

REMARKS

OF

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AT THE

“STATE OF OJP”  
OJP ALL-STAFF MEETING

ON

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2013  
WASHINGTON, DC

Good morning. A belated Happy New Year to all. And thanks to Matt for that great slide show, and to Juan for the theme music.

It's great to see everyone. It's a new year – a new beginning for the Administration. I'm excited, and I hope you share my excitement about what lies ahead.

I thought it was important to bring us all together now – at the start of the year and the start of a new term – to talk about the “state of OJP” – where we are, where we're going, what we've done well, and what we hope to do better in the coming year, and in the years ahead.

I want to begin by taking just a little time to remind ourselves what we've been able to achieve over the last year – because it's really been extraordinary. It's worth remembering that, even with some of the challenges we've faced, we really have done many remarkable things.

There's the groundbreaking work we've done in the areas of reentry, justice reinvestment, and recidivism reduction through the Federal Interagency Reentry Council and our Second Chance Act programs.

Our work in promoting science and evidence-based practices continues to pick up steam. CrimeSolutions.gov is growing and the OJP Diagnostic Center is now working with eight jurisdictions across the country.

Our efforts in the area of officer safety are making a difference, particularly through the VALOR initiative and the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program, which we know has saved the lives of dozens of officers.

The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention continues to expand. It grew to 10 sites last year, we added services, and an outside evaluation showed the Forum is making a positive impact.

Our leadership in supporting Defending Childhood was tremendous. We're reviewing the Attorney General's Task Force recommendations, and I'll be expecting us to really work hard to respond over the coming months and years.

OVC wrapped up its work on the Vision 21 report – and it's been slowly making its way to the Attorney General. This really is a landmark document that outlines a full range of major policy and practice changes in victim services.

Our work with tribes continues to be impressive. In December, we issued another Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, which has been a model of interagency coordination.

We kept up our efforts to support our state and local partners, which remains a critical part of our mission during these tight times. And we added a new dimension in our work with philanthropic organizations and other parts of the private sector.

So, looking back on these and many other accomplishments, we really have a lot to be proud of in our work with the field.

But I also want to take a minute to reflect on some of the equally important things we've done internally. In OJP – as in every organization – there are those who work on the "mission" side of things – our program managers, researchers, statisticians, and so forth – and those who support the organization's "business" needs – our technology specialists, accountants, lawyers, human resource officers, management analysts, communications specialists, contracting officers, and many others.

Sometimes, we forget how essential the business offices are to OJP's work. But none of the successes I just described would have been possible without them. Our image – before Congress, our stakeholders, and the public – and our ability to perform our mission is intimately bound up with our internal support mechanisms. The bottom line is, our mission and business activities must support one another if we, as an agency, are to succeed.

Along those lines, I just want to point out some of our achievements over the last year on the business side.

First, let me thank OA for their work in negotiating our new lease. This ensures that 810 7<sup>th</sup> Street will be our home for at least another 10 years, and it gives us the opportunity to look at our collective workspace and figure out how it can best meet our needs.

Human Resources launched our new human capital strategy last year – called the “Good to Great” campaign. We're engaging office leadership as well as staff to understand and plan for future workforce needs and to ensure we have the right resources in the right places at the right time.

And by the way, I want to thank everyone who participated in the Employee Viewpoint Survey. We had a really good response. Our results indicate that we remain a leader in some areas. OJP employees continue to believe their work is important and are willing to contribute extra effort to get the job done. We're leading the Department and government overall in telework eligibility. And we now see a positive shift in performance management scores as well as the Employee Engagement Index for example.

But we struggle in other areas. And I'll be frank, one of those areas is training and development. Another is helping employees achieve a good work-life balance. Addressing these and other concerns will be a top priority of mine this year.

And given that the employees at OJP are our greatest asset, I'm pleased that hiring is another area where we've made excellent progress. Last year, we were fortunate enough to hire 10 new employees, all of whom have made an impact in their relatively short time with us.

I'm also pleased that the Attorney General has delegated authority to the Assistant Attorneys General to manage their own hiring processes to a certain level. We're working to fill critical positions and hope to continue hiring top-shelf employees – both from our internal ranks and external to OJP.

