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## Student Chapters Provide Pathways to Criminal Justice Careers:

Student chapters of CAYSA provide a pathway to educate students who are considering careers in Criminal Justice or Corrections. Students who participate in CAYSA student chapters have the opportunity to access many of the resources that CAYSA members enjoy including regional symposiums and national conferences. Many networking connections are made at these events which bolster the student's marketability upon graduation.

Often networking connections can lead to internships, mentoring relationships and potentially gainful employment. Students get to learn about the multitude of jobs available in their field through conversations and discussions with professionals from across the state (or country). CAYSA student membership provides a means to delve deeper into the field and possibly discover or identify what they like and are good at.



Student chapter membership varies widely from state to state. New York State currently has several active chapters in high school and colleges. Champlain Valley Technical Center's Color Guard presented the flag at the 2015 annual symposium held in Lake Placid, New York, not far from the students' high school. The students looked sharp in their uniforms, handled the flags with dignity and respect, and marched with tight precision. The students performed an impressive and moving ceremony to introduce the lunchtime keynote speaker.

Pat Perry is the ACA Chair for the Student Affairs Committee and Student Chapters Coordinator for NYCAVSA. Pat is passionate about "helping future practitioners in the field network with current professionals, share information on the field and to enhance the education experience of students in the Criminal Justice field", a quote from his article in the NAAWS newsletter, *the Grapevine* (June, 2015).

Pat further noted that on the local level, student chapters can "organize tours of prisons or other criminal justice institutions, obtain guest speakers and participate in community service activities that may be beneficial in helping to familiarize them with the criminal justice system". An example of community service is one student chapter assisted in rebuilding a playground after natural disasters struck. These experiences are designed to provide students with "an understanding that criminal justice operations are based on values, ethics, cultural expectation and legal responsibilities that are often overlooked in classes, internships or tours". Student chapters complement local law enforcement and corrections in service to others.

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High school and college students who are studying Criminal Justice or Corrections benefit from membership in professional organizations. CAYSA student members prepare themselves for the rigors of employment in the field by accessing mentoring, active learning and networking opportunities. If you know of or run a school program that wants to grow professionally, contact Pat Perry at [doublep2@charter.net](mailto:doublep2@charter.net) or 518-726-0357!

## Stressed?....Turn It Around!



Chances are you have given a lot of thought to being stressed. We have stress at home, taking care of children, pets, aging parents, or all three! We have stress in our professional lives and often in our community volunteerism. We may even have stress when we schedule relaxation time, such as airport delays, choosing which movie to see or deciding which book to read. Stress is a condition that affects almost all of us.

The media constantly reminds us of the toll stress takes on our health. Stress is blamed for headaches, acid indigestion and acne. Stress has been linked to cancer, asthma, obesity, infertility and diabetes. There is research to support and link stress to almost every area of our lives.

Chances are, too, that you have researched how to overcome stress. Americans spend a staggering \$40 billion dollars per year on complementary and alternative medicines, books, videos and magazines in the hope of learning how to manage their stress. Perhaps you have tried yoga, tai chi or running to increase your endorphins and shake off that stressful feeling, the one where your chest tightens, your shoulders ache and your breathing becomes shallow.

What if I suggested that we look at stress from a different perspective? What if we could use our stress in a way that was good for us? What if we looked at being stressed backwards?



Desserts.

Yes, desserts. Sweet treats that make us feel happy, feel better. Desserts are how we reward ourselves sometimes for a job well done. How can we shift those anxious feelings known as being stressed to a happy reward feeling that reminds us of desserts?

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances. Our stress may be from a known source like driving in heavy traffic when we are running late to get to work. Our stress may also be a presently unknown source that is nagging at our subconscious mind.

My research supports the concept that we can turn our stress away from having a negative impact on our lives and health to having a positive force that we can use to improve our lives. Stress can be channeled within us. Lara Kase is the author of the *Confident Leader: How the most successful people go from effective to exceptional*. She proposes that stress often precedes or accompanies creative breakthroughs. Her research found that totally calm or relaxed minds do not need a reason to see things differently. Stressed minds provide the opportunity to go to your edge and produce new work.

