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JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH CREATE LITERACY RESOURCE FOR THE VILLAGE OF FORD HEIGHTS

Ford Heights, IL: Justice-involved youth enrolled in the construction program at IYC Harrisburg/Booker T. Washington Alternative High School constructed a new literacy resource for the village of Ford Heights. The students spent nearly four months learning to build and construct four library boxes to be placed throughout the community with supplies secured through District #428 own resources and grant funding.

Born of a conversation about literacy in Ford Heights, Willa Taylor, Director of Education and Engagement at the Goodman Theatre, and Rev. Tiffany Trent, a local minister at God Can Ministries United Church of Christ, expanded the partnership to include the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and IYC Harrisburg/Booker T. Washington Alternative High School, and Open Books, who will continually supply books to the library boxes.

“We are thrilled that our youth are making such a positive contribution to a deserving community”, says Dr. Sophia Jones-Redmond, Superintendent of District #428. Heidi Mueller, Director of the Department of Juvenile Justice notes that, “The boxes are symbolic of how collaboration, hard work, and a shared goal between partners can produce a meaningful resource for children and their families. The department is proud to share the talents of our youth with the village of Ford Heights, the Goodman Theatre, God Can Ministries United Church of Christ, and all of the families who will take advantage of the free books.”

A dedication ceremony for the library boxes will take place on Tuesday, July 30, 2019 at 12pm Tidye A. Phillips School, 1401 E. 13th Place, Ford Heights, IL. The program includes the unveiling and dedication of the library boxes, and remarks from state officials, Ford Heights Mayor Annie Coulter, and representatives from the Goodman Theatre and God Can Ministries United Church of Christ.

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About IYC Harrisburg/Booker T. Washington Alternative High School: The Department of Juvenile Justice operates School District #428 according to the Illinois Compiled Statutes (105 ILCS 5/13/40). “It’s purpose is to enhances the quality and scope of education for youth within the Department of Juvenile Justice so that they will be better motivated and better equipped to restore themselves to constructive and law abiding lives in the community.”

About Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice: The Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) was created by statute in 2006 with the mandate of safely housing and rehabilitating youth committed to it’s custody. The mission of DJJ is to promote community safety and positive youth outcomes by building youth skills and strengthening families.