



### Community Connections Center Grand Celebration



Top Photo: DJJ staff and FJJ Board members break ground during the celebration. Bottom Photo: DJJ Staff and supporters gathered for celebration.

On June 26, DJJ staff and supporters celebrated the groundbreaking for the Community Connections Center, a first-of-its-kind building for the Department. The Center, expected to be operational by summer 2008, will give the Department a resource to connect juveniles with parents or guardians in a more welcoming environment. The Friends of Juvenile Justice (FJJ), a non-profit foundation, is funding the construction project through a \$3.3 million capital fund campaign. The center will provide space for more private family visitations, and for those persons involved in the rehabilitation of juveniles--including clinicians, educators, therapists, probation and intensive supervision officers, and volunteers. The celebration

included participation by some veteran DJJ employees. They were Mary Brown and Shawnta Cohen, Division of Rehabilitative Services; Bernie Edwards and Pat Tolbert, Division of Community Services; Lois Sanchez, Division of Administrative Services; Dianne Mclean, Division of Educational Services; Trudi Trotti, Office of Planning and Programs; and Doretha Best, Legal Affairs Office.

### Joe Benton Named State Employee of the Year



Joe Benton., center left, is pictured with Chief of Staff Margaret Barber, left, Bill Byars, director, center right, and Karry Guillory, deputy director for the Division of Rehabilitative Services.

Congratulations to Joe Benton! Benton was recently chosen by the South Carolina State Employees Association as a 2007 Employee of the Year. Benton has worked on behalf of youth and colleagues in various human services and professional capacities since 1965. He joined the association in 1985, and is its current president and the Southern Regional Executive Committee member on the National WAGE Board. Benton is DJJ's special assistant for Faith Initiatives, under a partnership with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He previously served as county director for the DJJ Richland County office.



### Original Painting Donated to Girls Transition Home

"Butterflies" an original painting by Frances Atkinson, (pictured above,) was donated to the Girls Transition Home. Her daughter, Meg Atkinson, (front left) made the presentation to DJJ on behalf of her mother. Meg Atkinson is an interior designer who is working closely with DJJ staff, female juveniles and volunteers, on designing the interior of the house.

Girls at DJJ's Willow Lane campus actually chose "butterflies" as a symbol for the transition home. They see it as a powerful metaphor for their transformation and change.

### DJJ Intensive Supervision Initiative is Studied

Representatives from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Juvenile Justice spent three days recently at DJJ to learn how South Carolina's reintegration efforts have evolved through the Intensive Supervision Initiative (ISI). The Bureau was represented by its divisional director, reintegration director and the assistant reintegration director—each of whom spent time with DJJ's intensive supervision officers to observe them at work. DJJ has 30 state funded ISOs in 23 counties and anticipates adding another 21 officers.