all, I had served as Child Support Attorney on Guam and as Director of the child support agency on Guam and in New York State.

I had also served as President of the National Child Support Enforcement Association, a position that led me to The Hague to pursue formal cooperation



Commissioner Bean

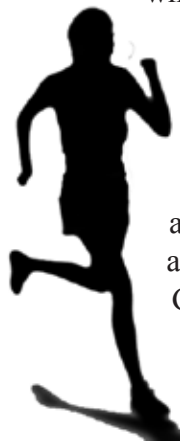
with child support programs around the world, and to Capitol Hill to testify on behalf of the program.

These experiences growing up in the child support program helped me prepare for the job of

Commissioner, just as running the hills on Guam helped to prepare me then and now for long, difficult races.

I brought with me to Washington the commitment to develop the sustainable partnerships needed to increase the number of families in which child support truly is a reliable source of income, and I was determined to lead OCSE, with our Tribal, State, and local agency colleagues, to fully realizing the goals of our National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan.

What I didn't expect, however, were a few of the



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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Child Support Enforcement

impediments on the way; nor did I expect, on the other hand, the amount of progress we made in such a short time, despite them. In other words, a mountain can look like an impossible hill as you start the trek upward; but when you reach the top, the view makes the journey worth the effort. It is preparation, collaboration, and patience that make the path to the top possible to achieve and more rewarding than you expected.

## Focusing on Results

The primary focus of my goals as Commissioner were to increase child support collections, more effectively prevent and manage arrears, negotiate and obtain US ratification of an international child support treaty, and increase the number of children served through the Tribal child support programs.

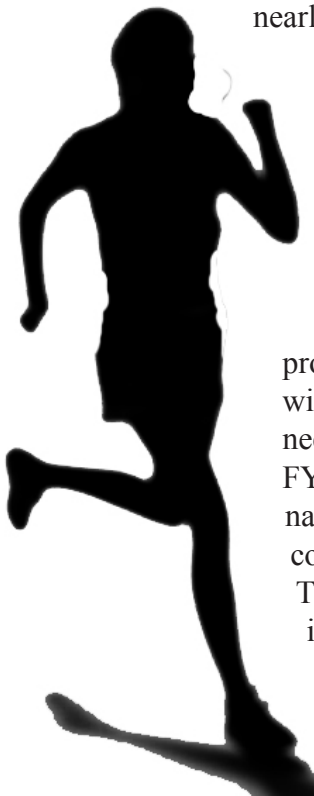
In FY 2007, results showed that our program exceeded many of its strategic planning goals, including a support order establishment rate of 78 percent, a cost-effectiveness rate of \$4.73, increasing the percentage of cases paying towards arrears in 43 States, and an enrollment of over 1,800 families in healthy marriage demonstration projects. We also saw many accomplishments in building coalitions that focus on results:

- The national initiative to increase collection of current support and prevent and reduce arrears, entitled PAID (Project to Avoid Increasing Delinquencies), has continued for nearly 2 years to impact Federal, State, and local activities.

Across the nation, caseworkers, supervisors, State directors and cross-agency task forces are all talking about and taking action to renew focus on areas that have been a priority since the start of the program—providing children with the financial support they need to be healthy and successful. FY 2007 data shows that our national program had distributed collections of almost \$25 billion. This total was a 3.8-percent increase from the previous year. And just as impressive, the national program was able to achieve its goal of 61 percent in current support

collected and in the percentage of collections on cases with arrears, the first time done so in recent years.

