Reentrant Success Story

Thomas Wines, parole agent 2 in the Eastern Region, shares information about one of his reentrants:

"My reentrant, Henry Martin, recently completed a Peer Specialist Training and is now a State Certified Peer Specialist.

Martin has had some challenges with drug use along the way, but he credits some success to a one-on-one chat he had with Supervisor Karen Bornstein during a momentary lapse in his sobriety. He told me that, ‘Supervisor Bornstein did not give up on me when others did.’

Martin is currently employed part-time, maintains his own residence and attends school at the Community College of Philadelphia. Additionally, he will be working with ASCRA Agent Mea Williams to help him find a Peer Specialist job.”
Adams Named SCI Mercer Superintendent

Melinda Adams, a 24-year corrections employee, has been named superintendent at the State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Mercer. The appointment was effective May 21, 2018. Superintendent Adams has advanced through a variety of managerial positions in the DOC, gaining the knowledge and experience necessary to lead the Mercer facility.

“Superintendent Adams has demonstrated first-hand what persistence, passion and a willingness to step out of your comfort zone can accomplish,” said Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal. “She brings to the table all of the characteristics that are necessary to be an effective leader.”

Superintendent Adams began her DOC career at SCI Cambridge Springs in 1994 as a clerk typist and was promoted to laundry manager in 1998. In 2006, she transferred to SCI Albion as the superintendent’s assistant. She then promoted to major of unit management in 2014 and to deputy superintendent for centralized services in August 2015. She then transferred to the position of deputy superintendent for facility management. While at SCI Albion, Adams also held the positions of acting major of the guard and acting activities manager.

Adams was a member of the hostage negotiations team at SCI Cambridge Springs and attended fire emergency response team school when appointed to back-up the safety manager. At SCI Cambridge Springs, Adams served as a staff trainer for Women Offenders in Pennsylvania Corrections and Fraternization, of which she was a member of the committee assigned to develop the training. In addition, she served as a program committee member for the statewide Empowerment Symposium for 10 years and presented various workshops at local, regional and state symposiums. She presented fraternization workshops at the PA Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections and the Juvenile Detention Centers Association of PA and at the PA Prison Wardens Association Conference. Adams was a 2004 Department of Corrections Outstanding Performance Award recipient.

As superintendent of SCI Mercer, Adams is responsible for almost 500 employees and approximately 1,500 inmates. Adams, who is married and has two daughters, holds a B.S. in Criminal Justice.

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Specialized Investigators Training Held
By Carole Mattis, Director
DOC Bureau of Standards, Audits and Accreditation

The Bureau of Standards, Audits and Accreditation, PREA Compliance Division hosted its Specialized Investigators training at the Training Academy June 26-27, 2018. While this training is typically held bi-annually for department staff, it was the first time county officials and security staff were included as participants. Eleven counties were represented including, Allegheny, Berks, Bucks, Lackawanna, Lancaster and Fayette, to name a few.

Secretary Wetzel provided opening remarks with an inspiring reminder of the critical role investigators play in ensuring the safety of both staff and inmates within our facilities. He welcomed county staff members and reiterated his commitment to support their endeavors and PREA related needs. The Secretary’s comments were followed by an overview of the zero-tolerance standard and introduction of PREA by the department’s PREA Coordinator, and DOJ certified auditor, David Radziewicz. Other presenters the first day included SCI Coal Township PREA Lieutenant Christopher Brownawell, who covered investigatory documentation and report writing requirements, investigatory outcomes reviewed by Bureau of Investigations and Intelligence Lieutenant Mark Becker, and co-presenters, Detective Jeff Corcoran, of the Lower Paxton Township police department, and Kayla Houser from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape Outreach Coordinator Kayla Houser who delivered the keynote topic of trauma informed investigatory interviews.
The training commenced on the second day with a call to action by Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal. She encouraged attendees to understand the importance of their roles as investigators to not only hold perpetrators accountable, but to conduct quality investigations to exonerate those who have been falsely accused and to ensure the safe operations of our facilities. SCI Muncy PREA Lieutenant Paula Sipe and Office of Chief Counsel Attorney Brian Hokamp each presented modules on evidence protocol and the goal of preparing substantiated investigations for prosecution.

County participants had an opportunity to receive additional training by Captain Miguel Castro of the Berks County Jail, in a “Peers in Action” session, describing the investigatory process he implemented at his facility to successfully meet the standards.

The diverse line-up of presenters and engaging deliveries made this a successful training event - thanks to all.

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**Muncy Holds Volunteer Banquet & Training**

SCI Muncy’s Volunteer Banquet and training, held on June 24 at the prison, was just another day at the beach! While some volunteers played games like lawn dice and corn hole, others painted wooden sea creatures, Adirondack chairs and sea shells at their tables in the shade. Still others chose to just sit in the sun and enjoy the hotdogs, hamburgers, chips, soda and ice cream novelty treats!

The day was a success with 65 volunteers being retrained in Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), as well as updating their security review and ID’s, if necessary. Dorothy Johnson-Speight from Mothers in Charge, out of Philadelphia, Pa., was awarded the volunteer of the year plaque along with an 11” x 14” Precious Moments counted cross stitch with frame. After a day of games and fellowship with other volunteers and staff, many left not only with their 5” x 5” Precious Moments counted cross stich gift, but with new friends as well.

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Get Back to Work

Pittsburgh District Director Brian D. Helfrich reports that on June 21 and 22, the Pittsburgh District Office’s Community Advisory Committee, in partnership with the Pittsburgh Community Services Inc., held its 13th annual Get Back to Work Job and Health Fair. More than 300 reentrants from the Pittsburgh District and the Allegheny County Probation Department attended the two-day information job fair.

On the first day, attendees were provided with information about how to get their drivers licenses reinstated, how to address housing issues and a host of different social and health providers. On the second day, they went face-to-face with employers and providers.

This year, among a few of the participants were the City of Pittsburgh, Amazon, UPS, McDonalds and numerous construction trades and unions.

We are very excited about the prospects for many of our participants.
"Juvenile" Lifer Receives Award

Javier Cintron, parole manager 1, in Philadelphia shares the following:

On June 21, former "Juvenile" Lifer John Pace was awarded the "Raymond Pace Alexander Reentry Star of the Year Award" for his work at the Youth Sentencing & Reentry Project as their Juvenile Life Without Parole (JLWOP) reentry coordinator.

DID YOU KNOW? Raymond Pace Alexander was the first African American judge appointed to the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas.

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On July 2, 2018, the Department of Corrections will begin issuing Debit Release Cards to individuals being released from all state correctional institutions. The DOC has partnered with JPAY, a Securus Technologies Company, to provide this service. The DOC has been providing electronic money transfer through JPAY since 2003. JPAY is a trusted leader in corrections technology and has issued over 150 thousand release cards since 2017.

Debit release cards are easy to use, completely secure and MasterCard branded. Only the cardholder sees the actual 16-digit card number. Cardholders have immediate access to the funds as the cards are active immediately once they are issued. There is 24/7 customer support by calling 866-777-5729, or online card management at releasecards.jpay.com. Cards are accepted nationwide and internationally anywhere MasterCard is taken. Cards are even reloadable by cardholder. Most importantly, DOC Debit Release Cards are fee-free, as long as they are used in the MoneyPass ATM network (fees may be charged if used at an ATM outside the MoneyPass network). The only fee is a $3 monthly inactivity fee after 90 days of issuance if the card is not used.

Individuals being released from a state correctional institution will be notified of the nearest MoneyPass ATM to their SCI upon release. Additional MoneyPass locations can be found by going to https://www.moneypass.com/atm-locator.html. There are over 25,000 locations across the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

DOC officials believe that the implementation of the Debit Release Card program will assist released individuals with reintegrating into society, gain money management skills and establish credit history. Information can be obtained from the DOC's website at www.cor.pa.gov
VIVITROL CONFERENCE: $3M AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT VIVITROL IN COUNTY JAILS

July 31, 2018
9 am – 3 pm
DOC Training Academy
1451 N Market St, Elizabethown, PA 17022

RSVP ASAP to:
RA-CRNONNARCOTICGPRO@PA.GOV

Subjects include:
Vivotrel 101; Implementing Successful Programs; Application Process; Reentry Efforts; PBPP Partnership; Allowable Expenses; Lessons Learned; Reporting Requirements; Necessary Staffing; Budget Development; Current Research; Barriers; and Protocol Development.

Cost: FREE
Who should attend:
ADMINISTRATORS
BUSINESS MANAGERS
MEDICAL STAFF
REENTRY STAFF
SOCIAL WORKERS
PROJECT MANAGERS

TREATMENT
To be effective, VIVITROL must be used with other alcohol or drug recovery programs such as counseling.

CONTACT
STEVE SEITCHIK AT 717-728-0388

Lodging will be the responsibility of the registrant.
Lunch will be provided.
Pine Grove Holds Appreciation Luncheon

On June 27, SCI Pine Grove held its Annual Employee/Retiree Appreciation Luncheon. Acting Superintendent Lee Estock presented the following staff with a certificate and Pine Grove coin recognizing their accomplishments:

- **Medal of Valor** (Western Region) CO1 B. Yount
- **Mentor of the Year** (Western Region) Corrections Unit Manager Amy Varner
- **Outstanding Performance Nominees** (Western Region):
  - Rebecca Bollinger, Psychological Services Specialist
  - Dana Brahim, Reentry Parole Agent
  - Robert Kaminski, School Psychologist
  - Jayson Lickenfelt, Lieutenant
  - Jessica Purcell, Superintendent’s Secretary, Clerk Typist 3
  - Gary Small, Electronic Trade Instructor
  - Judy L. Smith, Corrections Superintendent Assistant 2
  - M. Solarz, CO1

The Empowering and Employee’s Association Committees supplied food for the event, and Dietary staff assisted with making and serving the food. Nine retirees attended the event.
Instructor/Chef Todd Lewis of the DOC Culinary Academy returned to Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in Philadelphia for its annual Prison Food Weekend to show off baked goods made by students. The annual event each June draws thousands of visitors to the site of the oldest prison in the United States. The Culinary Academy graduates dozens of students each year, preparing them for careers in the food service industry, including the completion of ServSafe certificate requirements.

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Pine Grove Visiting Days Extended

Beginning July 1, SCI Pine Grove will open its visiting room for visits on Thursdays. Previously they only had visits on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Please make note!

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Welcome Aboard!

Fifty-four new field and institutional parole staff are attending their first day of basic training at our Elizabethtown Training Academy, which will run for 13 weeks. Welcome aboard!
Gov. Wolf Applauds Passage of Clean Slate Legislation

On June 22, Governor Tom Wolf issued the following statement on the passage of House Bill 1419, the “Clean Slate” bill:

“The Clean Slate bill helps us accomplish something I have worked hard to do since I took office, make our criminal justice system fairer, more equitable, and more focused on rehabilitation,” Governor Wolf said. “Passage of the Clean Slate law allows for many people to move on with their lives with greater chances for success. This means better career, housing and education options.

“I thank the General Assembly for its bi-partisan efforts to pass this important piece of legislation that will help Pennsylvanians. It’s another step in the right direction to reform the state’s criminal justice system and allow people the opportunity to succeed. I look forward to signing this bill into law.”

HB1419 provides those with low-level, non-violent criminal records a mechanism to have their record sealed from public view.

Nearly 3 million Pennsylvanians of working age are estimated to have criminal records with many that are only minor.

The legislation proposes the following structure for sealing records:

- Nonviolent Misdemeanor Convictions – Sealing would occur after an individual has remained crime-free for 10 years.

- Non-Conviction Records – Sealing would be done as a matter of course, given that the presumption of innocence is one of the bedrocks of the American criminal justice system.

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Rockview Inmates Clean Up Litter

SCI Rockview’s Forest and Nursery Manager Wade Renninger, who also oversees the prison’s Community Work Program, shares a picture of inmates cleaning up litter from along I-99, a portion of which runs through prison property.

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Former Employee Publishes Article

Former Allegheny County prison employee Albert DeAmicis, who now is a professor of justice and security at LaRoche College, wrote the following article after visiting SCI Greene where he witnessed the program first hand. The article appears in the July/August 2018 issue of American Jails, a publication of the American Jail Association. You can learn more and even subscribe at www.americanjail.org.
DOC/PBPP Hold OWDS Trainings

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) and Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) joined together to offer the first of two Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) trainings this year. The first training was held in Western Pennsylvania this spring and the second will be held in Eastern Pennsylvania this fall. As a reminder, OWDS is an intensive, 160-hour training that prepares individuals to assist the reentrant population in finding and maintaining employment. Thanks to in-kind support and grant funds, this training is available free of charge; however, sponsoring agencies are expected to cover travel costs.

In April 2018, 22 attendees participated in the first 40 hours of onsite training. The second 40 hours of onsite training was held last week (June 18-22) at the Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood, Pa. In between these two onsite trainings, participants completed approximately an additional 80 hours of practicum assignments, including submission of a video.

During week #2, the participants learned ethical decision making for a workforce development specialist. This included several case studies and activities geared toward appropriate ethical delivery of workforce services. They went over using technology to assist with job placement and development. This included a two-hour module where the participants reviewed helpful websites to determine how appropriate these websites are for offenders. The participants also learned about soft skill workshops, resume writing and job club development. Finally, the participants completed the planning for their team projects and will be implementing the projects soon.

We are happy to report that 20 individuals from corrections, parole, county prisons, the DOC’s Bureau of Community Corrections, Labor & Industry, and a variety of community-based organizations are now OWDS certified.
In addition to co-leads – DOC Western Region Reentry Administrator Janeen Christ and PBPP Parole Manager Matt Sheaffer -- we would like to thank the following instructors who volunteered to provide training on various subjects during the second week:

- Mike Corson (PBPP)
- Jill Seus Starr (Labor & Industry, OVR)
- Krista Callear (PBPP)

The second OWDS training of 2018 will be held at the Lehigh Carbon Community College in Schnecksville, Pa., in September and November 2018.

Individuals interested in attending any future OWDS trainings in Pennsylvania should contact Dorenda Hamarlund at dhamarlund@pa.gov.

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**DADS-R-FATHERS**

On June 18, SCI Chester held its first DADS-R-FATHERS graduation ceremony in the institution’s chapel. Twenty-one inmates were honored for their completion of the eight-week program. The program is spearheaded by volunteer John Linder, former mayor of the city of Chester, Pa. The DADS-R-FATHERS program is designed as a self-help group to give participating students wisdom, strength and hope in their desire to be better fathers.

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Incarcerated Veterans Facts

- The DOC has 3,215 inmate veterans (6.69 percent of the 48,046 DOC inmates) incarcerated within its facilities. Statewide Veterans Coordinator Ryan Yoder is responsible for coordinating and overseeing all veteran-related services within the department.

- Through the initial classification process, an inmate veteran is identified, entered into the DOC’s computer system and provided with an Inmate Veteran Information Packet. This packet contains pertinent information regarding benefits and services offered by the DOC that includes applications for both a Request Pertaining to Military Records-DD-214 (SF180) as well as enrollment for VA Health Benefits (10-10EZ). In addition, each packet provides information on Veterans Service Units (VSUs).

- The DOC currently has three regional VSUs designed to prepare veterans for successful transition back into the community. Currently, the VSUs are located at SCIs Dallas, Houtzdale and Mercer. Two additional VSUs are being developed at SCIs Muncy and Phoenix, both of which are expected to be operational this summer.

- These units provide veteran-specific programs, workshops and services, including how to acquire a DD214, forms of identification, reentry programming, life skills, substance abuse programs, home/employment plans, veteran-specific workshops, education/vocational programs, mental health services (including PTSD) and assistance with VA benefits and services.

- VSU staff is comprised of a unit management team, veterans’ coordinator, psychological services specialist, reentry parole agent and a social worker.

- SCI Dallas is the department’s longest running VSU having begun operation in 2014. This unit has a capacity to house 155 individuals.

- SCI Houtzdale began operation in 2016 and has quickly grown into the DOC’s largest VSU. This unit has a capacity to house 197 individuals and includes a dog-training program.

- SCI Mercer’s VSU opened in 2017 and replaced the VSU that had been operating at SCI Pittsburgh until that prison closed. This unit is nearly at full capacity and houses 126 individuals. It also includes a dog-training program.

- SCI Muncy will be the location of the DOC’s first all-female VSU. This first-of-its-kind unit will have an initial capacity of 20 inmates and will offer the same services and support offered in the male VSUs.

- SCI Phoenix is a new, state-of-the-art facility, which will begin operation soon. The DOC’s newest prison will also house a VSU with an initial capacity of 60 veteran inmates.
SCI Forest Holds Reentry Job Fair

SCI Forest’s Reentry Job Fair, which was coordinated by Guidance Counselor David Jackson, was held June 21, in the prison’s Education Department.

Two hundred twenty-seven inmates participated in various vendor presentations.

Vendors included: Erie and Sharon Community Corrections Centers, Mental Health Association of PA, IUP Culinary Program, Renewal of Pittsburgh, Family Services of PA, CareerLink, Erie County Re-entry Services, Triangle Teck, Guadenzia and OVR.

A representative from IUP’s Academy of Culinary Arts discusses her program with inmates.
Yoga and Justice with Kempis Songster, Colleen DeVirgiliis and Brianne Murphy

Kempis Songster, a former “juvenile” lifer, social justice activist and graduate of Transformation Yoga Project’s SCI Graterford’s yoga teacher program, joins Colleen DeVirgiliis and Brianne Murphy from Transformation Yoga Project at Eastern State Pen on July 3 (6 to 7 p.m.) to discuss the intersection of yoga and justice. They will lead attendees through a yoga class on the prison’s baseball diamond (weather permitting). No prior yoga experience is necessary; the class will be designed to meet the needs of all who show up. Dress comfortably. Chairs and mats will be available.

For the past five years, Transformation Yoga Project has offered full and partial yoga trainings throughout the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. Kempis Songster was recently released after serving 29 years in prison and is currently a social justice activist with Amistad Law Project.

This event is part of Eastern State’s ongoing Searchlight Series of events addressing issues in contemporary corrections. The Searchlight Series discussions take place the first Tuesday of every month, free and open to the public. No reservations required.

Calling ALL SCI Somerset Retirees!
Officials Provide Info to County Wardens

At a June 1 meeting of the County/State Corrections Liaison Meeting, Mental Health Advocate Lynn Patrone and Tom Greishaw, who serves as the director of the DOC’s Office of County Inspections and Services, provided information to county officials.

The attendees were comprised of individuals from the DOC; County Commissioners of Pennsylvania; PA Prison Wardens Association; PA Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators; County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of PA; to name a few.

The presentation provided a general overview of the DOC, with focus on the number of inmates with mental illness and serious mental illness and the services provided to inmates while incarcerated. In addition, an overview of the Pathways Transitional Wellness Center, which operates out of the DOC’s Wernersville Community Corrections Center, was provided.

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“How Did They Do That?!”

Just Detention International’s (JDI) “How Did They Do That?!” regional training was held in Philadelphia on June 19. The workshop provided an opportunity for corrections professionals and victim advocates to learn from and strategize with agencies and advocates that have developed successful victim services programs for incarcerated survivors of sexual abuse. The Department’s PREA Coordinator Dave Radziewicz was invited to co-present with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) Outreach Coordinator Kayla Houser, to highlight the successful partnership formed between the two agencies. They highlighted the successful navigation of the sometimes incongruent ambitions of correctional agencies and victim advocates and expounded upon the collaborative trauma informed training provided by PCAR to PA DOC during specialized investigator and PREA Compliance Manager trainings.

Guest faculty member Robert Green, director of the Montgomery County (Maryland) Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, whose facility was a pilot site for the initial PREA standards, was the keynote speaker and set the tone by opening an honest conversation about forming effective partnerships between correctional agencies and victim advocates. At least 50 representatives from various states including Connecticut, Maryland, New York, Nebraska and Pennsylvania were in attendance. Questions were fielded by JDI staff Cynthia Trotten, Esq., and Gwyn Smith-Downs, as well as additional guest faculty members Karel Amaranth from the Westchester, NY, Community Opportunity Program and Renea Somerville, PREA Compliance Manager at the Howard County, MD Department of Corrections.

The afternoon began with a session on trauma-informed, victim-center responses before leading into breakout sessions, where Mr. Radziewicz facilitated two sessions
focused on cross-training efforts the PA DOC has made with its staff and advocates for effective service delivery to the department’s inmate and reentrant populations. The training concluded with a report out from each of the breakout sessions identifying the next steps to move beyond partnership challenges.

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**In The Centers...**

**Newspaper Highlights Transitional Living Centers Inc.**


**Permission to Reprint Granted by the Williamsport Sun-Gazette**

With help, women can remove inmate number, get on with their lives

By Mark Maroney

Jamie’s number in Muncy State Correctional Institute was OU2963

Today, she’s about to become a wife and a certified recovery and family recovery specialist.

Jamie Kinghorn’s journey from an abused young woman who quickly gravitated into a world of drugs and alcohol to the productive member of society she promises to be was among the testimonials at the recent 31st annual luncheon of the Transitional Living Centers Inc.

Kinghorn, 42, joined Trixie Atkinson and Brittney Ferraro, both of whom went through the transitional program, to give snapshots of their journey.

It was a celebratory event at the Pennsylvania College of Technology Friday to mark theirs’ and others’ successful re-entries into society after spending much of it behind bars.

Describing a childhood of abuse, addiction, chaos and violence, Kinghorn said she was in various juvenile detention facilities and, by age 12, in jail, followed by a continual time in and out of prison for 19 years.

In 2012, Kinghorn was sentenced to serve time at Muncy SCI, which she considered to be the best gift the state could have given her.

Once there, she said she realized there were female lifers who would never walk barefoot in the grass, eat at a steakhouse or cuddle with their children.
She said she enrolled in a building trades class and became a peer assistant.

After serving her time, she selected the Transitional Living Center at Williamsport, a halfway house with a heart and mission, where she was “sober but dry” and not yet understanding of her role in recovery.

“Recovery to me was recovering with a drink from another hangover,” she said, adding she hadn’t achieved spiritual soundness or guidance.

As she left the transitional housing program, she acknowledged failing.

“I fell flat on my face,” Kinghorn said.

Her parole officer took her back to Muncy and, after six more months, she went back to the Transitional Living Center because, she said, other halfway houses were warehouses with formerly incarcerated women who were, like her, numbers.