Dr. Kelly McGonigal continued this line of thinking in her book *The Upside of Stress* and how to get good at it. She presents several provocative

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ideas about how to use stress to increase your performance and improve your life. Dr. McGonigal starts with the premise that people who believe that stress can be helpful are more likely to:

- Accept the fact that a stressful event has occurred and is real
- Plan a strategy for dealing with the source of stress
- Seek information, help or advice
- Take steps to overcome, remove or change the source of the stress
- Try to make the best of the situation by viewing it in a more positive way or by using it as an opportunity to grow.

Our challenge is to be honest with ourselves, believe in ourselves and be generous with ourselves. The first premise is to acknowledge that an event has occurred. My first inclination after a stressful event has occurred is to bury my head in the sand. This is the physiological reaction known as fight or flight. I am a flight person. I used to avoid conflict and stress which lead to more conflict and stress. I get anxious just thinking about an event.



The second and third premises are supported in the literature as helpful in recovering from stressful events. Getting information, help, and advice from a variety of sources gives you the tools to develop a strategy on how to deal with the stress. Some strategies that I have found to be helpful include making a list of what I can control in the situation. Sometimes the only thing I can control is my reaction. Sometimes that is the hardest thing to control.

I use steps four and five to implement any strategy that may work. I ask myself “what can I learn from this situation?” “Will this situation occur again?” “How do I want to be known for how I handled the situation?” This is where you might consider being generous with yourself. Give yourself some space. Don’t judge yourself harshly. Whether your tendency is fight or flight you are a human being. You are in control of you. You can find and use tools that work for you to control the energy in your body, the energy from stress, that can turn the stress around and make it work for you.

Stress is a natural reaction. It is a healthy reaction. Being stressed is a choice. Turning your stress into positive energy is a skill you can learn. With practice you can look at stressed as desserts!

## First Time ACA Conference Attendee Reflects

New Orleans, Louisiana...the Big Easy...and site of the 2016 American Correctional Association’s annual winter conference. NYCA YSA Region 2 vice president Ora Perkins received a scholarship from NYCA YSA to attend the conference and recently shared her thoughts, reflections and gratitude for the scholarship.

When Ora Perkins was asked what the most exciting thing about the New Orleans ACA conference was, Ora said that it was HUGE! She was most impressed by the sheer size of the convention hall and how the workshops, vendors and meals all fit into the hall. She said that vendor displays included items used across the industry from food service to educational materials. Ora was impressed that so many vendors were retired from the corrections field and had returned to market products at the conference. The vendors also sponsored hospitality suites that gave attendees an opportunity to meet sponsors and their companies as well as others from

across the nation. Networking with other corrections professionals at workshops, symposiums and conferences is one of the greatest tools we have to learn and grow in our field. The ACA winter conference was a rich learning and growth experience.

Many of us know the ACA from our accreditations audits. Ora found that she was exposed to the “inner workings” of the audit process because she participated in the conference’s education workshop. She highly recommended attending an accreditation audit workshop because the scope of the information gives a broader look at the overall function of the ACA. She also appreciated the chance to get together with other NYCAISA members as well as education and corrections professionals from all over the country to experience the conference and all that New Orleans had to offer.

Ora attended several workshops with common themes such as keeping the environment safe and creating a positive culture in the facility through the use of common language and mutual respect. She was impressed with James Carvill, a keynote speaker, whose message resonated with a call to create a culture of morality within yourself and your workplace by aligning one’s own values and vision with that of your department.

Ora was enthusiastic about the conference and highly recommends this experience to anyone who works in the field. She came home with renewed positive energy and a new found love for oysters, one of the many hidden treasures of New Orleans!



January 20-25  
ACA Winter  
Conference  
San Antonio, Texas

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**October 26-28:**

CAYSA Statewide  
Conference, Radisson  
Riverside Hotel,  
Rochester

Many, many thanks to the  
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this excellent publication:

Kathleen Barlow  
Audrey Held

## Regional News Roundup



**Region 1 :** Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chatauqua, Erie,  
Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara,  
Ontario, Orleans, Steuben, Wyoming and Yates

**Region 2 :** Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis,  
Montgomery and St. Lawrence

**Region 3 :** Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga,  
Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren and Washington

**Region 4/5 :** Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster,  
Westchester, Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Queens,  
Richmond and Suffolk

**Events: September 16, 2016 -- Golf tournament  
Green Lakes Golf Course, Syracuse**

**Region 6 :** Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware,  
Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego,  
Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga, Tompkins and Wayne