- The new global Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and other Forms of Family Maintenance (the Hague Treaty) was finalized at the end of the Diplomatic Session in November 2007. OCSE, HHS OGC, the Department of State (DoS), and NCSEA played major leadership roles during the negotiation of the Hague Treaty and the United States became the first Hague Member State to sign the Convention. This past Thanksgiving, at home with my family in upstate New York, I couldn't help but remember Thanksgiving Day 2007, a day I spent negotiating the final, critical elements of the Hague Treaty with China, Russia, Canada, and our Latin American partners, and calling high-level Administration officials to ensure our negotiated results were acceptable. Since then, OCSE and the DoS have been working toward ratification of the Hague Treaty. Some of those efforts include preparing technical amendments to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, collaborating with the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) to ensure conformity between State law and the new Hague Treaty, and submitting the Treaty Transmittal package to The White House and Senate. Once the Convention is fully in force, it will ensure a system for international child support cases that is predictable, efficient, affordable, swift, and consistent and will represent international child support standards for the next half-century.
- I am especially proud of our progress in partnership with Tribal communities. The number of Tribal programs grew exponentially in FY 2008. As of December, our national program includes 31 operational Tribal programs, and 11 additional Tribes are receiving 2-year start-up funding. In FY 2007, Tribal programs distributed nearly \$18 million in total collections, a 20-percent increase from FY 2006. Tribal programs provided culturally appropriate services to more than 27,000 families. As we continue to partner with Tribes, our understanding of Tribal cultures will continue to grow, as will the number of children our national program will be able to help. We've also developed a Model Tribal Automated System and are close to issuing a final regulation that will allow Tribal IV-D programs to



install it. We will select a Tribe to pilot the system, which will bring further automation options to the Tribes.

## Teaming Up to Achieve Success

- OCSE's successful 18th National Child Support Training Conference highlighted the courts as partners in the national child support program, and numerous members of the judiciary exchanged information with child support staff. The conference highlighted recent work of OCSE's National Judicial/Child Support Enforcement Task Force, which has disseminated best practices such as "problem-solving courts" to integrate treatment, rehabilitation, and employment services with State and local child support agencies. Its members also are exploring electronic data exchange between child support agencies and the courts and judiciary.
- OCSE's National Child Support Hispanic Workgroup evolved in light of the nation's changing demographics—and our program's changing caseload. The workgroup's Web-based Resource/Toolkit designed to offer State child support programs downloadable posters and brochures adaptable to their Hispanic communities will be published shortly. Last month, the Hispanic workgroup took its vision to the next level when Region II OCSE, along with the New York State and New York City child support agencies, pulled together some 35 community organizations to coordinate outreach strategies.
- Collaboration with the TANF and Workforce Development programs took off as OCSE jointly sponsored an event "Better Outcomes Through Collaboration" for State and local TANF, Workforce Development, and CSE agencies from several jurisdictions around the country, helping its managers to coordinate work to help our neediest populations achieve self-sufficiency.
- Our focus on medical support enforcement led to regional collaborative meetings with Directors of State Child Support, Child Welfare, and Medicaid programs to explore how these programs interact,



achieve Medicaid cost savings through child support enforcement, and improve health care services for children in foster care. More recently, a national workgroup has worked toward consensus on a medical support approach aimed at ensuring success in State efforts to secure appropriate health care for children.

- OCSE developed a guide for Child Welfare staff on the use of FPLS, and distributed information on referrals between the IV-E and IV-D programs, and referrals from Medicaid to child support agencies.
- Also in FY 2008, OCSE developed and implemented an efficient, cost-effective, and centralized Insurance Match Program, using an agreement with the Insurance Services Office (ISO), a private company that maintains a centralized repository of property/casualty insurance claims. As of December 2008, OCSE is matching with 105 insurers and 2 State Worker's Compensation agencies, and is providing the matched insurance claims data to 44 States for seizure.
- Finally, we have published proposed regulations concerning intergovernmental case processing, which will clarify and streamline case processing responsibilities. We also updated regulations concerning changes made by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, safeguarding of information, and updating medical support responsibilities in IV-D cases.

Which reminds me...where were the impediments I mentioned? To keep it short, I have a new appreciation for the rigorous clearance process that awaits new laws, regulations, and publications (both print and Web-based) in the Federal Government.

In addition, making sure that all partners are a real part of the process requires significant time, resources, and effort—our strategic planning and other workgroup processes have taught us all that we will achieve a far better outcome when we take time to consider all of the various experiences, perspectives, and collaborations as we develop any product.