But not at this facility, where she finally began to transform and found supportive, sisters, mothers and best friends.

It hasn’t been easy. She’s had to weather the suicide of her best friend in March.

But, in three weeks, Kinghorn is to be married and whenever she needs help, she has it from the staff of the center, many of whom will be at her wedding.

Atkinson, meanwhile, also is not only in recovery but assisting others on the journey. She said that was only possible through the “open-armed” philosophy of the house, near the corner of West Third and Maynard streets.

Ferraro has a 9-year-old son and is a peer specialist in recovery. She views aspects of recovery in more black-and-white terms and does not support all of the federal government handouts.

“You either get better or keep making excuses,” Ferraro said.

Women in the transitional program find an atmosphere that can help them reconnect with the community, as well as residential living, oversight and mentoring for up to 20 women.

The facility emphasizes connection to the community. The women in the program are still serving the remaining parts of their sentences.

“It’s our mission to provide a supportive community that enables incarcerated women to make a positive and productive transition back into the society,” said Nicole Miller, executive director.
The center began as a nonprofit corporation in 1987, with an initial population of five women, to a facility with a staff providing support and services 24 hours a day.

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Reentrants Partner with City of Reading

Reentrants from the ADAPPT Inpatient unit partnered with the City of Reading and the Reading/Northern Railroad to clean up a section in the City -- 7th and Penn Streets.

This very visible, highly traveled area of the city has railroad tracks running through the section of streets in the downtown business district and was cluttered with trash.

“Our reentrants were provided supplies by representatives from the City of Reading and the Railroad,” said Mike Critchosin GEO Adappt facility director. “Steve Harrity is our partner and coordinator who works for the City of Reading, and he praised the work done by our reentrants.”

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SCI Muncy Staff Participate in PSP Camp Cadet

In keeping with tradition, SCI Muncy’s Corrections Emergency Response Team (CERT) members participated in the 2018 Camp Cadet Program, which was hosted by the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) on the campus of Susquehanna University.

Eleven of SCI Muncy’s CERT team members, led by Lt. Matt Allis, volunteered their time to provide an on-site interactive learning experience for the boys and girls selected for participation in Camp Cadet.

This collaboration between SCI Muncy staff and the local PSP continues to enhance communication and encouragement to children interested in establishing a structured lifestyle and potentially a career in some level of law enforcement or corrections.

Superintendent Wendy Nicholas and Major Mike Rowe also attended and spoke to the students about careers in corrections.

What is an ASCRA?

By Melissa Repsher
Director of Specialized Services and Community Outreach Division

I am the director of Specialized Services and Community Outreach Division and I oversee four parole managers and 21 ASCRAs.

ASCRA stands for Assessment, Sanctioning, Community Resource Agent.

The ASCRAs are statewide and in all but one (Williamsport) district offices and some sub-offices. They are specialized agents who coordinate reentry services for all reentrants under the supervision of the PBPP. They are experts in the districts
on Evidence Based Practices (EBP) and how EBP relates to supervision. They are also the district liaison on all community services and treatment throughout the communities they serve.

Besides running numerous cognitive behavioral groups, ASCRAs are in the community networking for new initiatives and services for the district. They attend and serve on the counties Reentry Coalitions and/or CJAB (Criminal Justice Advisory Boards). They assist the district with special programs for example; in Allegheny, Dauphin, Lackawanna and Philadelphia Counties, the PBPP collaborates with the Commonwealth Courts and Parole Board Members to hold a monthly Reentry Program that models the Drug Court Programs. The ASCRA serves as a treatment team member and provides group services to reentrants placed into the program.

Each district has specialized programs that the ASCRA, along with their parole managers, coordinate and participate in. Some further examples below are:

**Project Safe Neighborhoods Call-In Program** – identify high risk parolees in the 39th, 24th and 25th Philadelphia police districts and collaborate with federal and local authorities to enforce laws, but also provide resources to those targeted for this program.

**Drexel Project** – In West Philadelphia the ASCRA collaborates and coordinates a program that places 1st and 2nd year medical students in the community in a health advocacy role, which might include: health screening, health education, discussion of medications or diet, health system navigation, stress reduction, preparing for physician visits, providing social support.

**“Juvenile” Lifer (JL)** – all ASCRAs statewide have been instrumental working with the JL population. When JLs were first identified by the DOC, the ASCRAs coordinated with each SCI that housed JLs and went inside the prisons to provide information sessions on parole and the role of an ASCRA. At the time of release, the ASCRA meets with the JL as soon as they are released and works to identify immediate needs and assist in reentry planning. In Philadelphia a monthly Juvenile Lifer support group that is facilitated by the Juvenile Lifers themselves and the ASCRAs offer support for resources was started and is currently running successfully.

**BCC 120 listing** - The ASCRAs are now going into the centers to work with the reentrants who are still in the centers to determine barriers and work to overcome the obstacles and provide further support to get them transitioned into the community.
Reentry Employment Specialist (RES) training - Most of the ASCRAs have been certified as an Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) and some have assisted in delivering the RES trainings. Nearly 200 professionals including corrections, law enforcement, social service agencies and workforce development staff have been trained around the state.

Reentry Fairs - ASCRAs participate in local job fairs, reentry fairs and other community events held in each county. They are also partnering with the SCIs this year who have held or plan to hold reentry fairs inside the SCI.

Collaboration with the SCIs - Several ASCRAs have assisted SCIs with teaching the Living Under Supervision class and held information sessions called “Ask the ASCRA.”

Nutrition Links - In Altoona the ASCRAs collaborated with the Penn State Extension and completed one round of the Nutrition Links Program teaching reentrants about nutrition and how to better support their families with their eating habits.

Financial Reality Fairs - ASCRAs and Reentry staff supported and attended the five Financial Reality Fairs that were held in Erie, Reading, Philly, Pittsburgh and Harrisburg. This was a collaboration with the DOC, PHFA, BCC, PCUA and the PA Department of Banking and Securities.

Safe Return Project - ASCRAs in Philadelphia and Harrisburg assisted at these events to be on-site to provide information on services and support as needed.

Victim Wraparound Program - The ASCRA works directly with the Office of the Victim Advocate to reach out to those victims who are participating in the program needing additional support from field supervision. These cases are usually severe high-risk crimes.

The day in the life of an ASCRA is very exciting as it is never the same. Besides running all of their required groups from life skills to employment, they are in the community networking, serving in leadership roles on committees and/or serving the district agents by providing information on services, treatments and triaging special circumstances. Since they are also trained and a field agent, in their spare time they can assist with arrest, searches and other field related needs.

It takes a special person to be an ASCRA, and I have the privilege every day to witness the amazing work that is done.

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Chester Holds 3rd Annual Mental Health Awareness Event

On May 30, SCI Chester held its 3rd annual “Mental Health Awareness Event” commemorating Mental Health Awareness Month.

Approximately 80 inmates attended the event sponsored by SCI Chester’s Certified Peer Support Specialists and the Activities Department. This year’s event was titled, “Let’s talk about Mental Health.”

Topics included depression, ADHD, PTSD and anxiety. Participants also took a personality test to help identify their own strengths and weaknesses. The day’s event concluded with an introduction to WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan).

Blood Drive Held

Employees from the DOC’s Central Office participated in a blood drive last week. Ten individuals donated eight pints of blood, which will save the lives of 24 local patients!
As part of the facility’s reentry efforts, Penn State University staff members (Melissa Duttry, director of Enrollment Services; Rebecca Pennington, director of Student Affairs; Holli Lashinsky, assistant director of Admissions, Enrollment Services; and Anna Akinbunde, assistant director of Career Services) visited the Quehanna Boot Camp on June 5 to discuss the following with both the Boot Camp and State Intermediate Punishment (SIP) populations:

- Introduction from the staff
- PSU application process
- Judicial review process
- Financial aid application process
- Overview of PSU academic programs
- Career piece: What can a person do with a felony on their record?

Also in attendance from Penn State was Tharren Thompson, enrollment specialist, Veterans Services. Thompson discussed veterans benefits that are available.

Approximately 100 inmates attended the presentation and actively participated by giving their full attention and asking relevant questions. The presentation went so well that arrangements are being made to do presentations twice a year.

QBC officials wish to thank Penn State University and Reentry Specialist Dunn.
Berks Connections/Pretrial Services Presentation

Kerry Kershner from Berks Connections/Pretrial Services met with approximately 155 Boot Camp and SIP male and female inmates on June 15. Kershner, a former DOC employee, discussed services available to reentrants.

A few of the topics discussed by Kershner were the importance of having identification such as a valid driver’s license or ID, birth certificate and social security card; how Berks Connections/Pretrial Services works with individuals to obtain credit reports, housing, clothing, food, transportation and employment; and the importance of seeking outpatient or inpatient counseling.

Inmates were provided with an opportunity to pose questions.

The main thing that was stressed to the population was that there are resources available to assist reentrants and that they just must make the effort and do the right things.

Father’s Day at SCI Huntingdon

All fathers and sons visiting fathers on Fathers’ Day at SCI Huntingdon received a free photo in the visiting room. The photos were sponsored by the Inmate General Welfare Fund. Thirty-three photos were taken.
Pine Grove Holds Inmate “Day of Responsibility”

The philosophy behind this year’s “Day of Responsibility” (DOR) at SCI Pine Grove was to reach as many inmates as possible with a message of responsibility and accountability.

On June 18, Dr. Christian Conte and the DOR committee went block to block and hosted a series of six interactive presentations centered around responsible thinking and application.

At least 250 inmates and 50 staff were able to participate in the day’s events.
Prepping Inmates for Jobs in Tree Care

Earlier this year, we wrote an article about how the DOC and DCNR partnered to teach inmates at the DOC’s Forestry Camp at SCI Rockview about arboriculture.

Well, here’s an article on that program as written by Patricia Chaudoin for HMI. HMI, according to its website, “was founded in 2003 to provide the insurance industry with standardized replacement cost values and objective pre-loss risk inspections on trees and shrubs. Through the years, we have created a national network of professional tree care companies, ISA certified arborists and other subject matter experts to support our growing list of services. Today, we offer emergency tree removals and a wide range of consulting services to property owners and insurance adjusters, who are dealing with damage to trees, turf, landscaping, as well as unique golf course features such as bunkers, greens, fairways, and tee boxes. Emergency tree removals are available in over 40 states and HMI’s consulting services are available throughout North America and the Caribbean.”

The following article can be viewed here:
https://www.hmiadvantage.com/program-preps-inmates-jobs-tree-care/

Program Preps Inmates for Jobs in Tree Care

By Patricia Chaudoin

When Shea Zwerver was an undergraduate at a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, she had two seemingly divergent passions: social sciences and working in the
outdoors. From these, she crafted her own undergraduate degree, with her major in Psychology and a minor in Landscape Studies. “I wanted to build understanding with people so they would value the outdoors and the sustainability of natural resources,” she says. “I also was interested in the criminal justice system and the potential for rehabilitation through the outdoors.

“I got an internship at Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia,” Zwerver continues. “While I was there, I created a survey for stakeholders – visitors, board members and others invested in the arboretum – that asked questions to help us understand peoples’ emotional bonds to the landscape.”

Eventually, she received her master’s degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. “It was then I started seeing opportunities to share and align my goals of landscape, psychology and criminal justice,” she adds.

In 2016, Zwerver landed her current position as community engagement coordinator for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR). Through her connections with Penn State Extension, she became aware of the Arborist Short Course that the extension service has offered to the general public since 2002. The course provides entry-level arborists with the training they need to take the ISA Certified Arborist exam.

“I thought, ‘Let’s try this at a prison,’” says Zwerver. “It would give inmates employable skills, and if they could get their ISA certification while in prison, that would be a huge motivator. Plus, it could give the tree care industry a non-traditional and more diversified workforce pipeline.”

Zwerver says she approached the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections with her idea in the summer of 2017. “The woman I spoke with said that Forestry Camp would be the perfect place to pilot this program,” she says, adding that the camp is a unique, minimum-security facility located directly across the road from the State Correctional Institution at Rockview, in the center of the state.
Inmates nearing the end of their sentences are given the opportunity to live and work at the 72-person facility, which is manned by unarmed corrections officers 24/7, but has no wire fencing or bars on the windows. The camp is in the middle of about 2,600 acres of forest, which is managed for its wood products.

“It houses those who are sentenced for more minor infractions,” notes Zwerver. “The inmates are going out daily from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to help manage the forest. They’re felling trees for firewood, operating a sawmill and even maintaining a greenhouse and a small nursery with about 100 trees. They’re working hard and getting lots of practical experience. The Arborist Short Course seemed perfect for them.”

It wasn’t long before Zwerver was launching her program. She offered the residents of Forestry Camp a series of 11 arborist courses over a five-week period last November and December. A total of 15 men signed up for the 18 hours of training based on the ISA’s Arborist Certification Study Guidebook.

Zwerver reached out to a number of tree care specialists – many from Penn State Extension and the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry – asking them to be instructors. Those who came on board presented topics ranging from “Tree Climbing, Knots and Working in Trees” to “Tree Identification,” “Tree Worker Safety” and “Tree Pruning and ANSI Standards.” Two women from the Delaware Forest Service, Kesha Braunskill and Hannah Small, presented on “Tree Selection,” which included a fun, interactive game where each of the men was given a tree name and then had to find his corresponding leaf shape. Rich Vrboncic of Bartlett Tree Experts in Pittsburgh gave a talk on “Arboriculture as a Career Path,” and Zwerver herself presented a program called “Why Care About Trees?”

“I talked about the benefit of trees and why they are important to the environment and for reducing stress, for emotional leveling,” says Zwerver. “I asked the guys how they felt being in the forest, and one said he felt like a burden was lifted from him. Another said he felt more relaxed being surrounded by all the trees. Many of them said
they felt that working with their hands and managing the forest had
definite emotional benefits.

“We took a one-mile hike and talked about tree characteristics,”
Zwerver says.

According to Zwerver, all the men – whom she guesses ranged in age from
their mid-20s to early 50s – were extremely engaged and respectful during
the entire five weeks of the course. “They were very appreciative,” she notes. “They
thanked each instructor and shook hands with them. Everyone involved felt it was
really worthwhile.”

Zwerver says one inmate in particular, Greggory Clegg, seemed very engaged
during the short course. “He came up to me after the final class and said he was
very interested in tree care as a career,” she relates. “Greg had been incarcerated
for 13 years and was released this past January. I heard from staff at Forestry
Camp that he had pretty good tree-climbing skills. He even sent me a
handwritten three-page letter afterward saying how much he appreciated the
courses and that he wanted to pursue this, but he didn’t have a resume and
wasn’t sure how to put one together. He
didn’t even have an email account. Then I realized he’d missed the
past 13 years of technology, and something as simple as setting up
email probably seemed daunting.

“So I helped him out with some of these things, like getting a resume
together, and then I reached out to a few people about giving him an
interview when he got out. I got good, positive response from the folks
I reached out to. Greg called two of the companies I’d contacted, had
interviews with both and ended up with two job offers – and one was
with Asplundh.”

According to Clegg, who now lives in Hampton, Virginia, the Arborist
Short Course at Forestry Camp refueled a love for trees that he had as
a child. “My mother and father had a tree care business, so I’ve been
around this work since I was young,” he says. “But I left home at 16
and was on the streets, getting into all kinds of trouble. So when these
people came to Forestry Camp to speak to us, I really got that passion again. Hearing them just gave me a real drive and a goal. It made me want to be like them, like they were kind of a role model. And I look at trees in a whole new way now.”

One of Clegg’s job offers is contingent on the 35-year-old getting his Certified Arborist credentials. “I got 18 hours of training (during the Arborist Short Course) and I got my CPR training, so all I need is aerial rescue and then I can take the exam,” he explains. “There is a guy at Cut Knuckle Tree Care (out of Portsmouth, Virginia) who said that once I get my arborist certification, he’ll start training me in sales so I can go out on calls and bid on jobs and talk to customers about tree care.”

For now, Clegg works at Asplundh as a ground worker, dragging brush, running chainsaws and doing other miscellaneous jobs. “My goal is to save enough money to eventually start my own business,” he notes. “I’ll have to start from scratch, get myself a truck and go from there. I’d also like to help others learn the business someday.”

Clegg said he is indebted to Zwerver for her dedication to the arborist program at Forestry Camp. “She told me to follow my dreams and my passions, and she gave me a lot of good pointers,” he says. “She’s a really good person. You don’t find too many people like that around. And she told me to keep in touch so she knows how I’m doing.”

Based on Clegg’s success and the overall positive response she’s had to the program, Zwerver hopes to expand and offer the Arborist Short Course at even more prisons, including women’s correctional facilities. “Three more prisons across Pennsylvania have shown an interest in offering some aspects of the training, and we hope to have another five-week course this fall at Forestry Camp,” she says. “I’m also looking at teaching some basic tree care – like proper watering, disease control and general tree maintenance – to community work crews from local prisons. These are the people you see working along the roadside. Since many municipalities aren’t able to maintain their
trees due to budget restraints, giving these people tree care skills could be a great solution.”

In the meantime, Zwerver is looking for Pennsylvania-based tree care business owners who might be willing to hire people who previously spent time in prison. She’s also looking for speakers to present on “soft skills,” as well as creating a resume and how to present oneself in an interview. Eventually, Zwerver hopes to build a nationwide network of tree care employers and company leaders “who are interested in exploring the possibilities of hiring the formerly incarcerated and becoming part of their re-entrance process,” she says.

“We’re talking about giving these people a second chance and helping them make a livable wage once they’re released.”

For more information on how to become involved in the inmate re-entrance process, contact Shea Zwerver at 717-346-9583 or c-szwerver@pa.gov.

Article Courtesy of MAY 2018 Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) Magazine

Huntingdon’s Skyline Changes

Last week we told you that SCI Huntingdon’s smokestack, which had been a part of the area’s skyline since the 1920s, was being dismantled. Here’s an article from the Huntingdon Daily News:

Area’s skyline changing

Contractors dismantle SCI Huntingdon smokestack
By KAYLA HANDY, Staff Writer

Smithfield Township residents may be noticing some changes in the skyline, as a structure that served SCI Huntingdon is no longer standing.

Beginning last month, a contractor started to dismantle the smokestack at SCI Huntingdon, according to the facility’s communications director, Connie Green.

The smokestack, which monitored steam generation for the boilers within the institution, hasn’t been used since it was shut down July 1, 2013. The smokestack itself stood over 170 feet high and was constructed in 1928 by inmates.

You can read this entire article online (with a subscription) at http://www.huntingdondailynews.com/
Coal Township’s Career, Reentry Fair Highlighted in Local Newspaper

The June 7, 2018, edition of the Shamokin News-Item featured an article on the prison’s career and reentry fair.
Pine Grove Holds Media Tour

Earlier this month, officials from SCI Pine Grove invited local media inside the prison for a tour.

You can read about what it’s like to work at SCI Pine Grove in the June 14, 2018, edition of the Indiana Gazette at www.indianagazette.com

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UPDATE on CIT Training

Since implementing Crisis Intervention Team training in 2012, the DOC has trained 1,773 employees! CIT training focuses on the challenges corrections employees face when dealing with inmates experiencing mental health crisis that goes well beyond what the untrained non-professional could be expected to know or understand. The CIT training program helps staff better understand the challenges many inmates face and how to effectively resolve tense, dynamic and evolving crisis situations.

The CIT training program is part of a system-wide initiative to place inmates’ mental health at the forefront of treatment during incarceration. Moreover, CIT is about maximizing safety for both staff and inmates. By providing this education to our staff, we reduce the likelihood of use of force situations.

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MHFA Training Continues for Harrisburg Bureau of Police

You may recall our November 2017 article that highlighted the DOC’s training of members of the Harrisburg Bureau of Police about Mental Health First Aid and how to appropriately respond to individuals in a crisis.

This work continued on June 8, when Mental Health Advocate Lynn Patrone conducted a similar training for Harrisburg City code enforcement officers.

This training is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between the DOC and Harrisburg Bureau of Police.

Honor Guard Attends CPOF Project

SCI Huntingdon’s Honor Guard attended the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation (CPOF) Project 2000 in Houston Texas.

CPOF is a national, non-profit charitable organization created in 1984. Its primary function is to preserve and support the surviving families of correctional officers who lose their lives in pursuit of their chosen profession of protecting the public from those remanded to correctional custody and supervision in the nation's prisons and jails.

Pictured, left to right, are: Sgt. Crile, CO1 McMahan, CO1 Clark, Lt. Harker, CO1 McDermitt and CO1 Miller.
Flag ceremonies at Flight 93 Memorial support fundraising, offer respects

MARY PICKELS | Wednesday, June 13, 2018, 11:00 p.m.

On an unseasonably cold and rainy May afternoon, half a dozen people gather around the flagpole at the Flight 93 National Memorial office headquarters in Somerset County, each casting their eyes skyward.

Under the direction of Brooke Neel, development assistant with the Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial, several staff members of nearby SCI-Laurel Highlands unpack an American flag and hoist it high above their heads.

Standing nearby, ignoring the drizzle, Deborah Borza smiles.

Borza's daughter, Deora Bodley, 20, was the youngest passenger among the 40 passengers and crew members who lost their lives in the crash of United Flight 93 during the terrorists' attacks on 9/11.

Borza also serves as the Friends' vice president.

The group was participating in a Friends' flag program, in which volunteers, National Park Service ambassadors, service groups and Friends' members unbox, hoist and raise to full staff flags that briefly fly from the headquarters' flagpole.

The flags respect and honor those Flight 93 passengers and crew members and all who lost their lives in the day's terrorist attacks.

"We hoist them up and let people decide. ... Some people salute or say a person's name. ... I kind of leave it up to them," Neel says.

After being flown, each flag is issued a certificate of authenticity by the Friends' group.
Half of the flags are then sold in the Visitor Center's book store for $40, with proceeds benefitting the Friends' organization, Neel says.

"Last year in the Visitor Center we sold over 300," she says.

The other half are sent to the National Park Foundation, where the flags are distributed as gifts to donors contributing $93 to the memorial's direct mail campaign to help support its completion, Neel says.

"We are backed up on our fulfillment to the National Park Foundation. That's why we are giving such a big push for volunteers and for people to come fly (flags)," she says.

