

***OCECD's Partnership with
Allen County Juvenile Detention Center, and Bluffton University***

For the first time, OCECD is working with a university to provide 1:1 reading mentoring (and other mentoring) for youth that are incarcerated in a county juvenile detention center. OCECD was instrumental in establishing a partnership with Bluffton University (BU), Allen County Juvenile Court and M4RA, our 1:1 reading program. Dr. James Harder, BU President; and Allen County Juvenile Judge Glenn Derryberry have pledged their support for this work. The goal of M4RA specifically for Allen County is to reduce recidivism of incarcerated youth by increasing their reading skills, which in turn improves their self-esteem. Higher reading levels will enable the youth to read books about a job interest, fill in job applications, and participate in activities/higher level thinking skills offered for their education. BU students from the following areas of study will participate in this partnership: Criminal Justice, Restorative Justice, Education, Pre-Art Therapy, Health Education, and Social Work.