## Reaching Toward New Heights

Needless to say, my departure will in no way change my compassion for or commitment to our program—sentiments I know many, many of you understand. I

have been privileged to have climbed the hills—and mountains—with all of you. We can all look back with pride as we rely on our partnership and experiences to guide us in developing our next National Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan for 2010 through 2014, along with the strategies we will use to reach our goals for children.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Federal staff, both central office and the regions, for their energy, enthusiasm, and wise counsel over the past 3 ½ years. I thank the State and Tribal Directors for their vision and ideas on improving our processes and the program, and for working through difficult problems together. I thank everyone in the States and Tribes that I have had the opportunity to speak with as I traveled the country—you all gave me something to think about along with new ideas and possibilities.

Finally, I thank each of you for what you do every day. We all came to child support from different backgrounds, and have unique perspectives on what and how to move forward. In the end, it is all about the children we serve and how to make their present better and their future brighter. While we have crested this particular mountain, I know you will meet the challenges of the next and provide even better results for the children as the journey up continues.



## Passport Denial



# Eight Families Get End of Year Holiday Cheer

By Rebecca Hamil  
OCSE



As 2008 comes to an end, eight families will receive additional money for the holiday season, compliments of the Passport Denial program.

**Michigan—\$100,597:** A noncustodial parent (NCP) wants to become a citizen of a Middle Eastern country and a requirement to do so is that all US child support arrears are satisfied.

**California—\$98,628:** The former in-laws of an NCP liked him so much that they loaned him the money from their family trust fund so he could pay off his child support debt in full.

**Virgin Islands—\$40,922:** A requirement for employment with the National Guard is a valid US passport.

**Pennsylvania—\$22,738:** A cashier's check was received for payment on a case for which the youngest child is 31 years old. The NCP frequently travels by air between Canada and the United States.

**Connecticut—\$21,939:** Arrears was paid from a 401(k) account by a relative when the NCP left the United States without a valid passport and missed a family gathering because he was stuck in Germany.

**Washington—\$7,961:** Total arrearage was obtained as a result of job interviews conducted with three NCPs, in New York City, Malaysia, and Cancun.

Since 1998, the Passport Denial program has collected over \$157 million in voluntarily reported lump sum payments.





# Region VII Cross-Agency Financial Training Gets High Marks

By Jeffrey Stocks  
OCSE Region VII

What began as a simple request for child support fiscal training grew into a multi-day event that drew attendees from 21 States and Territories to hear presentations from representatives of several Federal offices.

The training, hosted by OCSE Region VII and held in Kansas City, MO, on Nov. 6 and 7, focused on financial reporting, incentives, audits, and other Federal financial topics.

The training was designed to deliver helpful information to both the experienced and inexperienced with varying fiscal and reporting responsibilities. The attendee list included State child support directors, financial officers, accountants, and policy analysts. The diversity among the attendees afforded all participants the opportunity to gain real-world insight into how the fiscal components work together, and how other States meet Federal requirements and resolve issues.

Subject matter experts from OCSE and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) developed materials based upon input gathered from attendees prior to the meeting to assure the training was relevant, concise, and thorough.

Interaction was encouraged in the form of time allotted for questions and answers during each presentation, plus two roundtable/break-out sessions where specific questions could be addressed with each subject-matter expert.

The initial day of training featured presentations from Mike Bratt (ACF Office of Grants Management) and Angela Ingram-Jones (OCSE Division of Planning, Research and Evaluation) on completing the OCSE 34a, 396A, and 157 reports. Nancy Thoma Groetken (OCSE Region VII) followed with a presentation on incentives, including historical and regulatory information and calculation formulas. Monica Dazzio and Tom Kennedy of the OCSE Office of Audit partnered to discuss Data Reliability Audits, including commonly seen data reporting issues. Loli Surbaugh, Ruth Anne Decker, and Kastle Freeman (all of OGM Region VII) educated the group on Regulatory Compliance, the Transparency Act, and State requirements for monitoring Federal funds,

respectively.