Volunteers can fly multiple flags during one visit, she adds.

"If anyone does fly 100 flags, they get their own flown flag," Neel says.

Peer support

Helping to raise the flag on this day are Major Benjamin Grove, a USMC veteran and member of the administrative staff at SCI-Laurel Highlands, Michelle Houser, the institution's deputy superintendent, and counselor Jason Vello.

The correctional facility recently began a staff wellness initiative, Corrections Outreach for Veterans and Employee Restoration, a peer-based program facilitated by staff.

Over the course of their careers, many people who work in the field of corrections may find themselves dealing with post-traumatic stress, Grove says.

Many veterans enlisted because of the 9/11 attacks, and some go into the field of corrections.

"We are trying to give people coping mechanisms to, one, recognize signs and symptoms of being overcome by the stress of their jobs and, two, ways to manage and live productive lives," he says.

The program is open to all staff members.

Staff participation with Flight 93 National Memorial programs began with the annual Plant a Tree reforestation event at the site.

"Deborah Borza says, 'We do this other thing and we'd be more than happy to get you involved,'" Grove says.

The flag raising will be part of the program's closure for participants and a way to give back, he says.
Grove and Houser hope to return with a larger group and fly more flags soon.

"I think once the weather breaks and we get sunny days, it will be easier to get staff out here," Houser says.

Volunteers are always welcome to fly flags, and are encouraged to come with friends or family members to share the experience together, Neel says.

Details: 814-893-6550 or flight93friends.org

Mary Pickels is a Tribune-Review staff writer. Reach her at 724-836-5401 or mpickels@tribweb.com or via Twitter @MaryPickels.

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**Statewide Veterans Coordinator Visits Waymart Inmates**

On June 15, Statewide Veterans Coordinator Ryan Yoder visited SCI Waymart and spoke with the facility's inmate veteran population and staff from the prison’s Veterans Service Office (VSO) about the veterans service units and the new VSO at the prison. Yoder presented a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions for about 103 incarcerated veterans.

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Plaque Presented to Somerset

On June 14, Marty Carr, National President of The PRIDE MC Club, presented SCI Somerset with a beautiful plaque in honor of Sgt. Mark Baserman.

The PRIDE MC club is open to all active and/or retired correctional employees from any local, state or federal correctional institution in America. Their primary mission is to assist correctional families in times of need.

The club, in addition to assisting others, is a means to offer correctional employees and their family members the opportunity to enjoy each other’s company and to develop camaraderie outside of the workplace.

Since its inception in 2000, the Pride MC has donated over $326,000 to correctional families in need.
Laurel Highlands Holds Memorial Golf Outing

The SCI Laurel Highlands Memorial Golf Outing is held annually to honor fallen comrades.

This year, the success of the tournament developed into the creation of the SCI Laurel Highlands Memorial Golf Scholarship Program.

The Golf Committee recently awarded two $500 scholarships to Miss Shelby Ursiak, a 2018 Homer Center graduate, and Miss Elizabeth Pryal, a 2018 Berlin Brothersvalley graduate.

Left -- pictured along with their parents, who are both employees of SCI Laurel Highlands, are Captain Jeff Pryal with his daughter, Elizabeth; and Food Service Instructor Sondra Ursiak with her daughter, Shelby.

Also pictured (at right) are members of the golf committee: Brian Karwatsky, Donna Platt, Jeff Pryal, Elizabeth Pryal, Shelby Ursiak, Sondra Ursiak, Deputy Michelle Houser and Michael Maga.

Both awardees will be entering Physician Assistant Programs in the fall.
Prison Holds Restaurant Trades Open House

On June 14, SCI Muncy held an open house for its newly-established Restaurant Trades vocational program, at which an extensive cross section of staff enjoyed an array of homemade cookies made from scratch by the eight culinary students.

Newly hired Restaurant Trades Instructor Robert Wheeler III kept visitors engaged by explaining the construction of the commercial kitchen -- from the newly-poured seamless floors and the stainless-steel countertops to the new commercial gas range. Wheeler undoubtedly knows the importance of this program. He started his career over 23 years ago, first serving as a food service instructor and then as a food service supervisor at SCI Muncy for the past 16 years. He gave emphasis that this vocational program is the groundwork for a fulfilling career if the reentrants take the knowledge learned and apply it when released.

Mirroring that of SCIs Camp Hill and Waymart, the students must meet specific requirements to be considered for the program, after which the students are on a probation period and must pass the ServSafe test to continue.

The hands-on learning is sequentially structured to cover basic kitchen equipment safety, stocks and sauces, pan sautéing, baking and much more.
SCI Muncy also will incorporate a restaurant hospitality component and cake decorating to the curriculum.

The first round of students were given the task of naming the culinary space. Superintendent Wendy Nicholas commented that “Second Chance Café” was befitting and views the Restaurant Trades vocational program as just that, a second chance to a new beginning.
Litter Clean-Up

On June 14, SCI Waymart employees pitched in and collected 18 bags of trash to improve the appearance of Carbondale Road, the main road leading to the facility.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Superintendent Kevin Ransom, Facility Maintenance Manager Tim Schweinsburg, Clerk Typist Kathy Millard, Major Jeffrey Gibson, Unit Manager Tim McDermott, Unit Manager Dave Chapel, Unit Manager Jody Smith, Social Worker Amber Muchal and Corrections Counselor Nathan Mihal.

Pictured, left to right are: Deputy Superintendent for Forensic Services Bobbie Bassett, Shawntech Administrator Kelly MacRae, CCPM Joseph Grillo and Unit Manager David Gorman.
In The Centers...

Second Chance Job Fair Held

On June 14, the York County Reentry Coalition hosted a job fair at York County’s CareerLink. The focus of the “Second Chance Job Fair” was to give individuals with a criminal background the chance to find gainful employment.

Employers who attended the event said that they hire reentrants and that each had at least three open permanent, full-time positions.

GEO Reentry also hosted a “Job Fair Prep Day” two days prior in order to assist with resumes, mock interviews, etc. Participants were given bus passes to/from the job fair.

York Community Corrections Center Counselor Marisa Millet is on the Reentry Coalition’s Workforce Engagement Committee that was tasked with planning this event.
Pictured, from left to right, are: Erin Boyd (PBPP), Cristie Dewitt (CareerLink), Joan Shindel (OVR), Marisa Millet (York CCC) and Kalen Macon (GEO Reentry).
Week of June 11…

**Officials Dedicate SCI Phoenix**

One June 1, several hundred people, including lawmakers, stakeholders and state officials gathered today to dedicate State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Phoenix.

Built on the grounds of SCI Graterford, SCI Phoenix will begin operation by June 30, 2018.

“A facility that maximizes staff safety and wellness, this prison replaces a nearly century-old facility,” Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. “SCI Phoenix was designed as a 21st century institution with advanced security features, environmentally efficient infrastructure and modern work and housing spaces.”

“We are pleased to deliver this state-of-the-art facility that will enable the Department of Corrections to continue to carry out its mission in a safe and secure setting for both the staff and inmates,” Secretary Topper said.

Participating in today’s ceremony were Department of General Services Secretary Curt Topper, DOC Secretary John Wetzel, Senator Bob Mensch, SCI Graterford/Phoenix Superintendent Tammy Ferguson, Regional Deputy Secretary/Transition Team Lead Steve Glunt and DOC Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal.

SCI Phoenix is located on 164 acres and will house roughly 3,830 male inmates in 15 housing units. Its design includes East and West side facilities with a shared administration/support building. Each side will have its own program services area, Correctional Industries laundry, garment and shoe shops, commissary, inmate property area and maintenance shops.

In addition, there is a separate 192-bed Female Transition Unit, which is located outside the perimeter of SCI Phoenix. This first-of-its-kind facility, will focus on
reentry and family reunification for female inmates returning to the southeastern part of Pennsylvania.

**Opening prayer by Rev. Ulrich Klemm**, the DOC’s religious services administrator and acting statewide volunteer coordinator:

"Gracious God,

We gather today in a world still broken.

We, Your children, still act in ways, which show disregard and bring harm to others.

Thus, we join those who envisioned and designed Eastern State Penitentiary and SCI Graterford years ago in their – and our – quest to create a humane space where we can bring about positive change and keep our communities safe.

We invite you to honor the intentions of our heart and all the time and thought that went into every detail to create and build this new institution.

At the same time, we are reminded that new concrete and steel alone can never ultimately transform lives.

Only You, coupled with a caring staff, community partners and effective programs can lay seeds of change and hope.

Therefore, we invite You into every corner of this complex to guide all who will inhabit these walls:

And as we dedicate this new physical space, we dedicate our hearts to do what is right and good, and just.

Amen.”

**Remarks from Superintendent Tammy Ferguson**:

“On behalf of the staff and inmates of SCI Graterford and the newest state correctional institution, SCI Phoenix. Welcome! It is said that nothing worth having comes easy, and that holds exceptionally true for SCI Phoenix. Despite the challenges and obstacles encountered in reaching this day, in the end it WAS worth it!

As the staff and inmates of SCI Graterford prepare to close one chapter in history for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and open another, we are cognizant that this initiative would not have been possible without the commitment and ongoing support of
Our success is not ours alone to own. We also recognize the efforts and support of Governor Wolf, Senators Greenleaf and Leach, Senator Mensch, Representative Corr and the Pennsylvania legislature for their ongoing commitment and service to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

To Secretary Topper and the staff at the Department of General Services; Secretary Oleksiak and staff at the Department of Labor & Industry, we are grateful for the guidance, dedication, persistence and perseverance that you have exercised throughout this monumental project.

The work and collaboration of Walsh-Heery Joint Venture, Hill International, and multiple design teams, have afforded us a unique opportunity to turn our vision into reality.

We also recognize the presence of the representatives here from the 24 other state correctional facilities.

Our collective partnership continues to withstand the test of time by doing what we do best… operating as ONE TEAM!!! We are honored to be part of a team that undeniably shapes the best correctional system in the country.
We are grateful to be part of an organization that, in a time of need, never hesitates to offer the assistance of our most valuable resource -- our remarkable and unfaltering staff. Throughout this initiative, subject matter experts in this profession have never hesitated to raise their hands to assist in this process. That same collective effort has propelled us to this day and as we near the end of a seven-year marathon, we have never faltered ... even today when we are engaged in one final push in extending the services of our own maintenance tradesmen and maintenance instructors from across the state to assist us in final preparations at this facility in anticipation of our upcoming transition.

Gratitude is extended to the transition team who under the direction of Regional Deputy Secretary Glunt, Retired Regional Deputy Secretary Klopotoski and Retired Superintendents Giroux and Tennis, have worked tirelessly to prepare SCI Graterford for deactivation and SCI Phoenix for our reception.

And last, but certainly not least, we recognize the staff from SCI Graterford who are here today as representatives of the 1,108 corrections professionals who are prepared to complete our much-awaited transition to SCI Phoenix.

I ask you... What is in a name? In Ancient Greek mythology the Phoenix is heralded as a magical, resilient and radiant bird that lives several hundred years. As the Phoenix prepares to succumb to its demise, it erects a nest that it retreats to in its final days. As the myth goes... When the end is inevitable, the Phoenix engages in a single clap of its colorful wings, the nest unites into flames and the Phoenix emerges from the ashes renewed.

SCI Graterford has without question served us well for 90 years, but she is worn, and she is tired. Much like the ultimate, although temporary, demise of the magnificent bird, the Phoenix, the staff and
inmates at SCI Graterford recognize the need for renewal and regeneration. I am confident that SCI Phoenix is a facility that will allow us to emerge even greater than we were before... And forever remind us the fortitude established in our name.

SCI Phoenix is designated as a maximum security male facility that will house 3,884 inmates within the secure perimeter. In addition, the facility with absorb the existing 147-bed Outside Housing Unit currently maintained at SCI Graterford. SCI Phoenix will also provide for a 192-bed Female Transitional Housing Unit, the first in the history of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. Women assigned to this unit will have increased opportunities to learn additional skills and establish resources to assist in their reentry into the community.

This energy efficient facility provides optimal line of sight for point to point and direct supervision of inmates, which enhances the safety and security for staff and inmates alike. SCI Phoenix is equipped with state-of-the-art technology to afford us a more effective security system. The facility design is more conducive to our mission as a facility designated to house mentally ill inmates. With increased space for programming we can better accommodate for treatment programs and support the work of our criminal justice and community partners and volunteers that work selflessly to support our inmate population. With increased vocational programs in the Education Department and the incorporation of a Pennsylvania Correctional Industries’ centralized laundry operation into our current CI industries, we will be able to offer more inmates vocational programming and additional jobs that provide them opportunities to learn viable trades that will assist them
in gaining employment upon reentry into the communities. SCI Phoenix will also provide a Special Observation Unit, Male Transitional Housing Unit, Veterans Service Unit and increased housing for infirmary patients. SCI Phoenix offers increased accommodations that include waiting areas that better accommodate the children of incarcerated parents and the incorporation of virtual visitation, both programs initiated to assist in increasing and maintaining family relationships and reunification.

SCI Phoenix housing unit.

Ninety years of extraordinary and monumental moments in history has readied us for the journey from a nest that you and countless others had a part in creating. Much like the Greek myth, this facility will serve 1,108 corrections professionals who are invested in emerging from our current nest and ready to embrace a period of regeneration.

One thousand one-hundred eight corrections professionals committed to the inmates entrusted in our care. One thousand one-hundred eight corrections professional who are accurately represented in a quote from Melanie Koulourus, who said, “Like a Phoenix, rising from the ashes, reborn with a wisdom and a strength that creates a light that shines bright enough to help, encourage, and inspire others out of their own darkness.”

There is, with certainty, a level of sadness and gratitude in foregoing our current nest, but that sadness is not a barrier for what lies ahead. With the clap of the wings, the nest that served us faithfully will be no
more... For Phoenix has risen... And the staff and inmates who will soon occupy this astonishing facility are prepared to soar.”

An Employee’s Perspective:

SCI Phoenix: Opportunity Knocks
By Rich Jacobs
Warehouse Operations & Material Handling Teacher, SCI Graterford

Pennsylvania Department of Corrections’ newest State Correctional Institution (SCI) Phoenix was dedicated before the public at 10 a.m. on Friday, June 1, 2018. Dignitaries, a contingent of rank and file staff, media and folks from all walks of life attended the one-hour ceremony.

Staff and inmates from SCI Graterford’s 90-year-old worn out prison will soon begin to fill the new one million square foot modern-day facility. SCI Graterford was built in 1929 to replace the Eastern State Penitentiary constructed in 1829. There are a lot of memories behind those towering walls, and the final sunset of SCI Graterford, as we know it, will soon take place.

These three prisons -- Eastern, Graterford and Phoenix -- represent an historic story that reverberates throughout the United States to this day. Eastern was designed, according to www.easternstate.org, “As the world’s first true “penitentiary,” a prison designed to inspire penitence or true regret and attracted visitors from around the globe." This new industry model, which included solitary confinement for all prisoners at the time, would continue to go down a path toward our system today which includes the ill effects of mass incarceration and an undeniably broken criminal justice system nationwide.
The question now becomes... What is in store for SCI Phoenix? Some staff members will retire while others are just beginning their journey. Everyone else is somewhere in between. Some have the energy and ambition to climb the ladder of success, while others simply hope to get in and out each day without being depleted by the stress of the job.

For SCI Phoenix, opportunity knocks. With a newly-appointed local administration to oversee the newest and largest correctional facility in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, SCI Phoenix is positioned to soar like its legendary namesake. Such a reality not only benefits the staff, incarcerated individuals and taxpayers, but highlights Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel’s ongoing commitment to reversing the path the commonwealth helped create nearly 200 years ago.

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**SCI Phoenix Address is on WAZE**

It’s official! SCI Phoenix exists on Waze. The GPS app reached out to the SCI Phoenix transition team back in February to ensure the institution is accurately displayed on its popular driving app. The routes will take visitors around, not through, the Graterford property grounds as buildings at Graterford campus will still be in use.

For those that don’t use Waze, Google maps has Phoenix listed as "SCI Phoenix Project.” There is no prison-specific location yet on MapQuest. Until then, users should enter the street address: 1200 Mokychic [Mow-KAH-Chick] Dr., Collegeville. The newly-named road honors DOC Captain Felix Mokychic who died in the line of duty at Graterford in 1979.

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Greene Employees Volunteer at Phoenix

To assist with the opening of SCI Phoenix, maintenance staff workers from SCI Greene have volunteered to assist with numerous maintenance projects. Welding Trades Instructor Jeffrey Bland completed welding and other various projects at the facility.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Superintendent Tammy Ferguson, SCI Greene’s Welding Trades Instructor Jeffrey Bland and Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore-Smeal.

Cadet Graduation Held

On June 8, SCI Fayette held the second graduation for the City of Pittsburgh Police Academy cadets as they completed the Inside Out Program at the facility. This unique program, developed by Dr. Norman Conti of Duquesne University, has been integrated into the Pittsburgh Police Academy curriculum.
"You don't need a bunch of ladies guarding men." Those words, uttered by Louisiana state Rep. Kenny Havard at a recent hearing at the state Capitol, stung me, and I am sure thousands of other women corrections professionals reacted the same way. However, and more importantly, it reminded me that, in spite of the progress women have made in corrections, we still have work to do. The irony was not lost on me that such a statement was made in March, during National Women's History month.

As the executive deputy secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and president of the national Association of Women Executives in Corrections (AWEC), I am shocked by the commenter's inaccurate perception of women in the corrections field. AWEC and most of our male counterparts, who are true professionals, recognize, value and appreciate what women bring to the table. We firmly believe that the presence of women enhances the safety, operations, communication and security within corrections' organizational culture and that the field is strengthened by women and men working together within the professional norms of our society and culture.

How can it be that in 2018 we still have lawmakers so ill-informed about the growing role that women play in the field of criminal justice? In Pennsylvania, 25 percent of our corrections staff, 29 percent of our managers and 40 percent of our superintendents are female, and Gov. Tom Wolf, like many of his counterparts in other states, is working to increase those numbers. There's plenty of agreement, in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, that it should be your ability, not your anatomy, that determines your destiny.

How could it be that we are still expected by some only to take "women's" jobs or to believe that there is no place for women in a corrections setting, or that the only reason corrections wages should be raised is to attract more men and push out female staff, as Rep. Havard advocates? There's a better reason to raise wages: to recognize that corrections is as much a part of maintaining public safety as any law-enforcement agency.

Pay equity is needed for women, who continue to demonstrate the value of their leadership in the corrections field not only by their ideas but also by their ability to deal more effectively with potentially violent situations. To someone who says they would rather have men respond to a prison fight than women, my response is this:
If you had women working in that situation you may not have had a fight in the first place, because women are generally more skilled at de-escalating tensions before they boil over.

Indeed, research has shown that women working behind the fence have a positive impact on reducing violence in prison. It’s time for non-believers to wake up. What a slap in the face to all of the women who serve as corrections officers, non-uniform staff, prison superintendents and department administrators, and especially to the women who have lost their lives in the line of duty to serve and protect the public.

We would do well to acknowledge that there are no gender lines when we all serve in support of a common mission. So, thank you, Rep. Havard, for reminding us that we still have work to do. I suggest you spend a day inside a prison with one of your brave public servants protecting the citizens of Louisiana -- and make it a female.

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**DOC Leaders Experience IAS Training**

DOC/PBPP leaders recently experienced a modified Immediate Action Skills (IAS) training that involves combined practical application of several skills such as verbal de-escalation, OC and Assault Management Applications in Corrections (AMAC).

The participants were provided with a training radio, an inert OC canister, a concise verbal de-escalation strategy and an AMAC technique. They then were given the opportunity to select and use their skills during hands-on scenarios based practical applications where the facilitators role-played various levels of inmate non-compliance.
The feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive and indicated that the leadership highly valued the opportunity to be exposed to the complex decisions that line staff make under pressure every day in this organization.

IAS instructors are being certified at the DOC’s Training Academy this month and will begin providing this training to corrections officers, sergeants and lieutenants in the coming months.

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**Frackville Holds 1st Inmate Career Fair**

On June 6, SCI Frackville held its first ever Reentry/Career Fair in the institution’s gymnasium. The two-hour event was sponsored by the prison’s Education Department. Approximately 175 inmates had the chance to attend the event, which included two sessions that consisted of an hour each. The goal of the fair was to give the inmates a leg up upon their release from the institution. Participants were permitted to speak with the various organizations/vendors that came inside the facility to share their information. Many of the vendors had pamphlets and brochures describing the services they provide. Some of the services provided were college, ministries, outreach programs, reentry providers and employers looking for employees.

SCI Frackville would like to thank all of the organizations who participated: Disabled Veteran Outreach Program, Berks Connection Pretrial Services, Pathways to Success, Fairshake, Bureau of Community Corrections, Mental Health Association in Pennsylvania, Pathstone Corporation, The Program It’s About Change, Luzerne Community College, Delaware County Community College, Penn Technical Institute, Northeast Prestressed Products, Hydro Extrusion, Jubilee Ministries, Liberty Ministries and Service Access & Management (SAM). Their presence at the event cannot be appreciated enough by the staff and inmates of SCI Frackville.

Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive. Both the volunteers and the inmates expressed how much they appreciated the opportunity. SCI Frackville staff look forward to a great working relationship with all the organizations who came out and showed their support both through the Career Pathways program and the Reentry Service Office.

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SCI Albion Celebrates 25 Years of Operation

In honor of the 25th Anniversary of the opening of SCI Albion, a celebratory ceremony was held on Friday, June 8, 2018. Several administrative staff from surrounding institutions, former superintendents, retirees and local media were in attendance to help celebrate this milestone.

Alongside our special guest and keynote speaker, Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal, was SCI Albion’s first superintendent, Edward Brennan, who spoke about the institution and revealed the contents of the time capsule, which included a letter he had written to the “Superintendent of SCI Albion 2018.” All items were put on display for everyone to enjoy and reminisce.

Pennsylvania State Representative Parke Wentling also presented a citation from the House of Representatives in congratulations of the momentous occasion.

A wreath was then placed on the Memorial Wall, by Superintendent Michael Clark with the assistance of SCI Albion’s Honor Guard, to remember those staff who have passed away.
After the ceremony concluded, attendees were encouraged to stay to enjoy cake and refreshments. The prison’s Empowerment Committee and ACE also held daily prize giveaways during the week, and ACE sponsored a picnic for staff and retirees on Wednesday, June 6, 2018.

