

FY 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



The mission of Blue Ridge Court Services is to provide evidence-based sentencing alternatives for the local criminal justice system in an effort to reduce jail overcrowding, enhance public safety and offer rehabilitative opportunities to local offender populations in Staunton, Waynesboro, Lexington, Buena Vista, Augusta, Rockbridge and Highland County.

From the Director

2015 was a milestone year for Blue Ridge Court Services....marking 20 years since the establishment of our agency on July 1, 1995 with a mission to provide alternative sentencing options for the Central Shenandoah Valley.

Two key projects dominated the year for our agency and Board; the creation of the Staunton-Augusta Therapeutic Docket and this region's selection to participate in Phase V of the NIC Evidence Based Decision Making Initiative.

In September 2014 the Staunton-Augusta Therapeutic Docket held its first session after four months of planning and preparation by our twelve member therapeutic docket advisory committee. With Judge Chap Goodwin presiding, these dockets are held twice monthly and involve a collaborative effort by our local prosecutors, public defenders, court clerks, Valley Community Service Board staff and BRCS staff. These dockets focus on diverting appropriate misdemeanor defendants with serious mental illness out of the traditional criminal justice track and into a treatment oriented system. More than 40 defendants participated in the first year and we celebrated our first graduate this past fall.

In the spring of 2015 the Staunton, Augusta and Waynesboro area was one of six in Virginia selected by the National Institute of Corrections to participate in Phase V of the Evidence Based Decision Making (EBDM) Initiative. This process involved the region's principal criminal justice stakeholders participating in a comprehensive review or "mapping" of local criminal justice practices with a view to improve efficiencies and outcomes using research based methods. NIC has provided a technical assistance advisor, Becki Ney, who is spending two days each month in Staunton over the next year to guide these local efforts. The goal is for the local team to evaluate our local data and incorporate nationally-proven best practices in key decision points in our local justice process.

The demand for services provided by BRCS continues to grow....in 2015 our agency served more than 1,900 clients across our eight program areas. Our staff has grown too....adding a forensic psychologist to assist with our Therapeutic Docket and a new probation officer for the local courts.

The success Blue Ridge Court Services enjoyed in 2015 would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of our local criminal justice colleagues...we are fortunate here in the Central Shenandoah Valley to have judges, magistrates, prosecutors, defense attorneys, therapists, law enforcement and jail personnel who are willing to try new approaches to address age-old criminal justice issues. We also owe much to the Blue Ridge Criminal Justice Board for their guidance, to our magistrates, clerks, staff at the MRRJ, public defenders, staff at District 12 P&P and VASAP for their support. We are ever grateful for the support we receive from the City of Staunton for serving as our fiscal agent and providing us with much of our "behind the scenes" support. We look forward to working with all for another productive year in 2016!

Dave Pastors

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Probation Services

At its inception in 1995, the primary focus of Blue Ridge Court Services was to provide probation services to the local courts. With the guidance of the Blue Ridge Criminal Justice Board, annual assessments of local criminal justice needs resulted in a variety of additional community corrections programs being incorporated into the services offered to the local courts.

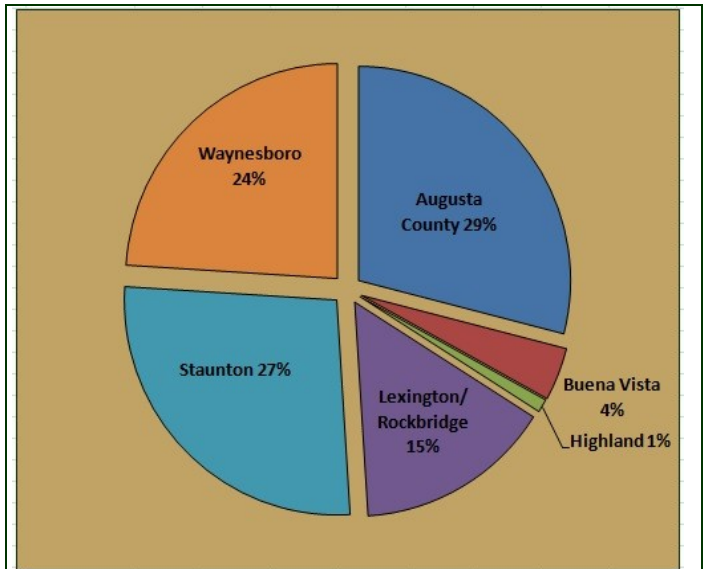
Our local probation services target those individuals who come before the local courts who have their cases taken under advisement or receive a suspended sentence with special conditions from the court. As part of our evidence-based process, all probation referrals receive an initial assessment to determine their risk level. Those individuals who are classified as medium and high risk are administered a more in-depth assessment to identify their criminogenic needs. For FY 2015, 70% were classified as low risk, 28% were medium and 2% were high risk. The vast majority of our low risk clients are required to perform community service, participate in educational groups for substance abuse, anger management or shoplifting intervention and are required to pay their court costs and restitution. The medium and high risk clients participate in an in-depth case planning process and are often targeted for cognitive behavioral interventions.