The immediate response to these presentations showed that the information was well-received, useful, and appreciated.

The second day of training featured an in-depth discussion on the Single State Audit, by Patty Fisher (OGM Region X). Fisher emphasized things a State can do to prepare for A-133 audits and ways to avoid common audit findings. The final presentation featured the return of Monica Dazzio and Tom Kennedy to talk with the group about Limited Cost Audits.

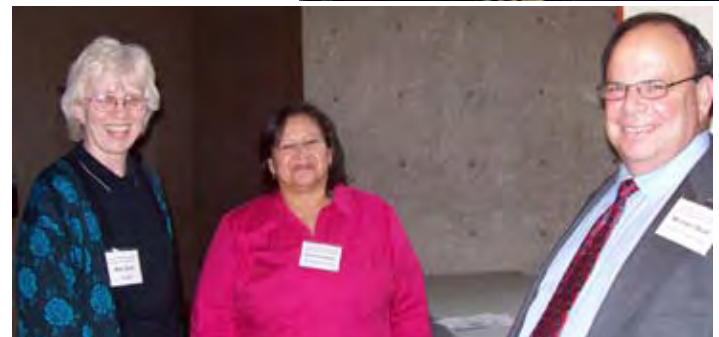
To close out the training, two 30-minute break-out sessions were offered for each topic where attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions of each presenter. The discussions were lively and the attendees noted that they were extremely beneficial to their understanding of these complex topics.

With attendees traveling from locations such as Arizona, Massachusetts, Georgia, Guam, and California, it was clear that this type of training addressed an across-the-board need. One participant was so impressed with the presented material he showed his appreciation by giving the presenters a standing ovation! The participant feedback indicated this type of training was critical and immediately applicable and they urged OCSE to find some way to continue to offer it in the future.

For more information, contact [jeffrey.stocks@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:jeffrey.stocks@acf.hhs.gov) or 816-426-2223.



At right are Terry Peterson (North Dakota), left, with Kastle Freeman (Office of Grants Management). Below, from left, are Mary Burk (Kansas), with Evelia Acosta and Michael Bratt (both from the Office of Grants Management).



# Hawaii Paternity Outreach Effort Speaks to Teens

By Rosemary McShane and Sheri Wang  
*Hawaii Child Support Enforcement Agency*

As the Hawaii Child Support Enforcement Agency compiles and validates performance measures from the most recent Federal fiscal year, we also begin the challenge of meeting its goals for the next fiscal year. Keeping the paternity establishment percentage (PEP) high is among our greatest challenges.

One way we are meeting this challenge is through an OCSE Section 1115 demonstration grant project in which we have initiated greater outreach efforts to hospitals and groups that traditionally serve new and expectant parents (e.g., prenatal clinics and WIC programs). We also have begun a new outreach effort networking with the Department of Education and our high schools, in particular the Graduation Reality and Dual-Role Skills (GRADS) program.

GRADS is a nationally validated curriculum offered in Hawaii as an in-school family and consumer science instructional and intervention program. The mission of GRADS is to prepare pregnant and parenting teens to become socially responsible members of society by promoting their personal growth, educational competence, and economic self-sufficiency.

Outreach to the teens enrolled in GRADS has included PowerPoint presentations about paternity and the distribution of materials to both students and teachers. OCSE's "Power of Two" DVD, for example, has been a popular feature of our presentations and we have distributed the DVD to all our GRADS program coordinators. Teens also read in our paternity brochures (*detailed in the July 2008 Child Support Report*) about the

benefits of paternity to the child and parents and where they can get help to establish paternity.

Teens aren't the only beneficiaries of our

outreach. We also learn from them, through the questions they ask and issues they raise for discussion, about factors most important to their lives at the moment. Chief among those are relationships, maintaining connections with the other

parent and the child, the ease or difficulty of the establishment process (e.g., do the teens' parents need to be involved?), and the drawbacks of not establishing paternity (e.g., no legal custody).