Above: SCI Albion’s history on display.
Left: The prison’s memorial wall.

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**Financial Education Program Research Study**

The Department of Corrections and the Department of Banking and Securities (DoBS) partnered for over a year now to educate inmates about managing their finances and credit. These two agencies now have partnered to measure the effectiveness of this program and will do so at SCIs Cambridge Springs, Muncy, Pine Grove and Retreat.

As part of the study, DoBS officials will present the program to different groups of about 50 inmates each time. The inmates would be six to nine months from release and half would be randomly selected to be in a control group. Pre- and post-tests will be given.

Results will be analyzed by the DOC’s Planning, Research & Statistics Bureau, but it will be at least a year until they have those results, because time is needed for the inmates to participate in the program, be released from prison and then be followed for a sufficient amount of time to analyze recidivism rate.

At any point, this is something for readers to put on their radars.

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Deployed Employees Received Package, Send Thanks

In the last issue of our newsletter, we mentioned that SCI Cambridge Springs employees, through their C.O.V.E.R. committee, send a care package to their deployed coworkers.

The following was received from those coworkers:

“A BIG SHOUT OUT to our Brothers and Sister at SCI-CBS and the COVER team for putting this care package together. There was so much needed and wanted items we were able to share with our fellow Airmen. On behalf of Ryden, Christon, myself and the 397th ECES WE THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND THINKING OF US!!”
Huntingdon’s Skyline Changes

People familiar with the skyline in Smithfield Township may have noticed some changes recently. The smokestack at SCI Huntingdon, which has long been part of the skyline, no longer exists.

On July 1, 2013, SCI Huntingdon ceased steam generation, making the smoke stack serving the boilers obsolete. The stack, built in 1928 by inmate labor, was just over 170 feet tall and was in continuous service until 2013. Since the smokestack fell into disuse, deterioration of the brick and mortar due to water and acids from sulphur set in.

Deconstruction of the smokestack started in mid-May and should be done by mid-June. A private contractor, R & P Chimney from Kentucky, is handling the demolition.

Below is a picture of the smokestack during its construction in 1928.

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#19 4/6/28
View #3
New Chim
Another HERO!

Andrew, an employee at SCI Dallas, submitted the following information about our latest employee hero:

It was 8 minutes after 12 noon and a young physician’s assistant from the infirmary started choking. CO Granoski jumped into action and applied the Heimlich Maneuver! With 3 short bursts into the lower cavity, the food was loose, the employee was breathing fine again, and CO Granoski went back to his post.

All in a day’s work. It was nice to observe people helping one another.

Thanks to CO Granoski for a job well done!

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Huntingdon Employee Attends Middle School Career Fair

Beth Linn, SCI Huntingdon records specialist and participator in Canine Partners for Life (CPL), was recently invited to attend the Huntingdon Area Middle School STEM Career Fair. Linn attended with Falco as presenters for CPL. They were, of course, the most popular presenter there, thanks to Falco! They were completely surrounded by students for the duration of the fair. Falco behaved beautifully as a representative of SCI Huntingdon and CPL!

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How to Perform the Heimlich Maneuver

If a choking person is not coughing or is unable to speak, that's your cue to perform the Heimlich maneuver immediately. Here are a few steps to help save a choking victim.

1. Ask the choking person to stand if he or she is sitting.
2. Place yourself slightly behind the standing victim.
3. Reassure the victim that you know the Heimlich maneuver and are going to help.
4. Place your arms around the victim's waist.
5. Make a fist with one hand and place your thumb toward the victim, just above his or her belly button.
6. Grab your fist with your other hand.
7. Deliver five upward squeeze-thrusts into the abdomen.
8. Make each squeeze-thrust strong enough to dislodge a foreign body.
9. Understand that your thrusts make the diaphragm move air out of the victim's lungs, creating a kind of artificial cough.
10. Keep a firm grip on the victim, since he or she can lose consciousness and fall to the ground if the Heimlich maneuver is not effective.
11. Repeat the Heimlich maneuver until the foreign body is expelled.

SOURCE: https://healthfully.com/Heimlich-maneuver-14949.html
Decommissioning of Camp Hill’s Special Management Unit

Unit was the first specialized program of its kind

On Thursday, April 12, 2018, the last remaining inmate transferred from the Special Management Unit (SMU) at SCI Camp Hill to SCI Benner Township as an SMU graduate.

Along with his transfer, the SMU at Camp Hill was officially decommissioned, and SCI Forest will now operate this program.

What you may not realize is that the SMU at SCI Camp Hill was the very first specialized program for male offenders in the PA Department of Corrections.

According to former Secretary of Corrections Dr. Jeffrey A. Beard, he was tasked in the early 1990s, by then-Commissioner Joseph Lehman, to develop a program/specialized unit for the most problematic male inmates in the state.

He worked closely with some colleagues reviewing state-of-the-art programs around the country to develop a program for Pennsylvania.

“What considering the nature of the inmate population that would be housed at SCI Camp Hill, the safety of staff was paramount to the development of the program,” Beard said in a recent interview.

Beard said the vision for the SMU was to restore these problematic inmates to a level of functioning that would allow them to be returned to the general population.

“At that time, these were inmates who had often languished in the Restricted Housing Unit (RHU) for years,” Beard said.

In 1992, Dr. Beard’s program, known as the SMU, was finally implemented.

When the decision was made in December 2017 to close the SMU at SCI Camp Hill and transfer the inmates, the SMU housed only 23 inmates. However, the number of inmates in the SMU in the 1990s was as high as 110 inmates. These were some of the most assaultive and problematic inmates in the entire state. Staff also described seeing a change in the type of SMU inmates over the years, from highly assaultive to more litigious.

The early years of the SMU were not easy times for staff. Staff described those early times as “controlled chaos” and “loud with banging and pounding all the time.” Staff further stated, “There were days when we had to suit up for multiple cell extractions the minute we came on shift.”

Numerous physical plant modifications and security enhancements were made to the cell doors, exercise units, food panels, etc., to make the unit safer as inmates were constantly trying to manipulate the security of the unit.

With the implementation of additional specialized units years after the SMU opened at Camp Hill, such as the Long Term Segregation Unit (LTSU) at SCI Pittsburgh (which was moved to SCI Fayette) and another SMU at SCI Greene and then SCI Fayette, it provided some much-needed relief to SCI Camp Hill as the only institution managing these problematic inmates.
With today’s specialized units for seriously mentally ill inmates and other targeted populations, inmates are now diverted to specialized programs that are designed to specifically address their individual needs.

Statistically, the SMU data shows that Dr. Beard’s program has been a success. Out of a total of 782 receptions, 489 inmates graduated from SCI Camp Hill’s SMU.

Although SCI Camp Hill has many other specialized programs still remaining, it will not be the same without the SMU. “E Block” will always hold 26+ years of SMU memories and history. However, the closing of the SMU will allow staff to divert their time and attention to the many other programs currently operating at SCI Camp Hill.

Staff who worked over the years in SCI Camp Hill’s SMU.

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**Benefits of Hiring Reentrants**
By Dorenda Hamarlund, Career Pathways Program Manager

On May 23, the Capitol Region CareerLink in Harrisburg hosted an event for Dauphin County employers to learn the benefits of hiring reentrants. A number of presenters provided information on a variety of topics, which included unemployment compensation, tax credits and bonding (Labor & Industry), Center for Employment Opportunities, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) overview, Career Pathways overview (Dept. of Corrections), Parole/ASCRA overview (PBPP), How to Read a Criminal Background Check (Rep. Patty Kim’s Office) and a roundtable with successful reentrants.
There were more than 40 people in attendance from businesses, non-profits and government agencies. We were pleased to have 10 employers attend the event. DOC reached out to all of the employers last week and already received three responses wanting to work with DOC to hire reentrants. We hope to hear from others this week.

Overall, this was a very successful event and we may hold others throughout the state.

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**Retreat’s Dog Training Program Highlighted**

During a recent media tour of the prison, SCI Retreat officials showed off their dog training program. This program, along with other aspects of the prison’s operations, were highlighted on WBRE-RV.


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Mural Arts Program Inmates Work with Professional Artists

SCI Muncy inmates employed by the Mural Arts Program had the opportunity to work with two professional artists during the week of June 4. Through a partnership with the Northern Tier Partnership for Arts in Education artists, Jon Laidacker and Katie Trainer worked with the inmates on a mural design for the inmate dining room (IDR) at SCI Muncy. Laidacker is an accomplished muralist who was responsible for the “How Philly Moves” mural at the Philadelphia Airport, the “Our City, Our Team” mural celebrating the Super Bowl Champion Philadelphia Eagles, and various other murals.

Laidacker prepared the design off-site and brought in panels which were painted by the inmates in the program. Trainer and Laidacker explained the mural process, mural supplies and various other art-related topics to the inmates while working on the project. It was a truly immersive learning experience for all involved. Laidacker’s mural process involves simplifying the art into basic colors so that the mural can be made into a “paint-by-numbers” project that anyone can complete, regardless of artistic talent or background.
Seven inmates participated in the week-long instruction and helped paint the panels. Once the panels are painted on-site, Laidacker takes them back to his studio for touch-up and fine detail. A total of 16 panels will be installed in the IDR, with the theme being a transformation from the past to the present at SCI Muncy using old and current photographs of the compound.

In addition to the past week, the artists will also return for dates in July to finish the panels and then install the panels in the IDR. Once completed, the 16-panel piece will be mounted on the wall of the IDR at SCI Muncy.
Parole Agent 2 Stefanie Mong, who works out of the Mercer District Office, was mentioned in the May 20, 2018, issue of the Sharon Herald.

In addition to several other veterans’ recollections, Mong’s military experience was recently discussed at the Veterans Breakfast Club. Mong, who is from Grove City, talked about her radio operator military occupational specialty and how she also assisted in Iraq with that country’s first election day searching women as they were going to cast their ballots.

The club, led by Executive Director Todd DePastino, who is a history professor and author of “Bill Mauldin: A Life Up Front.” As a result of his work on the book, DePastino began helping military veterans tell their stories at the club, which recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The club meets several times each week, and they hold two gatherings a year in Mercer county – one is on Armed Forces Day, and the other is in October. You can learn more about the Veterans Breakfast Club at veteransbreakfastclub.com
Corrections Employee Week Picnic Held

In celebration of Employee Week, which was May 6-12, 2018, SCI Forest held its annual Staff Appreciation Picnic on May 17. Employees were served pulled pork, fried chicken, coleslaw, baked beans and fries.

The prison’s C.O.V.E.R. Committee held a bake sale during the event. All goodies were donated by staff. The prison’s Employee Association (EA) also held a Chinese Auction and 50/50.

Other fun events were held throughout the previous week, including trivia, EA merchandise give aways and cash drawings.

During their lunch periods, employees were able to enjoy games of corn hole.

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Serving as a Resource to Counties

Recently, Steven Seitchik, who serves as the DOC’s Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) coordinator, met with several individuals from the Franklin County Prison to discuss MAT and the use of Vivitrol and similar substances to help reentrants avoid returning to opioid use after release from prison. Plans are underway for Seitchik to return to the prison to provide information to additional county prison employees.

As a refresher, here’s information on the DOC’s MAT program which is available on the DOC’s website:

As part of its ongoing mission to better equip reentrants as they return to their communities, the Department of Corrections (DOC) began providing Vivitrol (Naltrexone for extended release injectable suspension) for female reentrants at SCI Muncy (2014). Vivitrol is a non-narcotic medication indicated for the treatment of alcohol use disorder as well as opioid use...
disorder. Penn State University researchers evaluated this initiative and ultimately recommended the DOC consider expanding it to men’s institutions.

As of April 2018, Vivitrol is available at all state correctional institutions (SCIs): Albion, Benner Township, Cambridge Springs, Camp Hill, Chester, Coal Township, Dallas, Fayette, Forest, Frackville, Graterford, Greene, Houtzdale, Huntingdon, Laurel Highlands, Mahanoy, Mercer, Muncy, Pine Grove, Quehanna, Retreat, Rockview, Smithfield, Somerset and Waymart.

**Medical Assistance/COMPASS**

With many serious mental and physical health conditions, including substance use disorder (SUD), reentrants require essential health care immediately upon release from incarceration. To address this issue, the DOC and the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) have collaborated to create a process ensuring that Medical Assistance (MA) benefits are in place for reentrants on the date of their release. If the individual is eligible, MA is authorized no sooner than seven days prior to the individual’s release date from the SCI, using the release date as the MA begin date. This partnership has resulted in the development of a more effective and expedited continuum of care.

**MAT Challenges**

Many treatment facility staff, who conquered their own addictions without medication, favor an abstinence model, and provider skepticism may contribute to low adoption of MAT. Staff in community corrections contract facilities (CCFs) have expressed that their corporate offices do not support the use of MAT and are therefore hesitant to personally participate in MAT expansion. Additionally, many individuals utilizing MAT are met with harsh criticism from the 12-step community.

Substance Use Disorders has been generally treated as if it were an acute illness, rather than a chronic disease. Research results suggest that long-term care strategies of medication management and continued monitoring produce lasting benefits. The use of MAT for those suffering from addiction should be insured, treated and evaluated like other chronic illnesses.

**Opioid Therapeutic Community Programs**

In the recent years, information has shown that the United States is in a state of emergency regarding substance use, particularly with opiates. Pennsylvania has seen this issue arise both in communities and in its state correctional institutions. Statistics from December 1, 2016, through November 30, 2017, show that 21% (3,025 out of 14,150) of the individuals that completed a drug and alcohol assessment, The Texas Christian University – II Assessment (TCU), reported opiates as their drug of choice.
Another 5% (751) reported that opiates were their 2nd or 3rd drug of choice.

In January 2017, the DOC made changes to the general population Therapeutic Community Curriculum and the Co-Occurring Disorders Therapeutic Community Curriculum to provide evidence based treatment. On March 12, 2018, the department converted six therapeutic communities (TCs) to opiate specific therapeutic communities.

**Institutions with Opiate Specific TCs:**

- Camp Hill
- Laurel Highlands
- Chester
- Albion (Co-Occurring TC)
- Quehanna Boot Camp (State Intermediate Punishment [SIP])
- Cambridge Springs (SIP and Female)

While these are the first institutions to implement this program, the goal will be to continue to increase the program based on successes and need.

**Oral Naltrexone Maintenance**

The DOC has expanded its MAT programming to include oral naltrexone maintenance, which is now available at each of the Opiate Specific TC sites listed above. Participants are switched to Vivitrol prior to institutional release.

**Future Expansion**

The DOC plans to take a sharply-focused approach in its plans to expand MAT, both now and into the future. To bring this mission to fruition, the DOC, as it advances its expansion plans, will include Methadone and Buprenorphine (i.e., Bunavail, Probuphine, Suboxone, Subutex, Sublocade, Zubsolv, etc.) as standards of care where determined appropriate. Any decisions regarding MAT expansion will take PA licensing restrictions into account, and ongoing collaboration with other state agencies shall continue to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on current licenses to provide alcohol and other drug (AOD) programming.

**Options for MAT expansion include:**

- **Medication-Assisted Opiate Detoxification:** For new commitments, parole violators and diversion cases
- **Maintenance:** For those individuals who are committed to the DOC and who are already receiving MAT
- **Initial Prescriptions:** For those individuals who are committed to the DOC and who are not in need of detoxification, but who could benefit from MAT from the time of DOC commitment
Social workers, or staff in a treatment classification, are the main points of contact for coordination between internal and external stakeholders. A MAT statewide coordinator was hired in March 2016 within the DOC’s Bureau of Treatment Services. This individual provides training and technical assistance to site coordinators (i.e., social workers) and is the liaison with the Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC), PA Board of Probation and Parole (PBPP) Points of Contact (POCs), Single County Authorities (SCAs) and community-based treatment providers.

**Medications for Opioid Use Disorder**

The following medications are approved by the FDA for use in opioid addiction treatment in conjunction with psychosocial therapy:

**Methadone** - Methadone, a synthetic opioid, is an agonist that mitigates opioid withdrawal symptoms and, at higher doses, blocks the effects of heroin and other drugs containing opiates. Maintenance of opioid addiction treatment with methadone is approved “in conjunction with appropriate social and medical services.” Used successfully for more than 40 years in the treatment of opioid dependence, methadone at therapeutic doses (generally 80-120 mg) has been shown to eliminate withdrawal symptoms produced by stopping use of heroin and prescription opiate medications because it acts on the same targets in the brain as those drugs. Methadone can be dispensed only at an outpatient Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) certified by SAMHSA and registered with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), to a hospitalized patient in an emergency, or as a three-day bridge until a patient can be scheduled with an OTP. SAMHSA-certified OTP facilities provide daily doses.

**Buprenorphine** - Buprenorphine, approved by the FDA in 2002 to treat opioid dependence, is a partial opioid agonist that, when dosed appropriately, suppresses withdrawal symptoms. Although buprenorphine can produce opioid agonist effects and side effects, such as euphoria and respiratory depression, its maximal effects are generally milder than those of full agonists like heroin and methadone. Physicians are permitted to distribute buprenorphine at intensive outpatient treatment programs that are authorized to provide methadone if providers are trained in its use. Additionally, a special program has been established so that buprenorphine can be prescribed by physicians in office settings and dispensed by pharmacists.

In order to prescribe this medication, physicians must complete a training course and receive a waiver granted by the DEA. Buprenorphine was tested in clinical trials for addiction treatment in the United States both by itself and in combination with naloxone, a drug used to counter the effects of an overdose.
of opiates such as heroin or morphine. The buprenorphine/naloxone combination is sometimes referred to as Bup/Nx (marketed under the brand name Suboxone®). Formulations approved for drug abuse treatment are intended to be taken sublingually (placed under the tongue and allowed to dissolve). When taken this way, the naloxone has little effect. However, if a patient injects Bup/Nx, the naloxone (an antagonist) enters the bloodstream and will block the buprenorphine, causing the patient to enter opioid withdrawal. This combination formulation may deter abuse through injecting because abusers are motivated to avoid unpleasant withdrawal symptoms.

**Naltrexone** - Naltrexone is a non-addictive antagonist used in the treatment of alcohol and opioid dependence. The medication blocks opioid receptors so they cannot be activated. This “blockade” action, combined with naltrexone’s ability to bind to opioid receptors even in the presence of other opioids, helps keep abused drugs from exerting their effects when patients have taken or have been administered naltrexone. As an antagonist, naltrexone does not mimic the effects of opioids. Rather, it simply blocks opioid receptor sites so that other substances present in a patient’s system cannot bind to them. If a patient who has been administered naltrexone attempts to continue taking opioids, he or she will be unable to feel any of the opioid’s effects due to naltrexone’s blocking action. Naltrexone is administered in an injectable, long-acting formulation (marketed under the brand name Vivitrol®), which is designed for once-monthly dosing.

The FDA approved this medication for use in people with opioid use disorders to prevent relapse. Naltrexone should be used only in patients who have been detoxified from opioids and have been opioid free for 7–10 days. Naltrexone is non-narcotic and non-addictive; however, as with other medications that interact with the opioid receptors, there is a risk of overdose if a patient who is being treated with naltrexone misses a dose and takes an opioid, or if the patient takes large quantities of opioids in an attempt to “break the blockade.” Compliance measures that closely monitor patients during the treatment period may be beneficial.
Coal Township Honor Guard Participates in Parade

SCI Coal Township’s Honor Guard participated in a recent Memorial Day celebration. The parade traveled throughout Coal Township and Shamokin, ending at the Veterans Memorial in Shamokin. Coal Township Lieutenant Chris Brownawell was the guest speaker. Officer Damon Morris played bugle.

Also, Counselor Chris Christian and retired Food Service Instructor John Schenewerk participated as part of the local VFW.
Inmate Veterans Hold Memorial Day Ceremony

On May 24, 2018, the SCI Houtzdale Veterans Service Unit (VSU) hosted its annual Memorial Day Ceremony. The ceremony, although supervised by the administration and VSU staff, was planned, developed and performed by VSU participants/inmates.

This year’s ceremony paid tribute to combat journalists who have fought and died for us throughout our country’s history of war. Keynote speaker at the event was Brigadier General Michael J. Regan Jr. General Regan Jr. serves as the Pennsylvania Deputy Adjutant General for Air and is based out of Ft. Indiantown Gap, Pa. In addition to keynote speaker Regan Jr., Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel and Executive Deputy Secretary for Institutional Operations Tabb Bickell also attended this year’s ceremony.

Approximately 225 veterans housed at SCI Houtzdale, along with facility staff, attended this year's Memorial Day ceremony.

The event featured a flag-folding ceremony performed by the VSU Color Guard, as well several VSU participant/inmate speakers, music performers and a wreath presentation. Additionally, the ceremony also allowed spectators to recognize fallen family and friends with the ringing of the ceremonial bell.

The success of this year’s Memorial Day ceremony reflects the efforts that VSU participants/inmates, facility staff and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections take in ensuring the SCI Houtzdale VSU continues to thrive on a state and national level.
Mercer Holds Memorial Day Ceremony

On May 25th, SCI Mercer’s Veterans Service (VSU) Unit held its first Memorial Day Ceremony on the VSU housing unit with inmate veterans participating. One of Mercer’s housing units was designated in February 2017 as a VSU, receiving its first inmate veterans in March 2017. The VSU currently houses 112 veterans.

The ceremony was coordinated by Corrections Counselor Aaron Diaz and the Activities Department. Facility Chaplaincy Program Director Rev. Joseph Kosarek led the opening prayer. VSU Social Worker Erica Lynn sang the National Anthem for the group, and Taps was played along with folding of the flag.

Inmate veterans expressed their gratitude for the time and effort put forth on the unit’s Memorial Day tribute, and another stated he felt the ceremony was professional and patriotic.

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“Quarterbacks of Life” at SCI Muncy

On May 24, 2018, Rocky Bleier and Rocco Scalzi were at SCI Muncy to speak to inmates in the visiting room.

