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*News Release*

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## **DJS' Dwain Johnson Wins National Award for Service to Children and Youth**

Baltimore, MD (January 29, 2013) – The Department of Juvenile Services' (DJS) Director of Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI), Dwain Johnson, was awarded the 2013 LEWIS HINE AWARD for Service to Children and Youth. The award was presented last night by the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC).

Named for the acclaimed NCLC photographer who documented early-20<sup>th</sup> century exploitation of children, the LEWIS HINE AWARDS honor those individuals who, as professionals or volunteers, give of themselves and go the extra mile for the well-being of young people. The recipients are selected by a distinguished panel of judges from among hundreds of nominations submitted each year by business, community, and nonprofit leaders. Johnson was the only recipient from the Maryland area.

“The Violence Prevention Initiative is one of our cornerstone programs at the Department,” said DJS Secretary Sam Abed. “I am thrilled to see Dwain receive such an extraordinary honor for his well-deserved accomplishments.”

Johnson has worked for DJS since 2000 and was named the Director of the newly-created Baltimore City Violence Prevention Initiative in 2007. Johnson put together a team of highly motivated juvenile probation officers to work with and protect those juveniles identified to be most at-risk to become victims or perpetrators of violence in Baltimore. Intensive supervision, surveillance, and treatment were the focal points of the initiative. He also mobilized support from the Juvenile Court, the Mayor's office, the Baltimore City Police Department, the local State's Attorneys office and child-serving agencies. Johnson and his VPI teams worked to ensure that all high-risk youth were in compliance through safety planning, supervision, Global Satellite Positioning (GPS) monitoring, and treatment coordination.

Since 2007, juvenile homicides in Baltimore City have been driven down 57% and non-fatal shootings of juveniles have dramatically decreased by 82%.

Due to the success of the Baltimore VPI and Johnson's leadership and collaboration with state and local law enforcement agencies, the initiative's mission was expanded in 2011 to encompass the entire State, while Johnson was named the Director of the Statewide VPI program.

**For more information about the National Child Labor Committee and the LEWIS HINE AWARDS, visit [www.nationalchildlabor.org](http://www.nationalchildlabor.org).**

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