Honolulu's Farrington High School offers one of the largest GRADS programs in the State. At the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, 30 teens were enrolled in the school's program—8 boys and 22 girls. Seven of the eight

boys are fathers and one will be a father in early 2009. Eight of the girls are pregnant, one with her second child. Of the 30 teens, the GRADS program coordinator knows that 16 have established paternity. She does not specifically track the number of paternity establishments, however, since some of the teens' parents do not encourage paternity.

Over the years, the GRADS program's student demographics have mirrored those of the high school as a whole; a high proportion of low-income immigrants or the children of immigrants from Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands. It is not uncommon to have multigenerational families and unrelated families living together in the same household. In these living situations, paternity establishment is not as high a priority as meeting the basic needs of the household. Yet, even in this environment, the Farrington GRADS program has had an impact educationally (69 percent of teens in the program have graduated from high school) and emotionally (87 percent continue to be involved with the other parent).

We are encouraged that this step to collaborate with the



Deidra Freitas, shown with a student, runs the GRADS program at Honolulu's Farrington High School.

educational system is leaving a positive message with teen parents about the benefits of paternity establishment. We want to promote responsible parenting, and that includes having both parents identified and involved in a child's life. By addressing the issue of paternity among teens, we seek to build awareness about and have teens become more responsible in their parenting decisions, both now and in the future.

As teens in the GRADS program talk with their peers,

we hope they share the message we are promoting through our presentations, the "Power of Two" DVD, and our brochures so that everyone learns about the importance of establishing paternity.

*Please contact Rosemary McShane, CSEA attorney, at 808-586-5420 or [rosemary.mcshane@hawaii.gov](mailto:rosemary.mcshane@hawaii.gov), or Sheri Wang, CSEA Assistant Administrator, at 808-692-7131 or [sheri.wang@hawaii.gov](mailto:sheri.wang@hawaii.gov), for more information about this outreach project.*



## OCSE Awards Section 1115 Grants for FY 2008

OCSE recently awarded the following Section 1115 demonstration grants for fiscal year 2008. For information about each grant, please see the OCSE Web site: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/grants/>

- **Colorado** Division of Child Support Enforcement with child support units in Denver and Larimer Counties: "Avoiding and Managing Child Support Arrears in Colorado"
- **Colorado** Division of Child Support Enforcement: "Child Support Enforcement Business Intelligence Project"
- **Florida** Child Support Enforcement Program: "Child Support Enforcement and Chipola Healthy Start Collaboration Project"
- **Hawaii** Child Support Enforcement Agency: "Decision Support System Data Warehousing"
- **Iowa** Child Support Recovery Unit: "Income Withholding Order Data Mining Project"
- **Minnesota** Child Support Enforcement Division: "Simplifying and Streamlining Orders"
- **Tennessee** Child Support Division: "Tennessee Statewide Clearinghouse of Information and Wrap-Around IV-D Case Management Services for Offenders and Ex-Offenders"
- **Washington** Division of Child Support: "Arrears Stratification in Washington State: Developing Operational Protocols through Longitudinal Analyses in a Data Mining Environment"

## New ACF Newsletter Offers Tips for Non-Resident Dads

A new online newsletter is spreading the word about the National Quality Improvement Center for Non-Resident Fathers (QIC-NRF) and the Child Welfare System. QIC-NRF is a collaborative effort between the American Humane Association, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, and the National Fatherhood Initiative and is funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau.

The purpose of the QIC-NRF project is to determine, through research, the impact of non-resident father involvement on child welfare outcomes. The premiere newsletter includes "Tips for Dads"; one tip explains why dads should support their children financially.

"QIC News," to be published quarterly, will share information and activities of the QIC-NRF and its fatherhood project sites at: <http://www.abanet.org/child/fathers/qicnewsletter>.



# Bryan Tillman

## DC Locate Investigator



Bryan Tillman began work as a Locate Investigator with the District of Columbia's Child Support Services Division (CSSD) in April of 2008. Before then, he was working as an assistant director for a substance abuse program, but had decided he was ready for a change of pace. He met CSSD's Operations Section Chief at a job fair and was given an offer.