For FY 2015, Blue Ridge Court Services received 680 misdemeanor placements and 80 felony placements for a total of 760. These probationers enjoyed a 74% success rate. They completed a total of 8,245 hours of community service and paid \$30,737 in restitution to the victims of their crimes.

Demographically our 2015 probationers were:

59% male vs. 41% female
85% Caucasian, 14% African American and 1% Hispanic
24% had less than a high school diploma
60% were high school graduates or received a GED
11% had some college education
5% were college graduates

The chart below outlines the distribution of cases received from the seven jurisdictions that Blue Ridge Court Services serves:



Re-entry Services

Blue Ridge Court Services has offered re-entry services to local offender populations since 2007, when our efforts were funded by a Justice Assistance Grant from DCJS. In more recent years BRCS has been fortunate to receive grants from CAPSAW, the Community Action Partnership for Staunton, Augusta and Waynesboro and the United Way to target those key elements of assistance for recently released offenders. Working in partnership with the Re-entry Council of the Central Shenandoah Valley, the BRCS Offender Re-entry staff has provided services for recently released offenders from state, federal and local institutions. The primary focus of these efforts is in five areas:

- Employment Readiness Skills / Securing a Job
- Securing Affordable Housing
- Accessing Food and Clothing
- Accessing Reliable Transportation
- Accessing Community Resources for Counseling

Over the past year our re-entry staff routinely held informa-

tional seminars at the Middle River Regional Jail each month targeting those inmates who were within 60 days of release. For 2015, our re-entry staff worked with 216 clients seeking a broad range of services. At year's end:

- 185 recently released clients participated in the employment readiness skills sessions
- 34 clients were hired within 30 days of their release
- 37 clients received assistance in securing improved housing
- 10 clients improved their housing status
- 52 clients received transportation assistance
- 41 clients received emergency food
- 34 clients received new clothes
- 29 clients were linked to appropriate counseling

Our goal for 2016 is to intensify our efforts in cutting the time it takes to gain employment and efficient transportation for this vulnerable population.

Pretrial Services

The Blue Ridge Court Services Pretrial Services Program provides assistance to the Middle River Regional Jail and the local courts in managing the pretrial population in two ways:

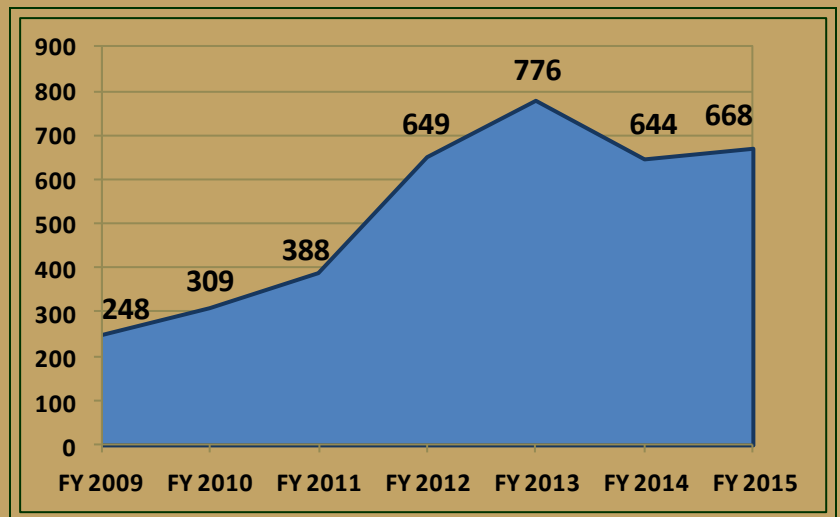
- Pretrial staff report to the Middle River Regional Jail each morning to interview those defendants who have been arrested and detained the previous 24 hours. Based on those interviews they prepare a pretrial investigation report and the Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (VPRAI) to assist judges in making a better informed bond decision. During FY 2015, BRCS pretrial staff screened 988 misdemeanants and 876 felon defendants at the MRRJ. Those screenings led to a total of 748 pretrial investigations.
- BRCS pretrial staff also provide intensive supervision for pretrial defendants that the magistrates and judges release pending trial. Pretrial staff ensure that these defendants adhere to the conditions of bond imposed by judicial officers and that they appear in court on the appointed date of trial. These defendants are often required by the court to maintain employment,