Quarterbacks of Life are leaders and team players who are responsible for moving their lives forward in the direction of their dreams and goals while confronting obstacles and challenges that stand between them and success.
This exciting and dynamic program helps participants to understand the nature of success; identify and challenge imposing success stoppers; use five powerful Stepping Stones to Success to achieve their dreams and goals. The five stepping stones to success are:

* Dreams & Goals
* Self-Awareness: Resource Review & Development
* Team Support
* Decide & Plan
* Positive Mental Attitude

SCI Muncy inmates, including female veteran inmates, have been participating in this program since August 2018.

Rocky Bleier was not a very big man nor exceptionally fast on his feet, but he was an extremely determined athlete. His goal was to play professional football despite those people who persisted in their belief that he would never be drafted by a pro team. With much determination, a dream that would never die, help from others, and much hard work, Rocky Bleier was selected in the next-to-the-last round of the 1968 draft to play for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Before he could prove himself as a rookie, he was drafted again, this time for combat duty in Vietnam. A few months later, crippled by enemy rifle fire and grenade wounds to both legs, Bleier faced his biggest challenge. His wounds were so severe that they threatened his ability to ever walk again, much less to play professional football. For more than two years, he drove himself. Little by little he overcame obstacles and fought his way back.

Well, the rest is history. Rocky not only regained the use of his legs, but went on to become a starting running back on a team that won four Super Bowls and became the greatest football team of the 20th century.

Quarterbacks of Life has visited several DOC facilities.

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**Briefing Judges on DOC Initiatives**

In May, Corrections Secretary John Wetzel, along with executive deputy secretaries Tabb Bickell and George Little, met with Philadelphia judges to discuss and highlight the reception, classification and treatment processes within the Department of Corrections.
Specific information was shared about SCI Muncy -- the female diagnostic and classification center -- and SCI Camp Hill -- the male diagnostic and classification center.

The classification process includes screening for appropriate inmates to participate in the State Intermediate Program (SIP) and/or the Quehanna Boot Camp.

Outside of these programs, all inmates are assessed for mental health, alcohol and other drug, and other treatment to establish a correctional treatment plan in order to immediately begin working toward reentry.

Also discussed was vocational trainings offered within the DOC, including a Pennsylvania Correctional Industries optical lab at SCI Cambridge Springs, fiber optics, flagger courses, restaurant trades, cosmetology and barber programs, HVAC and various curriculums under the purview of the National Center for Construction and Education Research. These specialized vocations offer certifications to assist with future employment and are only among some of the skills and trades offered within the DOC.

For inmates identified on the mental health roster, additional contacts and services are offered on an individual and group basis by various service providers. Mental health inmate who incur infractions within the institutions are housed on a Diversionary Treatment Unit which offers at least 20 hours out of cell a week – 10 hours of which are structured and 10 which are unstructured. Out-of-cell hours include contacts with psychology and other members of the multi-disciplinary treatment team.

From the time of reception, the DOC is committed to establishing a successful plan for each inmate by offering services and skills inmates can use as tools for successful reentry.

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Forest Named EOM

SCI Forest Corrections Counselor 2 Michael Cummins was named Employee of the Month for June 2018. He was nominated by his coworkers, who said Cummins was a model of professionalism.

“You are professional, and the quality of your work is excellent. You never complain when extra duties are required of you, and you always give every task your undivided attention,” said Superintendent Michael Overmyer in a letter to Cummins.

Overmyer also added that Cummins is always helpful to everyone and acknowledged his work in the prisons PAWS dog training program since its inception.

Congratulations, Michael!

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Ten Years of Service

SCI Frackville Deputy Superintendent for Centralized Services Lori White recently presented Registered Nurse Carla Orris with her 10-year certificate.

Congratulations, Carla!

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Billotte Receives Welcome Book Recognition

Quehanna Boot Camp’s Superintendent Assistant Melissa Billotte won the American Correctional Association’s (ACA) Welcome Book Contest at the May 19-22 Compliance and Accreditation Manager’s Association (CAMA) Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

One of the judges -- Jennifer Stohr, an ACA auditor and the Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation at Alvis, Inc., a non-profit Community Corrections Agency in Ohio, and ACA Auditor -- presented the award to Director Carole Mattis in Melissa’s absence. Melissa’s prize was an embossed Louisville Slugger baseball bat.

A welcome book is a document provided to ACA auditors prior to conducting an ACA accreditation audit to familiarize themselves with the facility’s programs and operations. The book contained a tour route/agenda for the first day of the audit, facility narrative summary, ACA organization summary, facility organization chart, facility map, facility schedule, administrative staff listing, facility goals and priorities, ACA Self Evaluation Report, significant incident summary, outcome measures worksheet and education information (include enrollment in academic and vocational classes and number of diplomas and certificates issued).

Melissa’s welcome book was presented to the auditors in a report cover with a clear front and a colorful tabbed index. The audit chair expressed his appreciation for this format as it was easy to identify specific information.

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Rockview Holds 4th Annual Veteran Turkey Hunt

On May 1 and 2, SCI Rockview held its annual Wounded Veteran Turkey Hunt. The event was kicked off with a meet and greet spaghetti dinner held at the Pleasant Gap American Legion. The local Legion has supported the event since its inception in 2015.

This year’s hunters included three hunters from Western PA who were identified by It’s About the Warrior Foundation. The fourth hunter was identified from Clinton County. Lt. Jeremy Luzier and Lt. Justin Sherman led a committee of staff members who helped put together this year’s hunt. Eight employees were teamed up in tandem to act as guides and callers for the hunters. A blind draw was held to match hunters with their respective guides.

Throughout the year, the staff at Rockview hold fund raising events in an effort to make each year’s hunt extra special. Through the generosity and support of the staff, funds raised allowed the committee to present each hunter with a Remington model 870 shotgun (with special event engraving), a Jack Paluh Veteran/Turkey canvass print, hats and knives from the National Wild Turkey Federation, custom-made calls by Ed Hall and Josh Payne, customized laser-engraved boxes by Pennsylvania Correctional Industries, various calls donated by Mark Intallura, and some custom-made Lynch box calls from Jim Lear/Kokomos Calls.
This year, two of the four hunters harvested Spring Gobblers. Both birds are set to be mounted by Matt Harris of TNT Taxidermy. The other two hunters were put in position to harvest birds but ended the day only to tell stories of the pursuit and challenge.

This year’s guides were Sgt. Ed Hall, Sgt. Clay Kuhn, CMEO Matt Foster, CMF Josh Payne, CO 1 Mike Rains, CPTI Nick Dimoff, Sgt. Mark Intallura, and CSC Jess Riggle (ROC/BEN).

Rockview staff would especially like to thank the following for their on-going support of the annual event:

- Nittany Valley Longbeards (NWTF) Abe Frantz
- Pleasant Gap Legion
- Correctional Industries
- Kokomo’s Calls
- Ed Hall, Josh Payne, Mark Intallura
- Quality Inns and Suites-State College
- TNT Taxidermy

And, of course, we thank ALL of the employees at Rockview who support the fundraising efforts for the event.

Thank You, veterans, for your service and sacrifice.

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Picking Up Litter

SCI Somerset’s Community Work Program inmates were busy recently picking up litter form along Route 219.

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Greene Holds Career & Reentry Fair

On June 8, SCI Greene’s Education Department held a Career and Reentry Fair for inmates. Vendors from the following agencies and businesses attended: PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Greene County Career Link, Renewal Inc. & Lydia’s Place, Goodwill Industries, Bidwell Training Institute, Triangle Tech, Trade Institute of Pittsburgh, Beating the Odds Foundation/Quarterbacks for Life, Vivitrol for Opioids and Alcohol, Eaborn Trucking, Dad’s Matter, Private Industry Council, SERVPRO of Metro Pittsburgh and Roofer and Water Proofing Union.

Approximately 130 inmates, who are expected to parole or be released within two years, participated and were educated on the resources available to them and their families throughout Pennsylvania.

Western Region Reentry Administrator Janeen Christ, Statewide Veteran’s Coordinator Ryan Yoder and Parole Agent/ASCRA Denise Weaver also attended the event, which was held in the gymnasium.

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Law Enforcement Torch Run

By Kelsey Strong, Corrections Officer, SCI Benner Township

May 31, was the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, and six SCI Benner Township employees participated: three corrections officers, one sergeant, one corrections officer trainee and our Deputy Superintendent for Centralized Services Bradley Booher.
We ran the final leg with members of PSP, PennState Police, Centre County Correctional Facility, Philadelphia Police, Pittsburgh Police and various other branches of law enforcement from across the state. The entire torch carry took 56 teams of law enforcement and their families three days. It traveled 150 miles from PNC Park to Pegula Area at PennState. The forecast was not promising but the rain held out for the length of the run. Regardless, we had all agreed to participate in rain or shine.

When we entered Pegula Area with the lights and sirens of the same motorcade that escorted us during the run and saw the hundreds of athletes, coaches and their supporters from all over the state of Pennsylvania cheering, it was very clear to all of us why the LETR or “Be A Fan” torch run is so important: it raises awareness for all of the spectacular individuals we saw in the stands. Awareness is crucial because it brings in the funds that organizations like Special Olympics needs to survive.

The torch lighting and the recitation of the Special Olympics motto "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt,” was a very moving moment. While corrections officers contribute to the communities we work and live in, very rarely do we get direct contact with them, so this was a unique experience for some us. We all agreed that it was such a rewarding encounter with the community that we look forward to participating next year.

Law enforcement professionals can also bring their spouses, children and other family members to participate in the run. A member of the PennState police even brought with him the exchange student he and his family are hosting from Norway.

I would encourage more members of the DOC and PBPP, from CO1’s and CO2’s, to counselors, unit managers, nurses, parole agents, superintendents and beyond to consider participating in next year’s run when it comes through their communities.

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Albion Psych Staff Meet with Erie CVC

On May 25, staff from SCI Albion’s Psychology Department participated in an afternoon of discussion and education with staff from the Crime Victim Center (CVC) of Erie.

The CVC’s mission is to reduce crime and the impact of crime, including sexual violence, through counseling, prevention education and advocacy in Erie County.

Licensed Psychology Manager Steve Reilly and Psychological Services Specialist and Sex Offender Treatment Coordinator Miranda Galbreath met with staff from the CVC to educate their counselors, advocates, community educators and other staff about the support and services provided to individuals who are incarcerated at SCI Albion.

The meeting was initially requested by CVC staff so that they could better support their clients who have experienced sexual victimization. These clients are often concerned about the kinds of treatment and support received by the individuals who have victimized them. CVC staff wished to be able to clearly explain to clients “what happens” when the person who has victimized them enters the prison system. CVC staff also received information about a variety of other rehabilitation, treatment and education opportunities available within the prison system, as well as a basic education regarding principles of sex offender treatment.

The meeting ended with CVC and SCI Albion staff discussing further opportunities for collaboration and supporting those who have been victimized as well as those who have victimized, in their path to recovery.

Raising Funds for C.O.V.E.R.

On June 6, SCI Waymart's Chapter of Corrections Outreach for Veterans and Employee Restoration (C.O.V.E.R.) hosted Truck' N Kitchen -- an event where employees were able to purchase fish tacos, burgers, chicken wraps, grilled chicken salad, sausage and peppers, fries and drinks. The event, which was scheduled to serve three shifts, unexpectedly sold out due to high demand, prompting a return visit next week for second and third shift employees. Proceeds from the food truck sales benefited SCI Waymart's C.O.V.E.R. Chapter.
Patrone Pens Article for Inclusion in Annual Report

DOC Mental Health Advocate Lynn Patrone wrote the following article which appears in the 2017 Annual Report of the Copeland Center For Wellness and Recovery.

The Copeland Center and System’s Transformation

Bringing WRAP® to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

My name is Lynn A. Patrone, mental health advocate for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC). In my role within the DOC, I have the distinct honor to direct the Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPS) program which includes approximately 500 inmate peers across 24 state correctional institutions. As someone who has personally benefitted from a WRAP®, and as I challenge us to continually raise the bar on the CPS program, I began to recognize the impact that implementing co-facilitated WRAP® groups in correctional settings could have not only for the individuals who are incarcerated but also for staff wellness. Working behind the walls can be a very stressful career, and oftentimes we may not always promote our own wellness. The Copeland Center’s values based training and technical assistance supports us to implement our commitment to ensuring that there are holistic wellness tools available to promote mental wellness for everyone who lives and works behind prison walls and fences.

I am very excited to introduce how we are leading the way for corrections. The DOC will ensure that every CPS has WRAP® Seminar I training and will also provide WRAP® Seminar II to select CPS’ in each state prison.

This is so very important because our staff and CPS’ encounter daily crises, and our goal is to prevent a person from experiencing this level of distress. Pennsylvania has a significant rate of incarcerated individuals who have experienced trauma, and being exposed to prison life and the stress of incarceration is very often a trigger. This can lead to an imminent crisis, and it’s our goal to prevent this from occurring. With a high prevalence of trauma, both incarcerated individuals and the staff alike are exposed to trauma and secondary trauma. In an institution where several thousand people live and work together daily, the risk of exposure to trauma is significant. This impacts a person’s wellness, dignity and may limit positive coping options.

We are also implementing WRAP® Seminar II for staff at each state prison in order to promote staff wellness and offer a supportive environment where staff can experience a strategy that assists in maintaining one’s wellness.

Other highlights:

As correctional settings continue to experience an increase in individuals living with behavioral health challenges, evidence-based practices are critical. Individuals who become incarcerated often experience worsened health conditions or experience new signs of distress. Many individuals lack supports in the community and struggle with triggers, how to cope and lack hope. WRAP® peer led groups provide hope. Co-facilitated WRAP® practices offers the tools to experience wellness and how to maintain wellness. Staff may also experience feelings of hopelessness, stress, anxiety. Many staff are veterans and also carry the trauma related to military life. There couldn’t be a more important environment to bring WRAP® to than to our institutions nor time to do it than NOW!
Reentrant Success Story!

Peggy Kershner, co-executive director of Berks Connections/Pretrial Services shares the following:

James Kline served an eight-year term from SCI Smithfield. Following his release in 2016, he was referred to the Berks Connections/Pretrial Services (BCPS) Workforce Development Program and since then has turned his life around.

After completing BCPS programming, he obtained employment, established financial goals and wanted to be held accountable for the outcomes. He set high standards for himself and was invested in the BCPS financial coaching process.

James achieved financial success through significant savings and by increasing his credit score 150 points, all in less than one year!

He purchased his home earlier this month. James and his dog, Rocket, are thrilled to have a place of their own!

What is most impressive about James’s financial achievements and success in purchasing a home is that he accomplished both with a modest salary.

Learn more about BCPS services at www.berksconnections.org.

James and Rocket
In The Centers...

**Rep. Patty Kim Visits HCCC**

On June 8, state Representative Patty Kim visited the Harrisburg Community Corrections Center (CCC). During her visit, she met with staff, reentrants and took a tour of the facility. Center Director Maxine Stanley had the opportunity to discuss her philosophy, how she manages infractions, the opioid epidemic and general housing concerns. Moving forward, center staff plans to share information with Rep. Kim’s office in an effort to cultivate a strong community partnership.

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**Sharon CCC Donates to AWARE**

In April, Sharon Community Corrections Center (CCC) employees donated items to the AWARE program in honor of Crime Victims Awareness Month. AWARE is a victim services agency dedicated to eliminating domestic/sexual violence in Mercer County.

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*Pictured, from right to left, are: Counselor Eric Patton and Center Director Joel Murray.*
Scranton CCC’s May Community Service

The community service project for the Scranton Community Corrections Center (CCC) in May involved collecting sports items for the local Boys and Girls Club.

Center Counselor Kenny Jordan is pleased to report that more than $1,000 worth of sports items were donated!

Pictured, from right to left, are: Athletic Director Lloyd Blackwell, three awesome kids from the Boys and Girls Club and Center Counselor Kenny Jordan.

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Sharon CCC Reentrants Help Beautify Neighborhood

On May 5, 16 Sharon CCC reentrants participated in a day-long community neighborhood cleanup event which was organized by the Sharon Beautification Commission. The event focused on distressed properties and alley ways surrounding the Musser Elementary School and playground. More than 400 discarded tires, 70 abandoned appliances and multiple pieces of furniture were collected and hauled away to an appropriate location. Following the event, event coordinator Bill Drolsbaugh thanked the reentrants and the Sharon CCC for ongoing support of the Sharon Beautification Commission.

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Pathways CCC Reentrants Participate in Cleanups

Earlier in May, 10 reentrants from Pathways Community Corrections Center (CCC), which is part of Wernersville CCC, participated in another community service event. Pathways sent out an email to all boroughs within a 10-mile radius of the center offering help in any community with spring cleanups.

Adamstown Public Works Supervisor Mike Palm responded needing help with removing the community pool cover and spreading mulch in the park.

Once again Pathways reentrants were up for the challenge and spent a full day working with public works staff to remove the pool cover and spread 32 yards of mulch. Mike Palm was extremely grateful for the help and thanked Pathways for helping them get the area ready for the children and the upcoming park opening.

Mike sent the following note to the center:

Joseph,

Thank you and your volunteers for helping us at the Borough of Adamstown. We were able to take the pool cover off in a fraction of the time it normally takes since we had so many volunteers to give us a hand.

You were also able to spread 32 yards of mulch at the playground which allowed us to complete our other work at the pool.

We were very happy with the guys that showed up and would be happy to have them back again when we have some more work.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Sprucing Up a City Center

In an effort to uplift the outside of Philadelphia CCC #2, reentrants and first shift monitor staff removed a large patch of rocks in the front of the center and replaced them with plants and flowers. The area is nicely maintained by reentrants.

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To All ADAPPT Staff,

I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart. You gave me a chance at life. You gave me the opportunity to learn some things about myself. Which allowed me to be a better person. You will forever be a part of my story. A positive part!!

You have a tuff job. But you all do it well. You never gave up on me. You hugged me when I cried. You laughed with me. But most of all you supported me at my lowest point. But you helped me rise to who I am today. I am stronger because you never gave up on me. I can’t even find the right words to tell you how blessed and grateful I am for each and every one of you. But thank you from the bottom of my heart. I am better because of you.

Sheila R.
Week of May 28...

**Murals Installed at SCI Phoenix**

The local mural arts program, in conjunction with Philadelphia Mural Arts, completed two murals which were recently installed at SCI Phoenix.

One mural, which is displayed in the main lobby, depicts a Phoenix rising.

A second mural, located in the children’s area in Visiting Room West, is an inspirational poem.

Children learn what they live

If children live with...
Criticism, they learn to condemn
Hostility, they learn to fight
Shame, they learn to feel guilty
Tolerance, they learn to be patient
Encouragement, they learn confidence
Praise, they learn to appreciate
Fairness, they learn justice
Security, they learn faith
Approval they learn to like themselves
Acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in the world
Prisons Hold Media Days

Cambridge Springs

SCI Cambridge Springs held a Media Day Event on May 23, 2018. Reporter Emily Matson of WICU-12 and Reporter Jackie Roberts of WJET-24, accompanied by their photographers, visited the facility. Superintendent Lonnie Oliver, Deputy Superintendent Debra Rich, Deputy Superintendent Michelle Wagner, Classification and Program Manager Dr. Richard Learn and Superintendent Assistant Amy Boylan escorted the media throughout the facility.

The first tour stop was the Therapeutic Community, where each reporter interviewed AOD Manager Rose Tarquinio. The next stop was the Greenhouse, where reporters learned about the volunteer work of the Penn State Master Gardeners from inmate greenhouse workers. Both news crews took a walk through the Food Services Department seeing staff and inmates hard at work preparing for the next meal to be served. Tony Rentz had the opportunity to showcase the Correctional Industries Optical Lab, and an inmate was interviewed about the positive affect the program has had on her life and shared the fact that she already has employment secured for when she leaves prison. The tour concluded in Housing Unit E-B, where the news teams took some footage of the inspirational hand-painted murals on the walls.
Greene
By Tracy Shawley, Superintendent Assistant

On May 22, SCI Greene held a Media Day. Jared Barton, broadcaster for WJPA Radio in Washington, Pa., and part-time employee of KDKA partook in this wonderful opportunity.

A few of the areas toured included the Residential Treatment Unit where Unit Manager Tina Staley provided a brief overview of the unit programs, activities and staff responsibilities.

In the Education Department, Principal Gregory Johnson discussed the various programming and educational opportunities provided to the inmates, and Librarian Jayme Gardner explained the library services that are offered.

Inmates in the gymnasium were preparing for the “Hoops for a Cure” Basketball Tournament. The tournament takes place every year and all of the proceeds from the event are donated to the American Cancer Society.

We also visited the Barbershop and spoke with Shop Manager Michael Kletcho, who discussed providing barber services for approximately 60 inmates per day and the upcoming state board examination for one of his students. Garment Factory Supervisor Louis Giachetti, along with Foremans Trish Ray and Krisiy Santoyo, gave a brief overview of the Correctional Industries while the inmate workers were busy sewing apparel.

We toured the Dietary and Medical Departments and observed food preparations and sick call processes. We also attended a training session for the inmate handlers and volunteers of the Canine Partners for Life Program.

Barton’s segment was expected to air on WJPA (95.3 FM) that evening.
Retreat

On May 24, SCI Retreat held a media day, and while only one TV crew participated, the prison staff highlighted their “New Leash on Life” dog-training program which is coordinated with the local SPCA. Also highlighted included the therapeutic garden and how the prison donates everything to local charities, the medical department and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment.

During the tour, prison staff presented a plaque to a local veterinarian who volunteers to treat all of the dogs for free. Prison staff also was presented with a $17,000 refund check from the local utility company for all the LED upgrades that have been complete at the prison; and during the tour UGI identified additional things done and indicated that another significant rebate check will be sent very soon.

Thanks to WBRE for sending a crew to participate in the Media Day. Coverage aired that night and is available on their website.

Providing Info at Veterans Resource, Job Expo

SCI Cambridge Springs staff and military retirees, Lt. Murray DeForce (left) and HR Analyst Ira Doubet (right), recruit and swap war stories with event goers at the May 24th Veterans Resource and Job Expo in Erie, Pa.
It’s hard to believe that 40 years ago Bob Bilous started his correctional career, following in the footsteps of his father. On April 6, 1978, Bilous started at SCI Camp Hill as an administrative assistant in HR. Two years later he became a therapeutic activities specialist where he remained for seven years. In 1987 he became a corrections counselor. In 1989 when the riots took place, he saw the commotion of police and fire engines go by his home. When he learned of the reason, he did not hesitate to get to Camp Hill and help. He continued his career path as a corrections counselor for an additional seven years after the riots. He has now spent the last 22 years as a unit manager – a title he intends to retire with later this year! His professionalism and dedication in his career is a direct reflection of his family, life’s lessons and military experience. Prior to starting his corrections career, he served in the United States Army and continued his service, while employed with the DOC, in the Army Reserves for a total of 28 years. He retired as Lt. Colonel in 2004. We are thankful for his service both inside and outside these gates.