Tillman covers the Southeast Washington, DC, area. He serves putative noncustodial parents (NCPs) with a Notice of Hearing and Order Directing Appearance (NOHODA) and instructs them to appear in court for their child support case.

Tillman is one of the District's newer investigators and loves the job. He's learning a lot and likes helping to get child support orders in place. He also enjoys the independence traveling out in the field affords him. He has not yet experienced a winter being outside so much of his day for work, so he's gearing up for that!

Even though Tillman is a native Washingtonian, he's a Dallas Cowboys fan. Go figure. He explains that his mother was a fan and he inherited a love of the Cowboys from her.

Locating and serving court papers to putative fathers in the District is not an easy venture, as the following typical day shows:

- **9:02 a.m.** Leave desk, go to garage to agency vehicle.
- **9:24 a.m.** Arrive at home in Ft. Dupont. Approach woman standing in front of house. Woman turns out to be NCP's girlfriend. Give her NOHODA and explain it to her. NOHODA states, "A petition to establish paternity and/or provide support has been filed against you."
- **9:49 a.m.** Back to agency to exchange cars.
- **10:12 a.m.** Knock at home in Stanton Terrace, but no answer. Tillman thinks, "I know they're there. Too many cars." He leaves his card.
- **10:26 a.m.** Parks in front of Highland neighborhood house. Woman in car asks Tillman what he's doing.

Turns out she's the mother of the NCP, so Tillman gives her NOHODA. "Moms are good," notes Bryan. "You can almost guarantee he'll be in court."

- **10:41 a.m.** Apartment complex in Highland. No one is there. This is Tillman's second attempt. On the prior attempt, he stopped by the rental office to make sure the person lived there. Tillman previously personally served an NCP in that complex who later mailed it to the court with a note falsely stating that the order had just been left at his door.
- **10:52 a.m.** Pierre L'Enfant's grid breaks down a lot in Southeast. Streets twist and turn and you can't just find a place by its address. No response at next home.
- **11:01 a.m.** No response at either of two neighboring homes in Barry Farms. Tillman notes that family members are reluctant and neighbors refuse to accept NOHODAs. He feels that some people don't trust the police and are wary of anything related to courts.
- **11:07 a.m.** No response at another home in Barry Farms.
- **11:15 a.m.** Buzzed apartment in Anacostia. No response at first, but just as Tillman is about to leave, father of NCP comes to the door and is served. NCP is mentally incapacitated and hasn't left the home in a year. Tillman will call a mental health provider back at his desk.
- **11:31 a.m.** Anacostia, no response.
- **11:39 a.m.** Anacostia, invalid address. The NCP must have moved. The current occupant showed Tillman his ID, proving he wasn't the NCP. (Some citizens are more cooperative when Tillman shows them his badge.)
- **11:44 a.m.** Anacostia home, no response.
- **11:55 a.m.** Anacostia gated apartment complex. Had to ask the staff to open the gate. Tillman gets no response.
- **12:02 p.m.** Tillman swings back to Stanton Terrace home visited at 10:12 a.m. Tillman's card has been removed, and one of the cars is missing. He takes



cases like these to the manager who can have the Metropolitan Police Warrant Squad serve the NCP.

- **Lunchtime**, then back out some more.

Three successful services is not a bad morning, Tillman reports; on many days, he'll get zero. Evenings and weekends yield better results. Sometimes he serves people at work. If someone is upset at Tillman when he gives them the NOHODA, he uses his background in counseling to calm them down.

Despite the challenges, Tillman ends his day with a sense of satisfaction and belief that his efforts are worthwhile. He says, "I like to think that our work puts families back together and gives children a fair opportunity to achieve their dreams and continue to gain hope for the future. At the end of the day, the work we do as investigators can be a little dangerous, but the ability to help children makes it worth it."

—By Justin Latus

*District of Columbia Child Support Services Division*



Bryan Tillman, Locate Investigator, arrives at a DC apartment building.