refrain from contact with the victim or be subject to random drug testing. For FY 2015, a total of 668 pretrial defendants, 309 misdemeanants and 359 felons, were placed under pretrial supervision. Pretrial defendants for 2015 enjoyed an 82% program success rate along with a 97.3% appearance rate and a 98.1% arrest-free rate while under supervision.

2015 Demographic studies indicate that our pretrial clients were:

- 69% Men and 31% Women
- 84% Caucasian, 15% African American and 1% Hispanic
- 18% had less than a high school diploma, 62% were high school graduates or had GED's and 20% were college students/graduates
- 35% were ages 18 to 25, 31% were ages 26 to 35 and 34% were 36 years or older

**Growth of Pretrial Services
2009 to 2015**



Restorative Justice

The Blue Ridge Court Services Restorative Justice Program was established in 1998 with the support of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) and the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) who assisted with both planning and implementation funding. Our local restorative justice efforts are modeled after the "Reparative Probation" system in Vermont where citizen restorative panels receive and hear cases directly from local courts. The restorative justice concept focuses on repairing the harm done to victims and the community by certain criminal behaviors while at the same time holding the offender accountable for their actions and assisting them to learn how not to re-offend.

The early years of our restorative justice effort were quite fruitful...we reviewed more than 245 cases and enjoyed significant successes in restoring both the victims of crime as well as the perpetrators. A James Madison University Psychology Department recidivism study of our early restorative justice graduates revealed a 17% recidivism rate compared to a 42% rate for comparable offenders who were processed in

traditional court methods.

When our original grant funding expired in 2003, we were forced to transition to a smaller scale program. Over the ensuing years we have continued to offer restorative programs to the local courts on a limited basis while we have pursued sustainable funding. Absent a full-time coordinator to work closely with prosecutors and screen daily court dockets we have been receiving a limited number of cases on a sporadic schedule.

In 2015 the BRCS restorative justice program received a total of 7 new restorative justice cases, 3 males and 4 females. 3 of these cases came from the JDR Courts, 2 from the General District Courts and 2 from the Circuit Courts. Of note this year we received two felony cases from the Staunton Circuit Court. Six of the seven or 86% of the restorative justice participants successfully completed the program. Restorative justice participants performed a total of 860 hours of community service and made \$1,401 in restitution payments to the victims of their crimes.

Home Electronic Monitoring

The use of home electronic monitoring experienced a 21% increase in 2015, primarily due to increased demand from the Rockbridge County area. We also have provided courtesy HEM services to the Charlottesville area as they develop their own HEM program. HEM in this area has changed in recent years....where it was originally used for offenders with significant health issues that would create a financial burden on the local jail, there has been more of a focus on requiring HEM in pretrial cases, particularly where alcohol was a factor. Recent innovation in HEM technology has allowed us to provide 24/7 mobile alcohol monitoring through the use of breath print technology. This hand-held device the size of a cell phone vibrates randomly up to six times daily requiring the participant to provide instant alcohol monitoring.

Home electronic monitoring benefits both the offender and the community in that the participant has the opportunity to be

under confinement in his or her own home and continue to work and support themselves and their families while at the same time paying the full cost of the monitoring. Localities benefit in having low-risk defendants and offenders being supervised in the community and saving jail bed space for higher risk individuals. For every day an offender is on HEM, each locality reduces their jail per diem costs. The current average per diem jail bed cost calculated by the Virginia Compensation Board is \$75.00 per day.

For FY 2015 Blue Ridge Court Services received a total of 73 placements. Participation was slightly higher between male and females..... 58% male and 42% female for 2015. 74% were Caucasian, 22% African American and 4% Hispanic. Of the 50 HEM cases closed in 2015, 86% of the participants successfully completed the program.