SCI Camp Hill Superintendent Laurel Harry and Deputy Superintendent John Horner presented Unit Manager Bob Bilous with a Certificate of Service and a 40-year pin.
SCI Mercer Undergoing Renovations

“Exciting things are happening at SCI Mercer,” says Facility Maintenance Manager Larry Boggs.

Boggs reports that Mercer is currently undergoing a major capital improvement project through the Department of General Services. On May 23, 2018, ground was broken for the much-needed kitchen expansion project in the Dietary Department. The capital improvement project is expected to take 365 days to complete.

The expansion of the kitchen area will include more square footage and new equipment, including ovens, kettles, tilt skillets, coolers, freezers, dry storage area, milk cooler, refrigerator, vegetable prep area, staff offices, loading dock, upgrades to the electric, new flooring, inmate and staff restrooms, and a staff restroom in the staff dining area. In addition, a new camera system will be installed which will make the kitchen area safer and more secure with a better line of sight.

In March and in preparation of the expansion project, maintenance staff constructed two decks outside of the food service area to hold a cooler and a freezer, which were received from SCI Pittsburgh. Both the cooler and freezer are in place now and will be used temporarily during the kitchen expansion project. Using this repurposed equipment will save the facility an initial $19,000 and eliminated the need to rent the equipment during construction. Upon completion of the project, the cooler and freezer will be relocated to the warehouse and continue to be used there.

Facility Maintenance Manager Larry Boggs explains the layout of the construction area.
At the ground breaking for the kitchen capital improvement project, left to right: Front Row -- Food Service Manager Dennis Sansotta, Superintendent Melinda Adams, Deputy Superintendent William Woods, Acting Deputy Superintendent Shane Dady, CCPM Lisa Graves. Back Row -- Facility Maintenance Manager Larry Boggs, Major Rodney Painter and Maintenance Foreman Matthew Breniman.

__Smithfield Honors Crime Victims__

National Crime Victim Awareness Week was April 9th - 13th. SCI Smithfield’s C.O.V.E.R. team handed out blue ribbons to staff to be worn during the week to show support for crime victims. Staff also collected donations for the Huntingdon House, which is a local shelter for victims of crime and domestic abuse.

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Waymart Employees Volunteer at Local Soup Kitchen

On May 18, members of SCI Waymart’s Community Support Committee prepped vegetables, mopped floors, washed dishes and served food at the St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton. For over 30 years, the soup kitchen has provided hot meals to needy residents of Northeastern Pennsylvania. No one is ever turned away or questioned about their financial situation when they enter the St. Francis of Assisi dining room. Founded by Monsignor Constantine Siconolfi, the soup kitchen has served the needy for almost 40 years. The following employees volunteered at the kitchen: Superintendent Kevin Ransom, Deputy Superintendent James Cirelli, Deputy Superintendent Norm Demming, Deputy Bobbie Bassett, Major Jeffrey Gibson, Joe Grillo, Rich Russian, Tim McDermott, Krissy Quinn, Laurie Hess, Jessica Wisnewski and Heidi Fuehrer.
Stuffing Bears

SCI Cambridge Springs Activities Department employees assisted in coordinating an inmate community service project where inmates stuffed animals by hand, like the Build-A-Bear concept, to benefit children in the local community. Each animal comes with a birth certificate to be presented to the child receiving the new stuffed animal. Activities Manager Tami Caruso recently dropped off some stuffed animals to the Erie City Mission and the Shriners Hospital for Children in Erie. There are future plans to donate more stuffed animals to the local community women’s shelters.

SCI Cambridge Springs Activities Department employees James Morley, Tami Caruso and Chanda Rice are pictured with stuffed animals that will be donated to children in the local community and custom artwork that will be donated to other local community organizations.

Additionally, custom artwork canvases were hand-painted by inmates for donation to organizations within the community.

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C.O.V.E.R.-ing Deployed Staff

The SCI Cambridge Springs C.O.V.E.R. Committee held a collection for items to send to employees (Mark Nicolia, Officer R. Ryden, and Evan Christon) who are currently on military deployment overseas in Qatar (Western Asia). Several snacks, books, toiletries and miscellaneous items were donated by employees, and the care package was shipped via funds provided by the C.O.V.E.R. Committee.

Mental Health Awareness at SCI Greene

On May 23, SCI Greene held a Mental Health Awareness Day. The participant exhibits included Canine Partners for Life, Reentry Service and Incarcerated Veteran’s Organizations, Mental Health Information, Certified Peer Support Specialist Program, Alternative Therapies and inmate interviews. Several art, poetry and essay exhibits were also displayed for the event.

Social Worker & Reentry Coordinator Sara Dillard provided an overview of reentry services that are available to the inmates. Unit Manager Sue Cowan spoke about the Certified Peer Support Specialist Program and is working to select inmates for the next class. As always, she did a wonderful job coordinating the event. Non-uniformed staff were permitted to dress casually in GREEN in support of the occasion.

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Employees Recognized

Four SCI Forest officers recently were recognized for helping two injured people after a motorcycle accident that occurred on April 26 ... Read more about their heroic actions in the next article.

The heroic officers were CO3 Dickey, CO1 Glenn, CO1 Hetrick, CO1 Anderson.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
DOC’s Training Academy Graduates Put Basic First Aid and CPR Training to Life-Saving Use

Treating a struck pedestrian. Rescuing anglers struggling in a lake after their canoe capsized. Aiding motorcyclists involved in a crash on a remote stretch of road. Assisting a boy whose leg was stuck in a hotel pool’s intake, which trapped him underwater for over seven minutes.

These are the types of heroic actions DOC employees have recently taken to assist their fellow citizens – outside of prison.

“While on duty, inside and outside the gates, DOC employees help save lives all the time, but they also utilize those life-saving skills off-duty – without seeking acknowledgement – in order to help the public on a second’s notice,” DOC Training Academy Sergeant Tami Hemminger said. “These are such great stories. Our staff sometimes don’t get enough credit from the public.”

A good part of the credit goes to the amount – and type – of basic first aid (BFA) and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training correctional staff who are in contact with inmates have gotten at the Training Academy. And continue to get at their facilities.

Sgt. Hemminger, who heads up the BFA/CPR training at the academy, points out that the training is certified through the American Safety & Health Institute (ASHI).

“We meet regulatory requirements through ASHI, as they provide the curriculum and materials,” Sgt. Hemminger said. “All our contact staff are certified when they graduate from basic training.”

All contact staff receive BFA/CPR training during basic training, with medical staff receiving specialized BFA/CPR training designed for medical professionals. Since contact staff are often the first responders to an emergency, they must be skilled and proficient to handle a wide variety of situations. In addition, an ASHI-certified instructor course is also taught through the Training Academy to train medical staff throughout the department. Employees are required to continue their certification throughout their careers, which they do at their institutions during in-service training.

But in addition to administering first aid and providing life-saving assistance inside the walls of a prison, the knowledge and skills DOC staff learn for their job can – and do – save lives in our communities as well. These “Good Samaritans” rarely think twice about getting involved and rendering assistance when they’re off the clock, emphasizing the effectiveness of their training.

“I believe it’s the overall training and everyday interactions with inmates that gives them a heightened sense of awareness to notice details,” Sgt. Hemminger said. “In
a facility, they’re prepared to take on anything. When they’re out in the community, they’re still well-trained – and they use their training selflessly.”

DOC staff using BFA/CPR skills to selflessly help those in need often runs counter to aggressively spreading the word about one’s timely and life-saving actions. Saving a life or assisting in keeping a bad situation from getting worse is typically its own reward, but that isn’t always acknowledged in today’s society.

“But it’s important for these stories to come to light,” Sgt. Hemminger noted, adding, “Recognizing all the good DOC staff do on a day-to-day basis is empowering.”

Our Heroic Employees...

SCI Huntingdon’s Curtis Johnston saw a friend being hit by a car when it ran a stop sign. Johnson and a bystander administered first aid until the police got there, and then assisted the officer by riding along in the police car to the hospital when it was determined an ambulance would take too long to arrive.

SCI Pine Grove’s Barry Yount was fishing with his brother-in-law at Blair County’s Yellow Creek State Park when they heard cries of help coming from the lake. A family of three had overturned their canoe, and one of the adults was in a significant amount of distress. Yount and his brother-in-law immediately swam out from the shore and were able to rescue all three. This action won Yount the DOC’s Medal of Valor at this year’s DOC Employee Recognition Ceremony.

Three correctional officers and a lieutenant from SCI Forest were riding together after just leaving their shifts at the prison when they came upon a motorcycle accident involving two riders that had just happened. A man was lying in the road, bleeding profusely from the head, while a woman was attempting to help him but was herself in a dire condition. The four staff members (Lt. Douglas Dickey and officers John Anderson, Buck Hetrick and Glen George) were able to get the victims to the side of the road and administer first aid while also directing traffic around the site before police were able to arrive.

SCI Graterford’s Shaun Skursky was vacationing in South Carolina when a 12-year-old boy, who had been playing in a hotel pool, became lodged in the pool’s circulation intake pipe and couldn’t come up for air. Skursky and others worked to free the boy for nearly eight minutes, with Skursky giving him underwater CPR to provide him oxygen and keep him alive. The boy was finally freed and rushed to the hospital. After spending three days in a coma and eight days on a ventilator, the Michigander was later able to return to school.
“People who hear that he’d been underwater for eight minutes say there’s no reason your son should be alive today,” said Alyssa Pappas, the boy’s mother. She singled Skursky out in particular for saving his life.

These stories – and more like them – have not gone unnoticed. To that end, ASHI has a Good Samaritan Award that honors those individuals who rush in to help when help is needed most – regardless of where that help is needed. Management at DOC’s institutions are encouraged to collect information on these instances and submit them to Sgt. Hemminger at the Training Academy, so she can forward them on to ASHI for recognition.

“The staff at the Department of Corrections have a job where they must always be cautious and protective,” Sgt. Hemminger said. “But the public should know that these individuals are doing much more than just guarding the walls or fences that separate them from the inmates. It’s important not to gloss over care when we talk about ‘care, custody and control.’”

For more information on BFA/CPR staff training throughout DOC, or procedures on how institutions can submit information for the Good Samaritan Award, contact Sgt. Tami Hemminger at the Training Academy at (717) 367-9070.

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**Pine Grove Donates to ICCAP, Humane Society**

SCI Pine Grove’s Employee Association, its Empowering Committee and its C.O.V.E.R. group made donations to the Indiana County Community Action Program (ICCAP) and Indiana County Humane Society. Staff members donated the items during Corrections Employee week, which was May 6-12, 2018.

The donations to ICCAP will be used for their Power Pack Program which helps children in local elementary schools to meet the needs of children at risk of hunger
when food resources aren’t available for them, mostly during non-school hours, especially weekends and holidays.

The Humane Society will use the donations to assist with the pets placed in their care.

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**Two Reentry Program Participants Graduate**
By Matthew Sheaffer, Central Region Parole Manager

On May 16, two PBPP/Lackawanna County Reentry Program participants graduated from the Lackawanna Drug Court at Lackawanna College in Scranton. The two graduates were Joseph Keller and James Caramonno.

Joseph entered the program on April 20, and moved through the program with almost no issues. Joseph continued to support the program and is currently working in recovery at an AOD facility. Joseph also gave a speech at the graduation ceremony on the importance of recovery and what it means to him.

James entered the program on March 27, 2016, and had a rough start, resulting in increased time in Phase 1. James rebounded from his early struggles and was able to complete the program. James was able to complete all remaining phases at an ideal pace, and truly made positive changes in his life.

Both graduates have completed the program, and the hope is that they will continue to be a model for success in the recovery community.

![Pictured, left to right: Agent Michael Roberts, Joseph Keller, James Caramonno and Supervisor Seth Hendershot.](image-url)

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Corrections Employee Week Celebrations

Cambridge Springs

The SCI Cambridge Springs Employee’s Association hosted an enjoyable Corrections Employee Week for prison staff. Events included special meals in Dietary, a silent auction, daily prize drawings, a staff picnic, dress-down days for non-uniformed staff, special hat week for uniformed staff, and a pie-face fundraiser.

In addition to these events, a very special quilt raffle was held to raise money for the Employee’s Association. Food Service Supervisor Lewrose Myers designed and hand-stitched a custom quilt made from old DOC uniforms, as well as nursing scrubs and clothing from other non-uniformed staff. The SCI Cambridge Springs quilt brought in a total of $275.

“It was so nice to experience the camaraderie amongst staff and to see the smiling faces throughout the facility as staff enjoyed and participated in the events of the week,” said Superintendent Lonnie Oliver.

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During Corrections Employee Week SCI Fayette not only had a picnic in the Visiting Room on Tuesday, there was a Pizza Bar sponsored by the Employees’ Association and Cultural Change Committee on Wednesday, C.O.V.E.R. Symposium on Wednesday, Popcorn, Nachos and Ice Cream Bar on Thursday and a Pasta Bar which was served by administrative staff on Friday.

While SCI Fayette employees had fun events during the week, they also held a memorial service for those who have passed on during the previous years and this past year. Superintendent Capozza provided the opening remarks. A poetry reading and closing remarks were presented by Lt. Robert Newman, and the benediction was conducted by Rev. Frank Lewis. The main part of the memorial service was conducted by the SCI Fayette Honor Guard, where they presented the colors, read the names of those who were previously lost and the final call for COI Frank Neff was replayed for those in attendance. An inscribed brick was added to the memorial for COI Neff. The program was concluded by the playing of taps.
Frackville

During Corrections Employee Week, on May 11, SCI Frackville’s Corrections Emergency Response Team (CERT) was training at the range. Employees were invited to observe the training, see some of the weapons and equipment used and watch a demonstration of CERT tactics.

Also during Corrections Employee Week and Nurses Week, Frackville employee took time to appreciate each other for their exceptional work.
Employees Participate in Memorial Walk

On Saturday, May 12th, a group of SCI Dallas and SCI Frackville employees and their families participated in the Memorial Walk for Eric Williams (FBOP) at Luzerne County Community College. On February 25, 2013, while working a housing unit at the United States Penitentiary Canaan, Officer Eric Williams was killed by an inmate.

SCI Forest Community Work Program

SCI Forest’s inmate Community Work Program (CWP) recently worked at various locations in Forest Count including Tionesta Ambulance Service, Tionesta Historical Society, Tionesta PennDOT and the Tionesta Presbyterian Church.

Pictured here is a ramp inmate built for the Tionesta Presbyterian Church.
Mercer Inmates Raise Funds During National Child Abuse Prevention Month

SCI Mercer’s inmate organization recently held a candy drive and a 5K Pajama Jam to raise money for National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Both events raised a total of $1,400. The candy drive raised $1,000 with 354 inmates purchasing 1,578 bags of candy. Twenty-seven inmates participated in the 5K Pajama Jam to raise $200. The inmate organization matched these funds, making the total raised from the 5K $400.

With the funds, 121 pair of children’s pajamas of assorted sizes and designs were purchased to be donated to the Venango County Human Services, who will deliver them to local Children and Youth Services (CYS) agencies. As children may be removed from their homes during an emergency with little or no clothing, this agency provides them with a pair of pajamas, which can help make a difference in a child’s life during a difficult time.

Pictured, left to right, are: Deputy Superintendent William Woods, Acting Deputy Superintendent Shane Dady, Activities Manager April Harvey, Classification and Program Manager Lisa Graves and Acting Superintendent Lee Estock.
SCI Smithfield Superintendent Eric Tice arranged for Sammy's Famous Hot Dog Cart to be brought onto institutional grounds on May 16, for staff to enjoy Sammy's "best dog-gone dogs in town."

Sammy generally sets his stand up around Huntingdon during the warm months of the year. Dogs were enjoyed by many staff from around the facility, and Sammy reports it is one of his best day's sales so far.

It was a win-win for all!

Dog flavors ranged from a plain dog to a dog with peanut butter and bacon.

Due to the huge success of recent visit, Superintendent Tice will be inviting Sammy back often.
SCI Mercer Hosts “Go Green With Hope” Event

Western Region staff were invited to “Go Green With Hope” at a recent workshop sponsored by the SCI Mercer’s C.O.V.E.R. team. Guest speakers included Dr. Cynthia Wright, LPM at Mercer, and her therapy dog, Ginger; Dan McGivern, educational guidance counselor at Mercer; Shawn Harper, and Joni Sturgill.

Dr. Wright spoke about the benefits of therapy dogs, service dogs and emotional support dogs and explained the differences between them. Ginger, Dr. Wright’s therapy dog, was introduced to the group.

McGivern discussed developing and maintaining healthy coping skills and the importance of the presence of positive characteristics to help cope with life’s challenges and stressors.

Shawn Harper, former NFL offensive lineman for the Rams, the Colts and the Oilers, has overcome many obstacles and tests to earn the position he has today. Harper discussed mindfulness, renewing employees’ sense of well-being, and how to create a positive vision to rely on during stressful situations. He spoke about "Breaking the Chains," explaining how negative beliefs and mindsets can limit us physically and mentally. Harper also discussed strategies for breaking these mental barriers to move past our perceived limitations and insight into the "half time" of our lives; resting and refueling stages of our lives.
between where we have been and where we are going, and looking beyond who we are now toward the potential of who we could be. In addition, he spoke about incorporating practices to redevelop positive mantras and belief systems to redefine ourselves as victors rather than victims.

Joni Sturgill, a health and wellness coach from the Pittsburgh area, for the past 14 years has been teaching stress reduction, using mindfulness, meditation, relaxation and yoga. She has a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology and also studied at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. Through her business, Healthy Body Peaceful Soul, she shares insights on mental, emotional and physical wellness to corporate populations, cancer patients, educators, students of her training programs and other various groups and individuals. Sturgill discussed five simple tips to improve overall wellness: good physical, mental and emotional health doesn't necessarily mean an overhaul of every aspect of your life. Making a few simple changes can elicit dramatic results! She discussed the importance of these five wellness elements: 1) Water - staying hydrated, 2) Sleep, 3) Stress Management, 4) Social connection, and 5) Balance in diet.

Sixty-nine employees from SCIs Mercer, Albion, Forest, Cambridge Springs, Greene, Pine Grove, and Laurel Highlands attended, and their comments included that it was wonderful and they enjoyed listening to the speakers.

The workshop was also held in the afternoon for the inmate population with 39 attending.
Inmate Murals Transform Prison Corridor

Under the guidance of SCI Waymart's Activities Department, inmate artists are transforming the main corridor leading to 42nd Street into a colorful art gallery displaying the insignias of Pennsylvania universities and sports teams.

For the past month, Corrections Activities Specialist Troy Walsh (pictured standing next to the Pittsburgh Penguins logo) has been working with inmate artists to display the diversity of educational opportunities and healthy leisure activities that are available in Pennsylvania.

Corrections Activities Manager Steve Smith said Superintendent Kevin Ransom approached him with the idea of developing a project to brighten the hallway, promote education and provide job opportunities for inmates to showcase their skills.

"I spoke with my staff and we came up with the idea of utilizing our inmate artists to display the insignias of Pennsylvania universities and sports teams. We developed a list of schools and sports teams and selected appropriate inmates to paint the murals," said Smith. He added, "Mr. Walsh spearheaded this project and has done a remarkable job."

The first murals that were painted featured state universities such as Bloomsburg, East Stroudsburg University and Penn State. Supt. Ransom solicited employee suggestions for other colleges and universities and staff quickly filled his mailbox with the names of schools that they or their families attended. As of May 18, the following schools adorn the walls: University of Pennsylvania, Bucknell, DeSales, Misericordia, University of Scranton, Marywood, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Kings, Wilkes, Keystone, Villanova, Temple, Pittsburgh, and Lackawanna College and its police academy. In addition, the following sports teams are featured: Pittsburgh Steelers, Pirates and Penguins; Philadelphia Eagles, Phillies, Flyers and 76ers; Scranton-Wilkes Barre Railriders;
and Scranton-Wilkes Barre Penguins. Plans are underway to add additional schools and teams.

"The inmate artists are very talented. By allowing them to display their abilities, we are providing them with the guidance and practical experience that they will need to be productive, tax-paying citizens when they eventually leave this prison," said Smith. "This is a program that we are very happy to support."

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**Laurel Highlands Holds Career, Reentry Fair**

On May 17, SCI Laurel Highlands held its annual Career and Reentry Fair. There were 22 vendors represented bringing an abundance of beneficial resources for those preparing to reenter the community within the next six months.

Agencies and programs represented included Community Action, Vivitrol Program, Career Link, SCI Laurel Highlands’ Education Department - Flagging Course, Disability Options Network, Good Will Industries, Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc., Cambria County Day Reporting Center/Geo, Inc., “Ask The Agent” with PBPP’s ASCRAs, Greater Johnstown Career and Vocational Center, Transitional Housing Unit Program, Salvation Army, United Way, Berks County Pretrial Services, Department of Banking and Securities, Cambria and Somerset County Victim Services, Somerset Community Hospital – Smoking Cessation, Health Care Navigators, Bureau of Community Corrections,
APRI–Pittsburgh-Apprenticeship/Reentry Housing, Recovery Unit Program, CenClear – Family and AOD/Health Services, Veterans’ Services, and Transition and Reentry Advisory Committee/ Expungement Project.

Over 100 inmates took advantage of the opportunity which was held in the Chapel. The Somerset Daily American newspaper covered the event.

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IN THE CENTERS...

BCC Names Employee of the Quarter

The DOC’s Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC) recognizes staff all the time, but every quarter we select a staff member who gets their name engraved on a plaque that hangs at headquarters with their photo.

Monitor Jason Cummings was selected as Employee of the First Quarter of 2018 for his work with the reentrants, having saved two lives by using NARCAN and for being actively involved with the consolidation committees and volunteering to attend instructor courses. Monitor Cummings is a testament to us all, showing that one person can make a difference each and every day in the lives of others.