## Early Intervention in DC: Letters, Videos Help Parents Navigate Child Support Process



By Eboni Govan

*District of Columbia Child Support Services Division*

A child support agency's efforts to locate noncustodial parents and make sure they appear in court to establish a child support order can be a real challenge, as the preceding article about the District of Columbia's Locate Investigator, Bryan Tillman, shows.

To complement the investigator's efforts, the Child Support Services Division (CSSD) reaches out to NCPs with new orders right away to ensure they stay connected to the agency, and hopefully become regular payers of child support, through its Early Intervention Project (EIP). "Early intervention" is one focus of the nationwide Project to Avoid Increasing Delinquencies (PAID) to assist State child support agencies with efforts to increase collections on both current support and arrears.

Since early intervention projects under the PAID



initiative have been implemented with success in other jurisdictions, CSSD formed a workgroup in June 2008 to begin developing ideas for a successful program in the District. Workgroup members include Eboni Govan, Angelisa Young, Brooke Clay, Stephanie Woolbright, Taunya Jaco, Colin Dew, Thurston Haynes, and Chardonnay Taylor.

The goal of the District's PAID EIP is to reach NCPs as early as possible once a child support case has been opened and provide a helping hand as they navigate the child support process.

To that end, CSSD developed an introductory letter to distribute to NCPs when they are served with the papers that direct them to appear in court on a child support matter. The letter explains the purpose for the papers in layman's terms, and explains what they need to bring to a court hearing. So far, the letter has been met with positive response from the NCPs.

In October 2008, the District started mailing letters to NCPs once a new support order was established. The

“NCP Welcome Letter” introduces parents to the agency and gives them the phone number of a staff person to discuss any questions they have about their order.

Under the initiative, CSSD is also producing a video in conjunction with the DC Office of Cable Television, to be shown in the waiting room. The goal of the video is to provide a clear description of the rights and responsibilities of the noncustodial parent and to convey the message that the child support agency is not the enemy, but rather is striving to improve the lives of the District’s children and needs the NCPs’ help in achieving that goal.

Additionally, CSSD has developed a survey for NCPs

to fill out in the waiting room. The survey seeks responses from NCPs on several major child support issues including paternity, administrative enforcement, and proper payment methods.

CSSD has also recently begun showing TV shows in its waiting room that portray families in a positive light, as well as public service announcements and documentaries regarding health issues.

Finally, beginning in January 2009, the District will be sending letters to congratulate new NCPs on making 90 days of payments.

*For more information, contact April Randall, 202-724-2183 or [april.randall@dc.gov](mailto:april.randall@dc.gov).*



Early Intervention Project staff in the District of Columbia’s Child Support Services Division include, above at far left, Taunya Jaco and Roger Turpin; above from left, Colin Dew, Jaco, and Thurston Haynes; and below from left, Chardonnay Taylor, Brooke Clay, and April Randall.



# OCSE Makes the Wireless Connection

By Kerry Newcombe  
OCSE



Since 2005, a number of State Child Support Enforcement agencies have been conducting matches with various cell phone companies, with promising results. However, there have been

challenges for both agencies and the companies. In an effort to address some of these concerns, OCSE formed a national Cell Phone Workgroup, in 2007, as part of the national Project to Avoid Increasing Delinquencies, or PAID.

When first formed, the workgroup consisted of representatives from nine State CSE agencies: California, Colorado, Iowa, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington, and Virginia. Its mission was to document each cell phone company's data matching requirements and explore the feasibility of standardizing the data matching process.

Then, this October, OCSE brought together five State CSE agencies from the workgroup and representatives from four cell phone companies: AT&T, Sprint, Verizon Wireless, and U.S. Cellular. Attendees discussed issues and best practices, and explored alternatives for streamlining the process and data standardization. Topics included:

- How to ensure security of data for both the cell phone companies and State CSE agencies;
- How to draft effective State cell phone legislation;
- How to manage the increasing volume of matching requests; and
- How to improve the burdensome process for State CSE agencies and cell phone companies.

