



Media Release

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Division of Youth Services Director Announces Retirement

Ron Angel, whose leadership helped transform the Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Youth Services (DYS) into a nationally-recognized juvenile justice program, announced today that he plans to retire June 1.

DYS oversees a system of programs, both community and facility-based, designed to address the needs of youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. It is responsible for eight facilities and contracts with a number of community programs across Arkansas.

Angel, 66, began serving as DYS director in June 2007. Under his guidance, the state's juvenile justice system has dramatically enhanced its educational and behavioral health services, reduced the number of children in state facilities and built state-of-the-art schools. Angel also spearheaded efforts to transform the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center in Saline County, resulting in the facility's release from nearly a decade of federal oversight.

"Ron came in and offered two things that DYS desperately needed: Leadership and stability," said DHS Director John Selig. "With him at the helm, no problem seemed insurmountable."

Selig said he hired Angel, who is retired from the Arkansas National Guard's 39th Infantry Brigade and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, because of his strong management skills. Those are the skills Selig said he'll be looking for in the next director.

DHS Deputy Director Steven Jones, who has been Angel's supervisor for six years, will serve as interim director until Angel's replacement can be found.