Pictured, left to right, are BCC Director Dan McIntyre, Monitor Jason Cummings, Deputy Director Luis Resto and Regional Director Richard Dreisbach.

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GEO Participated in Reentry Fair

GEO Reentry Services was thanked by SCI Huntingdon staff recently for participating in the prison’s May 10 Career Fair or inmates.

In a letter to GEO’s Michael Critchosin, SCI Huntingdon’s School Principal Diana Beatty, wrote:

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your organization for attending SCI Huntingdon’s Career Fair on May 10, 2018. I realize that your involvement in this event meant a sacrifice to your professional duties in other areas; however, your contribution and participation were much appreciated by both staff and inmates.

The information you provided concerning your organization will definitely assist those inmates who are being considered for release in their efforts to reenter their communities, to become taxpaying citizens and avoid returning to incarceration. It is our hope that you will be willing to support our efforts again in future Career Fairs.

The surveys/evaluations received from both participants and inmates were quite favorable and indicated a need for such endeavors to be continued. The inmates were very grateful for the assistance received during the fair.”

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Pittsburgh CCC Participates in Neighborhood Clean-Up

On Saturday, April 21, 2018, Pittsburgh Community Corrections Center (CCC) 2 Director Richard Dotson and Corrections Counselor 2 Tara Marhefka, along with 10 reentrants, participated in Wilkinsburg Borough Clean-Up Days in Wilkinsburg, Pa. The Pittsburgh CCC team focused on an area in the center of town and near the busway. As a result of the clean-up efforts that day, the Mayor of Wilkinsburg has requested the ongoing help of center reentrants three days per week until October.

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**ADAPPT Reentrants Volunteer Services**

GEO’s ADAPPT Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) unit reentrants participated in beautifying the Reading, Pa., community area pool. Reentrants donated more than 120 hours as they restored and painted the baby pool and worked on areas that needed patching. The reentrants assisted in sand blasting and pressure washing the big pool and helped to fill cracks in the masonry. These individuals also helped clean and organize the kitchen, bathrooms and pavilion.

“I am very proud to work for a company that allows for our clients to give back to the community so generously,” said Center Director Michael Critchosin.

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**Pittsburgh CCC Teams Up with Treasure House Fashions and Comcast for Comcast Cares Day**

On Saturday, April 21, 2018, five Pittsburgh Community Corrections Center (CCC) reentrants volunteered at Treasure House Fashions with members of Comcast for the 17th annual Comcast Cares Day. The volunteers landscaped the non-profit organization’s property.

Treasure House Fashions’ mission is “promoting the dignity and self-esteem of women, particularly women in transition or crisis.” The most visible asset of Treasure House Fashions is the non-profit, quality women’s resale clothing shop. This shop offers clothing in sizes 0 through 4X and serves as the “closet” for over 65 agencies that serve women! These women have the dignity of shopping for what they like, as well as what they need, for their current situation. As recipients of the generosity of Treasure House Fashions, Pittsburgh CCC residents were eager to give back to the agency that has supported them during their reentry into the community.

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GEO ADAPPT Holds Open House

GEO ADAPPT held a Reentry Day Open house on May 25. GEO facility staff, PA DOC/BCC, PA Parole and representatives of the Reading City Police, as well as our community service partners attended a luncheon/mixer at the facility.

Attendees were able to spend time together and reinforce relationships and discuss ongoing efforts in assisting reentrants better reintegrate into productive citizens.

BCC Director Daniel McIntyre addressed the group specifically on the importance of community partnership, in strengthening our mission to assist our reentrants.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Daniel McIntyre, director of the PA DOC’s Bureau of Community Corrections; Fred Riccio, PA Parole district director; Eric Pennypacker, PA Parole deputy district director; Amy Worden, PA DOC press secretary; Facility Director Michael Critchosin; and PA DOC BCC Region 1 Director Christy Ulrich.

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Forest Employees to the Rescue!

From SCI Forest Facility Maintenance Manager 3 Ross Buscemi:

"I would like to thank Utility Plant Supervisor Benjamin Galina and Electrical Trade Instructor (ETI) John Smaroff for supporting Jenks Township in getting the generator back online!!! This not only helps us but helps the local community that is served by the lift station located at the Vets Club.

That was quick thinking and superlative diagnostic work by Mr. Smaroff!!"

During recent storms, Jenks township lost emergency backup generator power at the Vets Club lift station, which is the unmanned sewage pump station that is maintained by the Marienville water authority.

The station was overflowing when Smaroff arrived, but he quickly checked the generator and found a control wire had come off their generator. He replaced the wire and started the generator. Galina and Smaroff helped pumped down the lift station to help it return to normal operation.

When we reached out to Ben Galina for more details, he wrote:

"The pump station is unmanned but is alarmed to the waste water treatment plant if pump failure were to occur. The storms in our area took out all the power. The treatment plant operator was the first to respond to the pump station, he called me and said he was losing the Vets pump station - no power - and he could not get the emergency generator to start. He was flooding out, and time was short as we share the same sewage line. Forest would be next to flood if he cannot get the generator to start.

The treatment plant operator called me again and stated that his generator service tech was an hour-and-half away and asked if we could restrict the water flow from the jail. I really did nothing other than to say, 'I will make the call to start restricting the water usage in the jail.'

I have a 50,000-gallon holding tank at my lift station, so I sent one of my operators to prepare in case things got bad and hopefully buy us some time.

The superintendent called me and asked me what we had going on, and I told him I wanted to take our ETI John Smaroff and get to the Vets lift station to see if we could get the generator running. The Super said go for it, and the rest, as you can see, was a good ending to a very close call.

John Smaroff is one of the best ETI’s in the DOC, and I am very fortunate to have him here at the Forest."

Kudos to Galina and Smaroff!

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Stop the Bleed

According to Deputy Secretary of Field Services Christian Stephens, all field agents and supervisors will attend mandatory training called “Stop the Bleed.” This is a nationwide training initiative to improve survival and life-threatening bleeding and is in response to the increase in gun violence and mass casualty events in the country.

UPMC is coordinating with trauma centers across Pennsylvania to train law enforcement officers how to stop bleeding in victims, fellow officers and themselves. The DOC/PBPP Training Bureau will distribute coordinate information with the various trauma centers in PA to ensure the right employees are signed up for the 90-minute mandatory training.

“Stop the Bleed” was launched in October 2015 by the White House and is a national awareness campaign and a call to action. It is intended to cultivate grassroots efforts that encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.

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Agency Agreement Streamlines MA Access for Reentrants

The Department of Corrections (DOC) has partnered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET) to streamline the process for applying for medical assistance (MA) coverage for inmates returning to the community within the state.

“It’s important to recognize the fact that 90 percent of those who enter our gates leave one day,” said Corrections Secretary John Wetzel. “It is in the community’s
best interest to have those that leave succeed. Ensuring they have access to medical and mental health benefits is essential to a successful transition back to the community.”

The DOC releases approximately 20,000 inmates annually, of whom a small subset (10 percent) qualify for medical assistance because of chronic medical or mental health diagnoses and/or substance use disorders. Despite the relatively small number of applications submitted, the MA application process has proven both labor intensive and time consuming.

Prior to March 19, the DOC applied for MA benefits via the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Application for Social Services (COMPASS) portal for those returning to the community.

With implementation of the intra-agency data exchange, the process for applying for MA benefits was automated for all reentrants who consent to the application submission, regardless of health conditions or substance abuse history.

One specific group of reentrants for whom MA coverage will be extremely beneficial is those who have voluntarily enrolled in the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. Medical Assistance is secured for these individuals to reduce the likelihood of relapse to abusing opioids upon release from incarceration.

Ensuring reentrants are enrolled in Medicaid upon the day of release will assist with continuity of care for those with medical or mental health illnesses as well as those who struggle with addiction. Continuity of care is critical for this population as they assimilate back into the community.

“One of DHS’ top priorities is to ensure all eligible Pennsylvanians have access to high-quality services, including health care,” said DHS Secretary Teresa Miller. “This partnership will ensure individuals reentering society have access to the treatment and services they need to lead healthy, productive lives as they return to society.”

The DOC will also share notification of newly-received inmates with DHS, which will prompt DHS to suspend any benefits upon incarceration, thus helping to reduce the potential for benefits fraud.
Smithfield Ends Special Week By Honoring Sgt. Baserman

At its annual Corrections Employee Week flag ceremony, and in memory and honor of SCI Somerset Sgt. Mark Baserman, SCI Smithfield employees dedicated a memorial tree on the grounds of the prison on May 11.

SCI Smithfield Superintendent Eric Tice and Reverend Sylvia Morris dedicate the tree while the prison’s honor guard looks on.
Greene Celebrates with Luncheon, Training

On May 10, in recognition of Corrections Employee Week, administrative staff at SCI Greene volunteered to serve a delicious lunch of Chicken Parmesan and Pasta in the officer dining room.

A training session was also coordinated by Lieutenant Vic Santoyo in the facility chapel. The topics included C.O.V.E.R and mentoring. Individuals from the facility’s C.O.V.E.R. and Mentoring Committee’s discussed coping skills and how they relate to the job and the military. Attendees were eligible for prizes courtesy of the Employee’s Association.
Corrections Employee Week at Pine Grove

Here’s how SCI Pine Grove employees celebrated Corrections Employee Week May 6-12, 2018:

**Monday** – Proclamation & Presentation of Colors -- a table was set up in the lobby area – “this table that stands before you is a place of honor. In setting this table, we acknowledge those missing from our celebration today. And we remember them.”

**Tuesday** – Pirate Ticket Discount Sale (a representative was in the lobby selling discounted Pirate tickets)

**Wednesday** – Employee Association sponsored an ice cream social in the dining hall and a “Blessing of Bikes” by Father Koser.

**Thursday** – Rocco Scorzi, Motivational Speaker.

**Friday** – Retired the colors and held a basket drawing. (Baskets were donated by several department staff members.)
Celebrations Continued at SCI Mercer!

SCI Mercer celebrated Corrections Employee Week May 6-12, 2018. The prison’s Employees Association (EA) provided the food for the special luncheons throughout the week, including an ice cream bar on Tuesday with a variety of toppings. A staff appreciation cookout was held on May 10, with management staff cooking and serving the meal. Hot dogs, hamburgers and buns were provided by the EA for this event. The Morale Committee provided the fresh-squeezed lemonade at the cookout for all shifts. Four daily drawings were held with prizes donated by the EA. In addition, a corn hole tournament was held on Thursday. The winners were: 1st place-Charles Harlan and Ed Whitman, scoring 16 points each; 2nd place-Noel Berkley, scoring 14 points; and 3rd place-Charles Harlan and Shawn Phillips, scoring 12 points each.

Acting Superintendent Lee Estock and all the staff at Mercer would like to give a shout out to the EA committee and Crystal Hoffman, EA President, for their extra efforts and donations provided during Corrections Employee Week.
Con-GRAD-ulations!

Parole Agents Joanne Neil-Jackson and Thomas Wines graduated from Rosemont College on May 12, 2018. Agent Neil-Jackson Received her BS in Criminal Justice and Wines received his MS in Forensic Sociology and Criminology. They have supported each other through the process of earning their degrees but did not know they were graduating together until they saw each other just before the graduation ceremony.
SCI Mercer Employees Nominated for DOC Award

Five SCI Mercer employees were nominated for the 2018 Outstanding Performance Awards and attended the awards ceremony held at the DOC Training Academy on May 9, 2018, during Corrections Employee Week.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Steven Soliwoda, Michael Cole, Andrea Shiock and Shelby Miller. Missing from the photo is Jennifer Bickel.

Congratulations are extended to each nominee.

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Academic Awards, Expert Marksman Awards

DOC Basic Training Class 1803 and its individuals who were presented with awards for academics and expert marksmanship.
Albion Holds C.O.V.E.R. Event

On Tuesday May 8, SCI Albion hosted its very first “A DAY UNDER COVER” event. The Corrections Outreach for Veteran and Employee Restoration (C.O.V.E.R.) committee brought in guest speakers, including Secretary Wetzel, to discuss topics aimed at improving staff wellness at the institution.

After the educational component was provided to staff, members were given the opportunity to “blow off some steam” at the Car Bash Event set up outside. The Car Bash was designed to provide a positive and healthy outlet for staff members who deal with the daily stressors within the DOC. With the help of the local Albion Fire Department, Bish Automotive, Erie Mobile Crises Vet Center and the various committees and individuals within the institution, the event was a huge success.

Pictured, from left to right, are: DOC C.O.V.E.R. Coordinator Natasha Amaral; Paul Szallar, Counselor and SCI Albion C.O.V.E.R Chairperson; Bradley Jump, Safe Harbor; Bomber Ferraro, Erie Veterans Affairs; and Sharron Sandberg, Safe Harbor.
The SCI Laurel Highlands’ C.O.V.E.R. initiative includes a C.O.V.E.R. group dedicated to dealing with issues of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS). This is a 10-session group, where participants learn to recognize their individual symptoms, then learn strategies to deal with and combat those symptoms. The group is open to all staff, regardless of position within the institution, and is a volunteer only group. The time and day of the group varies according to the working shift of the participants. Two facilitators from across disciplines co-facilitate each group. The facilitators have undergone a two-day facilitator training, which provides them with the materials and the basics of facilitating groups. While the facilitators drive the group from week to week, they are also participants of the group.

The first group has recently concluded and included two facilitators and five other staff. They included participants from Security, Medical and Program Services. As the group journeyed through the sessions, growth was seen, both in individual realizations and also group closeness and strength. We received some great feedback from group members, including the following comments:

"Post-traumatic stress happens to everyone, not just war veterans or crime victims... it is okay to not be okay with everything you deal with on a daily basis both inside and outside the fence."

"I love the fact, that what is said and done in the C.O.V.E.R. class, stays in the C.O.V.E.R. class! Thank you to a great bunch of co-workers."

"I was skeptical at first to join the C.O.V.E.R. group thinking PTSD was only associated with veterans. After completing the group I have learned it is not,
and how to deal with stressors of my own. PTSD can happen to anyone. The group was very personable, resourceful, as well as a safe/confident place to discuss issues we were all dealing with. It was not only a learning opportunity for me but also a teaching opportunity as I have passed on information to a few family members who are struggling. I am very grateful I attended the group. If you’ve got stress in your life I highly recommend going to the C.O.V.E.R. group meetings. Give it a try, if it doesn’t fit or suit your needs I’m sure one of the facilitators may be able to direct you to somewhere/someone who may help.”

Prior to beginning the sessions, participants completed a Trauma Indicators Checklist. The average score of the checklist was 30.2. Following the final session, participants completed the checklist again. We were thrilled to find that the average score now stands at 10! The participants of the group deserve all of the credit for the hard work that they put into themselves and the group as a whole. We were able to develop strategies that help us not only in our work lives, but also in our daily lives outside of work. Our hope is that we can be ambassadors of the program to others, so that they can gain the tools that we have now gained. We look excitedly forward to the next group and the next and the next... It is exciting to see that we can and are helping each other!

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**Collecting to Help Children**

In honor of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, SCI Rockview staff collected 100 pairs of pajamas to be donated to local Children and Youth Agencies. Pajamas will be given to children that may be removed from their home with little or no clothing. A small gesture as pajamas can help make a difference in a child’s life during a difficult time.

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Shining Light Ministries is an Impact Workshop where inmates get to work with professional performers to create a production with a message of truth and hope. This is through acting, dancing, singing and poetry/rap. There is no performance experience needed. It is a two-week workshop, with a remarkable ending.

The workshop begins with an application and interview process. The optimum number of participants is 30, with a few on reserve for any instance where a participant cannot fulfill the obligation. Once the selection process is over, the work begins.

The Executive Director, Jeffrey Bohn, says it best when he says, “It is about presence, process and performance.” Bohn says that every time he begins a workshop in the DOC, he looks around the room and wonders how the group will make anything happen together in just two weeks. That moment forces him to rely on his faith in Jesus.

During the two weeks, there are long practices and the need for the participants to come together and rely on others to make the performance a success.

Such a thing happened here at SCI Huntingdon from April 24 thru May 6. Twenty-eight inmate participants acted, danced, sang and spoke words of poetry and/or rap during two rehearsal performances for staff and Residential Treatment Unit inmates and three actual performances open to all general population inmates. The participants performed together for a powerful and emotional experience for all those who attended.
Appreciating Nurses

May 8, in recognition of National Nurses Week, nursing staff at SCI Greene enjoyed a variety of foods, snacks and goodies that were permitted to be brought into the institution. Nurses week is a great time to recognize and remind our nursing staff how much they are appreciated for their proficient health and wellness efforts.

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Items Donated to The Abuse Network

Recently, SCI Huntingdon’s Morale Committee donated items to The Abuse Network on behalf of the staff at the institution. This agency provides a 24-hours crisis hotline, shelter and advocacy services to victims of interpersonal violence in Huntingdon, Juniata and Mifflin Counties. Crystal Paige, the executive director, stated, “This is not easy work. Knowing that others value the work we do is a tremendous blessing to the many people who work hard to provide some level of comfort and emotional support to the most vulnerable members of our community.”

Pictured are Wendy and Chris from The Abuse Network.

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Guard for the garden
Prison staffer looks after the flowers at historic Catawissa Quaker site

By PETER KENDRON
Press Enterprise Managing Editor

CATAWISSA
Bob McDonald spends his weekends tending the minutes at SCI-Coal Township.
When he gets home, the prison guard spends his time tending a whole bunch of flowers.
For the past four years, McDonald, 48, Catawissa, has done the landscaping on the Quaker Meetinghouse in Catawissa as a community service.
Beginning in January, he plants flower seeds in his home and lets them mature under grow lights. By spring, he has marigolds and geraniums ready to plant. He also has cultivated the tulip bulbs planted all around the spot.
"It’s something I’ve loved to do since I was young," he said. "I like to make things look good, and this was in my neighborhood."
Before he took over, the mulched garden beds around the building had lain fallow for a few years. He says he was told the Catawissa Garden Club had once maintained them, but its members had grown older.

ROBERT MCDONALD, Catawissa, stands next to one of the flower beds he created and cares for at the Catawissa Quaker Meetinghouse on South Street in the borough. Another flower photo, page 12.
Connie M. Cole, from Catawissa Borough wrote to McDonald:

“I want to extend my sincere gratitude for your contribution to the community. It is a generous gift of your time and donation of the flowers you planted at the Quaker Meeting house.

On behalf of the Catawissa Borough, I want to thank you for helping us make a positive difference. Your generosity encourages our continued commitment to make Catawissa a beautiful place to live.”
PPWA Presents Lamas with Warden of the Year Award

At its spring conference, the Pennsylvania Prison Wardens Association (PPWA) presented SCI Chester Superintendent Marirosa Lamas with its Warden of the Year Award for her work at SCI Chester.

Named the prison’s superintendent in July 2016, Lamas has fostered, encouraged and modeled an attitude of belief in oneself and the institution as a whole. She strives for excellence each day and accepts nothing less from her staff. She has raised the expectation of professionalism and pride in accomplishment by leaps and bounds.

During her tenure SCI Chester has been proud to host several major events and innovative programs including a TEDx production focused on children of incarcerated parents. The institution has also hosted a major press event announcing the First Chance Trust Fund with the goal of creating a charitable trust to provide educational support to the children of incarcerated parents and hopefully breaking the cycle of incarceration. Additionally, SCI Chester has been proud to host corrections delegations from both Norway and Japan.

Since her arrival as superintendent, SCI Chester has undertaken an ongoing systematic and large-scale mural arts project with more than 50 percent of the institution having inmate produced art on the available spaces.

SCI Chester broke innovative ground working with “juvenile” lifers. It piloted an initiative to train the “juvenile” lifers with today’s technology. This was accomplished by bringing full-functional smart phones into the visiting room and staff facilitating usage training.

SCI Chester has implemented the largest dog-training program in the state. In the past year the prison has fostered more than 150 abandoned and abused dogs and puppies. After the hurricanes last summer, the prison was able to provide shelter and care for 30 displaced dogs at one time.

Superintendent Lamas has been featured in the Philadelphia news both television and print for her works at SCI Chester.

Superintendent Lamas also works beyond the walls of the institution. She was the statewide Crisis Intervention Training coordinator, completed the National Institute
of Corrections (NIC) Advanced Certification Executive Excellence Program, has an advanced certification for Management Development for Women and Minorities and is a current NIC technical specialist. She is active in the Association of Women Executives in Corrections, the American Correctional Association, the Crisis Intervention Training International, The National Organization of Hispanics in Law Enforcement and the Pennsylvania Prison Warden’s Association.

SCI Chester Superintendent Marirosa Lamas listens to community members at a Let’s Talk Philly gathering held at the prison in May 2017.

In 1990, after completing her Bachelor Degree in Administration of Justice at Penn State University, Superintendent Lamas began her career with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections as a corrections counselor. She remained in that position at SCI Camp Hill until she was promoted to the position of unit manager in 2000. During that time, she also completed her Master of Science degree in Administration of Justice at Shippensburg University. In 2004, Superintendent Lamas was accepted as a regional deputy secretary staff assistant. After 18 months in this position she was then promoted to the rank of deputy superintendent and served in this position at both SCI Frackville and SCI Rockview. In 2008 she was promoted to superintendent and has served in that capacity at SCI Muncy, SCI Rockview, SCI Benner Township, Central Office and most recently at SCI Chester.

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At its spring conference, the Pennsylvania Prison Wardens Association (PPWA) presented SCI Dallas Superintendent Lawrence Mahally with the William B. Robinson Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mahally was nominated for the award by Butler County Warden Joseph DeMore, who provided the following information to the nomination committee:

"Larry joined the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections in September 1985. He has had a remarkable career in which he has served at four facilities in various positions.

Currently, Larry is the superintendent at SCI Dallas where he began his career as a corrections officer trainee. In 1993, Larry was promoted to sergeant and transferred to SCI Mahanoy. Larry was promoted to lieutenant at SCI Mahanoy and then transferred to SCI Forest as a unit manager. Larry was promoted to captain and then transferred to SCI Retreat. Larry returned to SCI Dallas as the major of the guard and has remained there, being promoted to deputy superintendent and eventually being promoted to superintendent.