As a result of the meeting, OCSE will be issuing a "Guide For Working With Cell Phone Companies" to provide State agencies with the information needed to interface with those cell phone companies that have provided information to OCSE.

Information about the Cell Phone Workgroup, as well as specific cell phone company input/output record layouts, sample State legislation and subpoenas, the October meeting minutes, and other material is available on the OCSE PAID Workplace, which may be accessed at: [http://ocse2.acf.hhs.gov/wp\\_welcome.nsf](http://ocse2.acf.hhs.gov/wp_welcome.nsf).



Standing, from left: Dalen Fredrickson, Texas; Rob Lafer, San Diego County, CA; Tom Koch, Sprint; Joni Nelson, AT&T; Traci Hart, U.S. Cellular; Robert Branson, Verizon Wireless; Martin Roland, Pennsylvania; and Roy Mathew, Verizon Wireless. Seated, from left: Nick Young, Virginia IV-D Child Support Director; Sara Nelson, Iowa; and Cindy Coiner, Virginia.

# OCSE Analyses of Potential Collections Pays Off for Louisiana

By Craig Blanchard

*Louisiana Support Enforcement Services*



The national Project to Avoid Increasing Delinquencies (PAID) provides many opportunities for OCSE to assist States in collecting past-due child support. One such

opportunity is through analyzing how States use data provided through the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM) program and identifying areas for improvement and best practices.

Currently, OCSE matches with nearly 4,500 multistate financial institutions and provides account data concerning individuals who owe past due support to States. The States take appropriate action to freeze and seize the assets identified through MSFIDM.

OCSE sends States over 2 million matches each quarter. To help States prioritize the match results, OCSE created the MSFIDM Potential Collections Report. The report lists matches identified in the previous quarter that may result in a collection by comparing the arrears owed with the account balance reported by the MSFI.

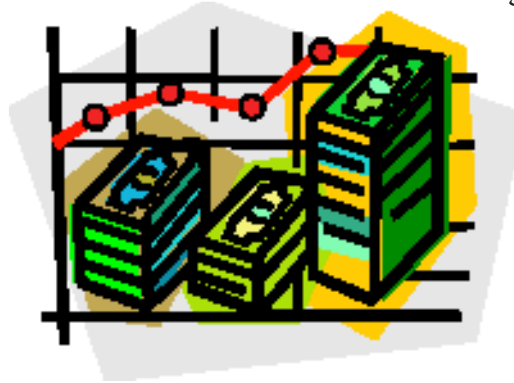
The list is prioritized by highest potential collection, making it easier for workers in Louisiana to determine which matches would best be pursued based on case arrears versus account balance. Some of the items listed on the report are: the noncustodial parent/account holder's Social Security number, arrears balance, account balance, potential collection amount, and the financial institution name.

Louisiana first requested and received the MSFIDM Potential Collections Report in December of 2007 and finds that it is a supplement to the in-state FIDM match report. In the months of September and October 2008, Louisiana levied accounts in the amounts of \$17,712, \$12,662, \$7,072, \$6,723 and \$2,356 (just to list a few). These represent collections which Louisiana likely would not have pursued had it not been for the MSFIDM Potential Collections Report.

Louisiana freezes and seizes the accounts listed in the report in the same manner as levying in-state accounts, as long as the accounts are either located in Louisiana or located in a financial institution that will honor Louisiana's freeze and seize actions. If the account is located in a financial institution that will not accept direct freeze and seize actions, Louisiana sends a request to the State where the account is located to assist with the levy action.

Louisiana Child Support Enforcement greatly appreciates OCSE generating and sending the MSFIDM Potential Collections Report, as it has proven to be a valued collection tool. Louisiana is also grateful to ACF and OCSE for their continued support in the area of MSFIDM/FIDM collections.

*If your State is interested in receiving this report, please contact [matthew.marsolais@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:matthew.marsolais@acf.hhs.gov).*



## Child Support Report

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pubs/csrindex.html>

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