



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

STAFF SALUTE TO: VALERIE JOHNSON

Q. How long have you been at the Agency?

A. 30 years and 4 months

Q. What is your degree in?

A. BA in Social Work

Q. Why did you want to become a 'social/caseworker?'

A. I always wanted to help children. I started my career at YSU as a teacher.

Q. What departments or roles have you served while at the Agency?

A. I was an Ongoing Worker in our Family Services Department for 18 years before transferring to Foster Care/Placement/Resource Dept in 2007 to 2017. I worked in the capacity as a licensing worker and a Lead Foster Care Worker. I always loved working with Foster Caregivers and saw myself working in that department in my later years. From 2017 to present, I am currently an Inquiry Caseworker and Foster Parent Liaison. My duties to include completing the inquiry process of applicants through vetting process. After vetting, then applicants are invited to pre-service foster classes to become licensed through a 4-6 month process. I also work with recruiting events to recruit applicants to educate what it means and the qualifications to become a Foster Parent. I recruit [Foster Parents] everywhere I go. I hope to eventually go the area churches especially Black Churches to recruit.

Q. What is the best part about working at Children Services?

A. My colleagues, the community and especially the children we serve and protect. I love meeting people and explaining in detail how to become a Foster Caregiver for our Agency. I love our Foster Caregivers. It is very difficult to foster and nurture children all to know they will be reunified. Research shows that children love their family no matter what. We do our best to reunify with family as much as possible. I also enjoy the adoption part to see a child get the family that every child deserves in this world.

Q. What's is the most challenging aspect working at Children Services?

A. Reunification is the goal! Infertile Parents. I would love to see more African American Recruitment and more African American Foster Caregivers. The division in the world is so intense it is hard to recruit but I never give up because all children deserve a home!!

Q. Is there a historical or current person (local, regional, national, famous) you look up to and why?

A. There are many! Harriet Tubman. She never lost a Passenger and she never gave up saving slaves and her family! Over 300 freed Slaves to the North including her family!

Q. Is there a particular quote/movie/poem/ that motivates you? A. "Love Covers A Multitude of Things!"

Q. When you're not working what do you do for fun? A. I love to cook and I am enjoying my new home!!

Q. Family members?

A. I am married to my wonderful husband, James Johnson Jr. I have two sons, Aaron and Isaiah. Two grandsons, Alexander and Isaiah Jr.

Q. If you were stranded on a deserted island, what 2 things are a must have?

A. Well that is hard to answer. Potato chips would be one and my husband. I know he would figure a way to save us!

Q. What is one thing no one knows about you that you would like to share?

A. I have many stories to tell. If I can make you smile or laugh then that is good enough for me! I got married on my lunch hour in college-- impulsive would you say?!!

Q. Where do you see yourself in the next 3-5 years?

A. Retiring all to come back to work part-time in the capacity of training set up and inquiries.

Q. Anything else you would like to share?

A. This is really a loaded question. Each day strive to do what you can and accept things you cannot that are beyond your control. You at least tried and nothing beats a failure but a try. Lastly make sure your heart and mind are on one accord. Strive to make a difference in someone's life!!!



Mahoning County
Children Services

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