HEM Participation by Locality and the Accompanying Jail Bed Savings for FY 2015

	Staunton	Augusta County	Waynesboro	Rockbridge/Lexington	Buena Vista	Other	Total
# of HEM Clients	17	19	13	6	2	16	73
# of HEM Days	1,707	1,267	1,293	666	279	1,315	6,527
Jail Savings @ \$75.00/ day	\$128,025	\$95,025	\$96,975	\$49,950	\$20,925	\$98,625	\$489,525

Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Drug Court

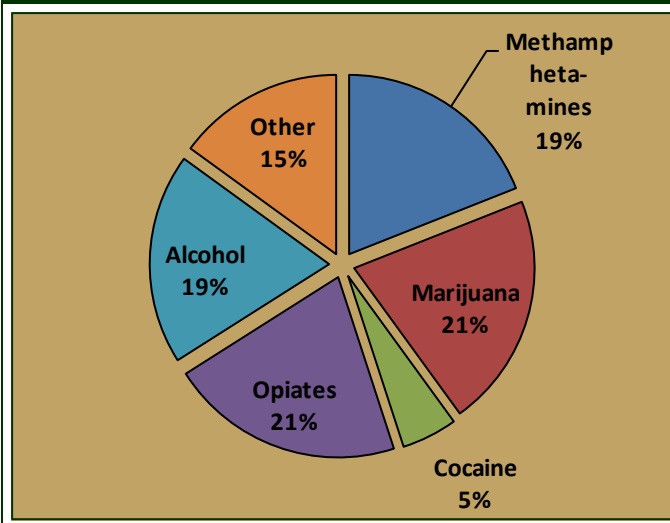
The Staunton, Augusta and Waynesboro drug court focuses on defendants who have been involved in criminal activity arising from their addiction to alcohol or illegal substances. Drug court participants are closely monitored by their probation officer as well as their therapist and return weekly before the court to report on their progress. Through effective use of incentives and sanctions, this multidisciplinary team approach has proven to be quite effective in reducing recidivism among this difficult population.

Since the drug court was established in July 2002, a total of 130 individuals have participated in the program and there have been 61 graduates. This is a rigorous program as evidenced by the retention rate for all participants (those who graduated vs. being unsuccessfully terminated) being 53.51%. At the close of 2015 we had 16 active drug court participants. The profiles for our 2015 participants include 6 females and 10 males, with an average age of 31.8 years and an average education of 12.38 years. Nine participants were referred from Staunton, three from Waynesboro and seven from Augusta County.

Quarterly recidivism studies are conducted to ascertain any arrests or convictions within two years of graduation. At the end of 2015 the recidivism study showed that of our 61 graduates, 9.8% had new criminal convictions within two

years of graduation. 21% had been rearrested within two years. Conversely, recidivism rates for those who failed to complete drug court were significantly higher....51% had been rearrested within two years and 38% had been reconvicted within two years.

FY 2015 Drugs of Choice



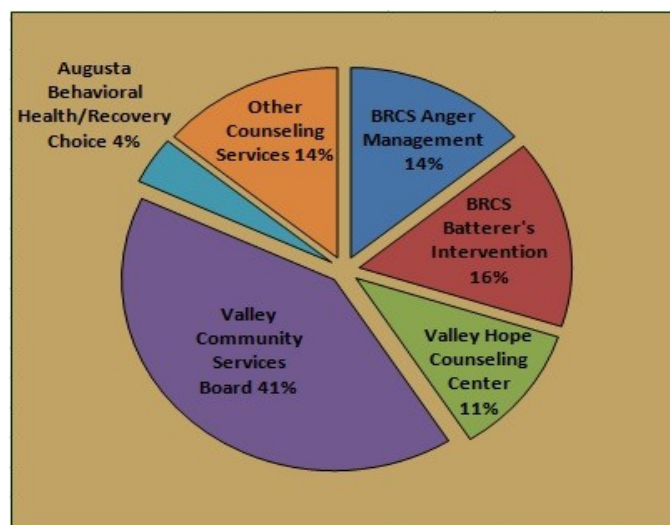
Domestic Violence

Defendants before the local JDR Courts charged with assault on a family member are referred to the Blue Ridge Court Services Domestic Violence Program for assessment and possible treatment. Each domestic violence client participates in an initial assessment to determine the appropriate level of treatment. The client's prior criminal history coupled with risk level as determined by the Modified Offender Screening Tool (MOST) and the Domestic Violence Inventory—Revised (DVI-R) play an important role in the level and duration of treatment. Treatment options include placement into anger management and batterer's intervention group therapy or individual therapy at one of six treatment providers in our community.