OCIO has been hard at work enhancing our information infrastructure and technical capabilities. We've been given approval to implement our new phone system that will save us well over half-a-million dollars a year. The voice-over-IP system – once it's fully implemented – will offer some great new features, like instant messaging and digitized voicemails in your e-mail inbox. And OCIO has been working with Main to improve connectivity for those working remotely, including options that allow you to work on your desktop from anywhere. OCIO is also developing a Mobile Strategy that will support things like tablets, smartphones, and maybe even “bring your own device” proposals.

I'm also excited about the progress we've made in implementing social media across the bureaus, spearheaded by OCOM. We now are able to get information to our stakeholders in new ways – and our hope is that we're reaching new stakeholders we've previously not connected with.

On monitoring and oversight, we've made huge strides in recent years. With business support from OAAM and OCFO, we've exceeded our statutory requirements for grant monitoring, and we received our sixth consecutive “clean” audit opinion.

We also improved our oversight through the new automated risk-based assessment process developed by OAAM. OCFO launched an Online Grants Financial Management Training for grant recipients, which has been tremendously successful. And our Acquisition Management Division in OA instituted a new automated solicitation and contract writing tool that we hope will improve accountability and save time.

Our new Performance Management Initiative, led by OCFO, is now off the ground. And we continued some great work to expand diversity and inclusion through efforts like our FedRecruit initiative, which will improve our recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities.

So it's been a remarkable year of accomplishments – and we've laid the groundwork for even more remarkable things this year. That's not to say we don't have places where we need to improve – we certainly do, and we can.

OJP is in a very strong position now, and it's these successes – in strengthening our impact on the field and becoming a more efficient and effective organization – that convince me we can do even better in 2013.

Over the last four years, the field has come to look to us, not just as a giant ATM machine, but as a source of knowledge and leadership – which means we're being counted on to deliver. And I want to make sure we're in a position to do just that.

I want us to really embrace our role as thought leader, because – particularly in this tight economic climate – our role as funders is going to become less important in defining who we are. I'd like us to be an organization that puts as much emphasis on generating and sharing knowledge as it does on its funding responsibilities. My goal – my vision for OJP – is for us to be the first place people go for guidance and solutions in addressing public safety problems.

This requires a culture shift. It will mean we'll need to start seeing ourselves – all of us, both mission and business offices – as experts and knowledge generators, not just as separate parts of an administrative process. It also means changing the way we think about information and how we share it. The amount of knowledge and expertise in this building is astonishing, but so much of it goes untapped because it's not accessible. We need to re-think how we use technology to facilitate the exchange of this incredibly valuable information.

For instance, our reliance on shared computer drives is woefully inadequate. Now we have tools like Sharepoint where information can be tagged and is easily searchable. This will vastly improve our ability to communicate with each other and with our external stakeholders.

Making this adjustment won't happen overnight – and it will require an investment of time and resources on the part of all of us. But I'm prepared to make that investment. Last year, in spite of our budget challenges and reductions in other line items, we put more money into staff training than we did the prior year. And we hope to do the same this year. We're also planning for ways to facilitate continuous learning. We plan to roll out something called "OJP U" this year, which will institutionalize training opportunities for staff from the GS-7 level all the way up to the SES series. You'll hear more about that in the weeks ahead.

In the meantime, my challenge to all of you is to think deeply about how we can effect this change to a knowledge organization. How can we ensure that information is a core OJP resource, and one we're sharing effectively with the field – and with each other? Share your ideas, as some of you have already done – so very thoughtfully – in response to Jim's blog posts, which you can find on the OJP Portal or OJPNet.

Let's make sure OJP is an organization that provides ultimate value.

Let me end by saying that our work has gotten a lot of very positive attention, from within the Department and the Administration, from our stakeholders, and from Congress. People are seeing what important work we're doing here in OJP. Our work is truly making a difference. So let's keep up the momentum and continue what we've started.

Why don't we open it up for any comments or questions? If there's anything on your mind you'd like to share, anything you're curious about that I didn't cover, any ideas you have – feel free to share.

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