For FY 2015 a total of 144 domestic violence clients were referred to the domestic violence program. 21% were female and 79% male. Demographically, 78% were Caucasian, 19% African American and 3% Hispanic. As in the past, the largest number of clients were referred from the Augusta County JDR

Court at 46%, followed by 42% from Staunton and 12 % from Waynesboro.

Domestic Violence Treatment Providers



Staunton-Augusta Therapeutic Docket

In the spring of 2014, Blue Ridge Court Services and Valley Community Services Board (VCSB) collaboratively applied for a grant from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) to develop a mental health docket for Staunton and Augusta. In May of that year we learned that we had been awarded \$80,000 to move forward with establishing a therapeutic docket. With much excitement, a therapeutic docket advisory committee of 14 of the regions principal criminal justice and mental health stakeholders began meeting immediately to lay the foundation for this new docket.

Through the leadership of Chap Goodwin and collaborative efforts from Tim Martin, Rupen Shah, Peter Boatner, Bob Tucker, David Rawls, Lola Hefner, Martin Schmid, Don McCown, Donna Gum, Faye McCauley, Amanda Knighting, Christy Hostetter and David Pastors, multiple meetings and site visits took place during the summer of 2014. The Staunton-Augusta Therapeutic Docket came to fruition with it's first session on September 24th.

Over the ensuing months, 22 dockets were held and a total of 43 defendants were referred to the therapeutic docket. Demographic characteristics of the participants include the following:

- 16 Males / 27 Females
- 19 from Staunton Courts
- 21 from Augusta County Courts
- 2 from Waynesboro Courts
- 1 from Highland County Courts
- 41 Caucasians / 2 African Americans
- 11 in the 18 to 25 age group
- 15 in the 26 to 35 age group
- 17 in the 36 and over age range

At year's end the docket was evaluated and it was agreed to move forward in making this effort be an integral part of our local criminal justice process.

Summary of Diagnoses—2015

<i>Bi-Polar Disorder</i>	<i>PTSD</i>	<i>Anxiety Disorder</i>	<i>Depression</i>	<i>Anti-social</i>	<i>ADHD</i>	<i>Schizo-affective</i>	<i>Border-line Personality</i>	<i>Other</i>
15	4	10	14	2	2	4	1	4

FY 2015 Finances

Blue Ridge Court Services receives financial support from a variety of sources... 74% is provided by grants from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for local probation and pretrial services, the Virginia Supreme Court for the Drug Court and the Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) for the Therapeutic Docket. 3% is received from local grants by CAPSAW, the United Way, the Community Foundation and Augusta Health. The balance, 23%, is from participant fees. These include supervision fees for probation clients and fees for the various treatment groups (anger management, batterer's intervention, substance abuse and shoplifters intervention) offered weekly in our office. Home electronic monitoring fees also provide a portion of this locally generated income.

86% of our annual expenses for FY 2015 was apportioned to personnel in support of our staff of 13. We were fortunate to have a fund balance of about 7% of our revenues which will be applied to operations in FY 2016.

FY 2015 FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME \$967,902

DCJS Grant	603,156
Drug Court Grant	78,565
JAG Grant	34,133
DBHDS Grant	27,000
Augusta Health	6,500
CAPSAW	15,000
United Way	5,000
Comm. Foundation	4,000
Donations	185
Participant Fees	194,363

EXPENSES \$904,201

Personnel	778,408
Supplies/Rent	118,382
Travel/Training	2,669
Equipment	4,742

FUND BALANCE \$63,701

Blue Ridge Criminal Justice Board

The Blue Ridge Criminal Justice Board was established on July 1, 1995 as the result of the Comprehensive Community Corrections Act and Pretrial Services Act. This board is comprised of the region's principal criminal justice stakeholders and they represent each of the seven localities served by Blue Ridge Court Services. The Board meets quarterly to receive updates and discuss local issues and set policy relating to local criminal justice.

<u>Staunton</u>	<u>Waynesboro</u>	<u>Augusta</u>	<u>Highland</u>	<u>Rockbridge</u>	<u>Lexington</u>	<u>Buena Vista</u>
Peter Boatner	Don McCown	Tim Martin	Roberta Lambert	Spencer Suter	Al Thomas	TBA
Alex Caldwell	Joe Harris	Linda Jones	Timothy Duff	John Higgins	Bucky Joyce	TBA
James Cooke	Bud Levin	Donald Smith	Humes Franklin			
Steve Rosenberg	Charles Ricketts	Miles Bobbitt				
Ray Robertson	David Ledbetter	Jack Lee				
Chap Goodwin	Bob Tucker	Christa Pierpont				

Blue Ridge Court Services Staff - FY 2015 -

David Pastors — Mr. Pastors became the Program Director in September, 1996. Dave is a graduate of the University of Virginia with a BA in Psychology. He previously served as the Executive Director of the Jefferson Area Community Diversion Program in Charlottesville before coming to BRCS. He and his family reside in Crozet, VA.

Debbie Walker — Ms. Walker joined Blue Ridge Court Services as an Administrative Court Services Officer in November, 1995. In the spring of 1997, she became a pretrial investigator and was promoted to coordinate our Pretrial Program in 2001. Debbie is a Cum Laude graduate of Mary Baldwin College and resides in Staunton.

Megan Roane — Ms. Roane graduated from Bridgewater College and began her career with BRCS in 1999 as a court services technician. Megan was promoted to be a local probation officer in 2002 and has provided probation services to the Waynesboro courts. In May 2015 she was promoted to be Assistant Director.

Tasha Harner — Ms. Harner provides probation services to the local Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts. She joined BRCS as a court services technician in July 2005 and was promoted to be our domestic violence probation officer in May 2006. In 2015 she was promoted to be our BRCS Probation Manager. Tasha is a 2005 graduate of Bridgewater College with a BS in Psychology.

Sue Markley—Ms. Markley joined our staff in 2006 and was promoted to be our

Drug Court Coordinator in 2014. She also supervises transfer-in clients. Sue is a graduate of Bluefield College with a BA degree in Human Resources and holds an MBA degree from Averett University.



Lynn Murphey—Ms. Murphey joined our staff in 2007 to coordinate our new Offender re-entry Program. Lynn is a graduate of James Madison University where she received her Bachelors and Masters Degree in Counseling. Lynn is now the probation officer responsible for the Rockbridge County courts.

Luther Hite— Mr. Hite came to Blue Ridge Court Services in January 2009 to be our principal pretrial investigator. He had previously worked at the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Detention center as a residential counselor. Luther is a 2008 graduate of Liberty University with a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice.

Samantha Honig— Samantha joined BRCS in August 2009 to expand our pretrial efforts in the Waynesboro Courts. Samantha is a 2004 graduate of the University of Richmond with a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice. She recently expanded her duties to cover pretrial cases in Rockbridge and HEM cases in Waynesboro.

Martin Schmid - Martin started as our court services technician in September 2009. He was promoted to be a pretrial officer in charge of the Pretrial Initiative on Mental Illness and our HEM Coordinator in 2012. He is a 1996 graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University with a BS in Psychology and a BA in English.

Andrew Lightner — Andrew joined BRCS in June 2013 as a recent graduate of Liberty University with a BA in Criminal Justice. He covers probation cases in the Augusta County courts and also coordinates our Restorative Justice Program.

Alison Schofield—Ms. Schofield began her career with BRCS as our post baccalaureate fellow in June 2014. Alison is a 2014 graduate of James Madison University with a BA in Sociology. She was promoted to be our probation officer for Staunton Courts in June 2015. She resides in Harrisonburg.

Diana Fetterer - Ms. Fetterer joined our pretrial staff in July 2015 to assist with our Therapeutic Docket Program. Diana is a graduate of Christopher Newport University with a BA in Sociology and a Masters Degree in Forensic Psychology from Marymount University. She resides in Staunton.

James Taylor — Mr. Taylor became our 4th Post Baccalaureate Fellow in June 2015. During his one-year fellowship he is learning all the aspects of the eight programs BRCS offers and has aspirations to attend law school. Jimmy is a 2014 graduate of Oberlin College with a BA degree in Politics, Philosophy and Law and Society. He resides in Albemarle County.