Larry is a very dedicated and loyal public servant who is respected by both staff and inmates and is very deserving of the Lifetime Achievement Award. A 33-year commitment to any profession is admirable, but 33 years in the corrections field is remarkable. I am honored to call Larry a colleague, but even more honored to call him a Friend."

William B. Robinson was a Bureau of Correction commissioner from 1975 to 1980 and was the founder of the Pennsylvania Prison Wardens Association.

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Wetzel Receives Honorary Degree

At its commencement ceremony on May 12, Chestnut Hill College conferred upon DOC Secretary John Wetzel an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

At the ceremony, Secretary Wetzel presented the commencement address where he spoke of accomplishments and goals. He told graduates that their lives, in the end, come down to how they live their lives and how they impact this country and the world.

He spoke about how the application of knowledge is more powerful than simply attaining knowledge and how just a little bit of mercy impacts the world and makes it more just.

Wetzel encouraged them to “apply your knowledge and be powerful, show extreme mercy in every case, and do the right thing, the right way, right now.”

The entire commencement ceremony can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/JcYdljrLLKY

Flower Sales Benefit Victims Counseling Organization

SCI Waymart’s Christine Altemier, the superintendent’s secretary, coordinates the orders and distributions of flowers every year on behalf of SCI Waymart employees. This year, potted geraniums, Gerbera Daisies, hanging ivy geraniums and hanging million bells were sold to employees.

The result was the raising of $670 which was donated to Victims’ Intervention Program (VIP). VIP provides counseling and support services for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and other serious crimes in Wayne County.

Learn more at www.vipempowers.org.

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Quehanna Boot Camp Donates Bench

In observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (April 8-14, 2018) and Child Abuse Protection Month (April), a concrete and wood bench was donated by the Quehanna Boot Camp to the Clearfield County Victim/Witness Office and is located at the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) of Clearfield County in Hyde, Pa. The bench was presented to Clearfield County District Attorney William A. Shaw Jr., Clearfield County Sheriff Michael Churner and CAC Director Mary Tatum on May 15.

The CAC is a safe place for kids who may have been abused. The center brings together a team of specially trained professionals who evaluate and investigate cases of child abuse and help children and their families. CACs are designed to be child-focused and reduce the stress experienced by child survivors of abuse and their non-offending family members throughout the investigation and intervention process.

Quehanna Boot Camp Inmates Beautifying PA

Quehanna Boot Camp Maintenance Foreman Hummel and the inmate Community Work Program (CWP) crew have collected approximately 50 bags of litter along Clearfield County highways since the beginning of April. It is nice to see the crew improving the area.
PPS Honors Huntingdon Area Woman

At its annual meeting that was held at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Prison Society (PPS) on May 8 honored individuals for their work with incarcerated individuals. One such honoree was Becky Mitchell. Mitchell was nominated by PPS convener Harriet Kaylor of the Huntingdon Chapter for the Official Visitor of the Year Award and she was presented with the award at the annual PPS event.

She was nominated for her significant impact on inmates, whom she connects with through visits and letters. She is a positive influence on inmates. Mitchell also is a member of SCI Huntingdon’s Lifers Board, where she encourages lifers to take responsibility for their actions and to assist others.

You can read more about Mitchell in the May 14, 2018, issue of the Huntingdon Daily News.

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LETTERS!

A “Juvenile” Lifer Talks About Life After Prison

“Having been incarcerated for nearly forty years, I chose to make the best out of a bad situation, while maintaining a positive attitude, I did strive to become involved in educational and artistic pursuits, and I did live vicariously through television and outside contacts, helping me to remain positive and hopeful; Faith, hope, and the right attitude prepared me for life in society.

When I was informed there may be hope for juvenile lifers for parole, I began to outline a plan for living outside prison walls. Also, I had been writing to a woman my age, Mariann, then began calling by phone. We were communicating for about eight years. When I found out about being resentenced and an opportunity for parole, we decided to be exclusive.

Mariann has been extremely helpful in my adjustment out here. She showed me around Scranton, helped in social situations, and we enjoyed many things together like bike riding in the summertime. She helped me find places like the library, the Colts bus terminal, and the Career Office, explaining how to get there, as she wanted me to gain confidence and some independence. Mariann has been a positive influence in my life and I’m very happy that we are a couple now.
Before being released from prison in November 2016, I made the decision not to go directly to an approved home plan, but to stay at a community corrections center, or halfway house, for a number of reasons. Reasons I felt would benefit me and make this adjustment to rejoin society easier. I would be around other residents with similar situations and be able to attend meetings there to help with life direction. Also, Mariann lives here in Scranton and would always pick me up for dinner, to attend Mass, or wherever we wanted to go.

I was able to utilize more resources from downtown Scranton than if I chose to stay with my cousin in Conygham, Pa. One of the first things I did was purchase an android smart phone, a great invention which helps me find out how to get anywhere by the quickest route. The residents at the halfway house showed me many things in learning to use my phone. I adapted at a nice easy pace, and now I couldn’t live without my phone!

My next goal was to obtain a driver’s license. I did have one in 1978 that expired decades ago, so I took the test again and got a driving permit. That was the easy part, the driver’s test was another story! Things sure had changes, and I struggled with re-learning how to parallel park. Finally, I passed after eight months and four attempts of taking the driving test. I was working and had some money saved, and with the help of my family, I was able to purchase a 2006 Volkswagen Jetta. After only a short time, it was like I was never away from driving. Although Scranton’s transit system is great, there’s nothing like the freedom of owning my own car.

My next step was to seek out a reasonably priced apartment. I have had a place of my own since late August. After eight months I felt it was time to move on from the halfway house to have some privacy and it gives me some peace of mind and quiet time. I was ready to take on the responsibility of paying rent and my own utilities.

Last, I would like to discuss my experiences with employment. It has been somewhat of a roller-coaster ride with ups and downs. As my first attempt to apply with a building company was rejected, I realize not everyone would be comfortable hiring a 55-year-old man with a felony on his record. But I did not let this discourage me. I continued applying to a multitude of different jobs. Less than two months after my release, I was hired by a tool company in January 2017. They paid only $9 an hour but I viewed the job as experience. Having some electrical background, I soon left the tool company and began working for a home builder. I now make $11.50 an hour as a sheeter until the company began losing permits and made a number of company layoffs in late August.

Since then I worked a few temporary jobs. I filled out many applications and have been on a few interviews, but, more often than not, the background check makes all the difference in being hired or even interviewed.

The funny thing is, many job applications that I have filled out ask if you have been convicted of a felony in the past seven to 10 years. I can honestly
answer ‘no,’ but then if they do a background check, well, we know what the answer will then be. Perhaps I should change that answer to “will discuss at interview.” Then, I perhaps may pique their curiosity and maybe at least have the opportunity at an interview, where they will hopefully see my positive qualities and strong work ethic. That’s where I hope to leave a strong impression with them. So, I remain positive, optimistic and determined and not let rejection deter me. Sometimes we have to figure different ways of getting our foot in the door, and if one way isn’t working, then we must be clever and figure another way.

All in All, to summarize, for my first year of freedom, I feel I have done well for myself. I have a checking and savings account with a credit score of 700. I began with a secured credit card and now have an unsecured platinum card. Not too bad for someone who has spent nearly forty years in institutions. My freedom means everything to me. Even when I’m having a bad day, I think about where I’ve been and how extremely fortunate I am to have this second chance at being a productive member of society. I have adjusted quiet well. I owe a good deal of that to my family, friends, and girlfriend, Mariann. They have been very supportive of me by helping me over some hurdles, but still allowing me the independence to learn so much on my own.

There are still a few steps I need to process. It can be difficult explaining my background and past at times. But I try to allow people I meet to get to know me who I am today before telling them of the messed-up kid I was more than a lifetime ago. I look forward to my future. Hopefully I will obtain a full-time job that I enjoy and pays well. Mariann and I have a great relationship and have talked about marriage. I do believe that is in my future.

I only hope whoever reads this may benefit by getting some idea of what it is like to readjust to society. But more importantly, to reconnect with people and potential employers as well. This can be as easy or difficult as you make it. One has to learn to trust the right people, and be open and honest where needed. You must put prison life and experiences behind you and move forward each day. Though I’ll never forget my own experiences, the effects of prison life weaken within myself each day. I’ll never take my freedom for granted and do my best each and every day to realize how fantastic life truly is out here in society.”

-Joseph

**Thanks for Helping Me Through My Darkest Hour**

“I would like to thank the warden at SCI Albion and his staff for helping me through my darkest hour. I was convicted and sentenced to 3-to-6 years at SCI Albion and during my time there the staff was more than exceptional. They were professional and helping in all aspects. They helped me understand my wrongful doing and what I needed to do when released.
They never treated me less than a human. They talked to me with respect as a human even know they did not have to. They have helped mold me into a good person and am thankful for that. I would love to hear all employees at SCI Albion are recognized for they above and beyond service to the community.

I have sought out schooling and have completed my schooling and now am a head welder at my job. This would have never happened if it was not for Mr. Williams and Mr. Pangborn along with all the kitchen staff and RHU staff while I worked there giving me guidance.

So please give recognition to the appropriate staff and thank you for changing my life for the best.”

-Jason

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“Thanks” via Social Media

“I would like to send my respectful regards to Ms. Murray at SCI Chester. I believe she works in the parole department.

She called to let me know that my son was made eligible for parole.

She was kind, caring, and compassionate about the information she shared with me. She also gave me some advice which I shared with my son -- to stay encouraged and keep your head up. She also followed up with my son to let him know he made parole.

She made a difference in this whole experience and I hope she knows that.

Thank you Ms. Murray!”

-Angie Perez

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Gov. Tom Wolf proclaimed May 6-12, 2018, as “Corrections Employee Week in Pennsylvania,” which is something governors have done since 1986. DOC employees find creative ways to celebrate this week.

The proclamation says:

"WHEREAS, Pennsylvania’s correctional system is the oldest in the nation, evolving from the establishment of Philadelphia’s Walnut Street Jail in 1773 and the Eastern Penitentiary in 1829; and

WHEREAS, the “Pennsylvania System,” as it became known, was the leading influence in the development of penology throughout the 19th Century and the forerunner of modern corrections; and

WHEREAS, today, Pennsylvania faces continued difficult challenges in corrections. With 24 state correctional institutions, one motivational boot camp, a training academy, 11 community corrections centers and 32 contract facilities, 63 county prisons and jails and 15 federal facilities and offices, our correctional facilities house approximately 95,000 inmates; and

WHEREAS, the secure and safe operation and management of those facilities rests in the hands of nearly 31,000 trained, skilled and dedicated corrections professionals. They are corrections administrators, corrections officers, counselors, treatment specialists, educators, clerical support staff, business administrators and purchasing agents, personnel and labor relations specialists, reentry specialists, social workers, clergy, medical professionals, food service specialists, computer technicians, planners and research analysts and skilled craftspeople upon whose skills, efficiency and professionalism the functions of the Pennsylvania correctional system depends;

WHEREAS, although each of these dedicated professionals work in a different field and specialize in a specific area, all are committed to a common goal: the secure, safe and humane operation of our Commonwealth’s correctional
facilities where employees work to reduce future crime through the delivery of programs to change an individual’s criminal behavior.

THEREFORE, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim, May 6-12, 2018, as CORRECTIONS EMPLOYEE WEEK in Pennsylvania. I encourage all Pennsylvanians to recognize the vital role these dedicated professionals play in ensuring the effective operation of our correctional system in the interest of public safety.”

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**DOC Holds Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony**

Since the early 1980s, the Department of Corrections has celebrated its employees through an annual employee recognition ceremony. The ceremony initially presented individuals with the DOC’s Outstanding Performance Award, and back in 1980, there were far fewer state prisons, so the number of recipients were fewer than are recognized today.

Over time the ceremony grew to include the DOC Medal of Valor, Mentor of the Year Award and the Thomas Fulcomer Award.

On May 9, 2018, 13 individuals were recognized at the DOC’s Training Academy for their outstanding work or heroic deeds.
The keynote speaker was Shirley Moore Smeal, executive deputy secretary for the DOC. She said:

"The employee recognition ceremony provides the opportunity for individuals from offices, divisions, bureaus, the department and the governor’s office to recognize our employees for the dedicated, committed and forward-thinking employees that make up this outstanding department.

Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher, said, ‘We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.’

Every day, we repeatedly strive to achieve excellence in all we do. One only has to look at 'Correctional Newsfront' or DOCnet or our awards program to see such incredible stories of our employees saving lives both in the facility and in the community, being mentors, raising puppies, training staff to be better employees, recognizing that as employees of this department we are people too who need to have our vessels replenished with the fuel to continue giving to others because that’s what we do. This unconditional giving and loving and caring was particularly demonstrated when we tragically lost one of our own, Sgt. Mark Baserman, at the hands of an inmate. We honor his life and all those lives that were lost while dutifully and heroically walking the toughest beat called corrections which highlights just how difficult and dangerous this profession can be.

Our mission statement says that we operate as one team, that we embrace diversity, that we are committed to enhancing public safety.

It’s important to remember that corrections is as much a part of the law enforcement and public safety community as is the state police, military and veterans affairs, and the fire departments. What we do as an organization matters. What you do as an individual matters. When you think about all of the different classifications that make up our department of over 17,000 employees, from clerical, to counselor to corrections officer, psychologists, food service, ASCRAS, activities specialists, social workers, business managers, parole agents, monitors, stock clerks, mail room personnel, maintenance, chaplains, teachers, and the list goes on and on, we know that it takes each and every one of us doing our job each and every day in order to enhance public safety by the services you provide to those within our care, custody and control, the majority of which will return to society one day."
As a result of your dedicated service, we have seen a number of accomplishments made:

• We have begun the successful consolidation of corrections and probation and parole

• We have gotten innovative by doing several pilots, successful pilots, with BetaGov

• We have hosted a number of other states to share with them our best practices that are nationally recognized

• We have established Corrections Outreach for Veteran and Employee Restoration (C.O.V.E.R.) at each facility and P.O.W.E.R. (Parole Outreach for Wellness and Employee Restoration)

• We’ve seen our population decrease by more than 3,000 inmates over the last four years, the single largest period of inmate population decline in the department’s history.

• We have enhanced our delivery of mental health services

• We have increased our drug interdiction efforts by implementing DISC

• We have improved our response to the opioid crisis by expanding our use of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and designating opioid specific therapeutic communities

• We have enhanced our reentry efforts for reentrants by expanding our partnerships with other agencies such as the Department of Banking and Securities, Department of Labor & Industry, Department of Health and Human Services, through provision of additional vocational programs, continued testing and awarding of GEDs, expansion of transitional housing and veteran services units and services offered through the bureau of community corrections

We are an extraordinary department because of you and your efforts.

To all of those who work daily to ensure we accomplish our mission, thank you. Thank you for each day that you work to support each other and to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. On behalf of Secretary John Wetzel and all of the executive staff, please know that we are extremely proud to stand beside you to continue to move this agency forward in a progressive and professional manner. In particular, this awards ceremony recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated by example what it means to not only be an outstanding employee but also to be an outstanding individual.

Thank you and enjoy this employee recognition ceremony – you deserve it!
This year’s award recipients are:

**Outstanding Performance Award**

**Eastern Region**

**Lieutenant Bernard Karabino** (SCI Benner Township) -- Lieutenant Karabinos oversees operation of the Transportation Hub at SCI Benner Township, ensuring that transport days run seamlessly and overcoming any challenges that may arise. On non-transport days, Karabinos assists throughout the facility wherever he is needed.

Karabinos was also instrumental in overtime reduction with daily overtime tracking and providing pertinent information to the manpower survey. He is a member of SCI Benner Township’s Critical Incident Stress Management team and serves as the facility’s State Employees Combined Appeal coordinator. Karabinos began his corrections career at SCI Cresson in 2000. He moved to SCI Benner Township and was promoted to corrections officer 2 in 2013 and corrections officer 3 in 2015.

Prior to joining the department, Karabinos served in the U.S. Air Force, completing Airman Leadership School and earning numerous awards, medals and letters of appreciation. During his military career he was awarded the Air Force Achievement Medal, First Oak Leaf Cluster, for service in Saudi Arabia; the Air Force Achievement Medal, Second Oak Leaf Cluster, for service at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware; and the Joint Service Achievement Medal for his service in Central America.

In his spare time, Karabinos is active in his church and volunteers at a local food bank as well as helping elderly and neighborhood families.
Unit Manager Richard Hamor (SCI Benner Township) -- serves as a mentor and positive example in the facility.

Hamor joined the department as a corrections counselor 2 in 1996, first at SCI Cresson and later at SCI Benner Township. He served as an acting unit manager for nearly three years.

In 2016, Hamor was moved to the reentry specialist position to create a Reentry Services Office at SCI Benner Township. In February, he was promoted to corrections unit manager, but continued to cover his role in the Reentry Services Office and train his replacement.

A graduate of York College, Hamor previously served as a counselor for the Youth Forestry Camp and a probation officer for Clinton County. In his spare time, he is a member of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program and active in community revitalization efforts with his church and social groups.

Business Education Teacher Mary Beth Pasqualicchio (SCI Waymart) -- is described as a “team player” and a role model to inmates and other employees.

She encourages her students to develop business plans and focus on what is required to be successful upon reentry. Based on her own experience, Pasqualicchio discusses qualities of good and bad leaders, as well as potential obstacles when starting a new business and how to use technology skills. She is a mentor to new employees and has assumed extra duties when the education department was without a principal.

Pasqualicchio began her career with the department in 2012 as an education and therapeutic community clerk. The following year she was promoted to
record Specialist I and, in 2014, became a record specialist 2. In 2016, Pasqualicchio was named business education teacher.

Prior to joining the Department of Corrections, Pasqualicchio worked in banking for 27 years, including as vice president and marketing director at the Community Bank and Trust Company. A graduate of the University of Scranton, she is currently pursuing her master’s degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Central Region

Unit Manager Craig Petulla (SCI Houtzdale) -- joined the Department of Corrections in 2002 as a corrections activities specialist and although his titles have changed over the years, he continues to excel in special programs.

In 2016, Petulla was chosen to lead the creation of the 197-bed Veterans Service Unit. Petulla accomplished this while simultaneously moving the prison’s dog training program to the unit and creating numerous other community partnerships to enhance programming and re-entry services to incarcerated veterans. The program has achieved positive state and national attention.

Before that, in 2014, Petulla was named SCI Houtzdale’s first unit manager for the Restricted Housing Unit. Prior to that, in 2011, also as a unit manager, Petulla provided oversight for specialized programing including Sex Offender, Courage to Change and Therapeutic Community, developing daily schedules and organizing processes.

Prior to joining the Department of Corrections, Petulla attended Slippery Rock University, but left to play baseball with the Houston Astros. After sustaining a career-ending injury, Petulla returned to finish college and then joined the Department of Corrections. In his spare time, Petulla mentors local high school baseball prospects to help them obtain college athletic scholarships.
Lieutenant Walter Grunder (SCI Graterford) -- has worked at SCI Graterford since 1991, but most recently, he has been a member of the SCI Phoenix Transition Team where he is responsible for developing policies, procedures and emergency plans for the new institution, plus tour guide for legislators, judges, law enforcement and staff from other facilities, and historian.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Grunder served from 1986 to 1990. After joining the department the following year, he was promoted to sergeant in 1994 and lieutenant in 1996. In 2004, he was appointed as the Critical Incident Manager at SCI Graterford.

Grunder has been instrumental in developing the Radiological Emergency Response Team framework and Critical Incident Management policies. As the senior Critical Incident Manager for the department, Grunder serves as a mentor and guide for other CIMs at other facilities. He has been instrumental as an Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer at the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency during statewide emergencies.

From 1990 to 2005, Grunder also served as a volunteer firefighter, working his way through the ranks up to chief. He is also a state-level Incident Command System instructor.

School Correctional Guidance Counselor Cathy Pickett (SCI Muncy) -- since 2006, works hard to make sure students and staff are given the ingredients for academic and professional growth.

As the facility’s educational guidance counselor, Pickett is responsible for ensuring that students receive the appropriate educational, vocational and emotional services. She offers individual and group counseling sessions to students with mental
health issues and learning difficulties, as well as guidance into career and college programs.

She has, at times, served as SCI Muncy’s acting school principal, serving as a resource and mentor for staff members. Pickett has coordinated school schedules and educational services, developed training materials, organized graduation and worked with outside agencies.

Prior to working for the department, Pickett worked as a mental health counselor, a school psychologist and a teacher/counselor. A graduate of Lycoming College, Pickett earned her master’s degree from Bucknell University and is currently pursuing her doctorate degree at Wilkes University. She also volunteers at residential treatment facility and sings in her church choir.

Western Region

**Unit Manager Barb Hollibaugh** (SCI Huntingdon) -- has been with the Department of Corrections for 29 years. She is currently responsible for running one of the most innovative and successful Residential Treatment Units (RTU) in the state, earning her the respect of both employees and inmates. An RTU is a special unit that is designed to provide structure, consistency and support to inmates who have been diagnosed with a serious psychiatric disorder and/or a serious impairment with psychological functioning. The ultimate goal of the RTU is to maximize functioning within the department and to facilitate a successful community reentry for relevant inmates.

In addition to managing the RTU, she oversees the Certified Peer Support Specialist program and is a member of the Critical Incident Stress Management team. Everyone visiting SCI Huntingdon’s RTU hears about the well-attended resident community meetings, inmate contests and other innovative and therapeutic ideas.

A graduate of Penn State University, Hollibaugh began her career as a corrections officer at SCI Rockview in 1989. She transferred to SCI Huntingdon as a corrections counselor in 1992 and, after three years in general population, she moved to the Special Needs Unit. In 2004, Hollibaugh was promoted to unit manager on the Special Needs Unit.
Hollibaugh encourages and empowers her staff to make decisions, expand their knowledge and increase their sense of professional independence. She takes great pride in her unit and her facility and demonstrates her dedication and commitment every day.

**Sergeant Michael Lohr** (SCI Laurel Highlands) -- is the primary 6-to-2 sergeant at SCI Laurel Highlands. In addition to his regular duties, he is a member of the institution’s Hostage Negotiation Team and the Critical Incident Stress Management Team and is a staff instructor.

Lohr joined the department in 2000 and was promoted to sergeant in 2008. He previously worked at the Johnstown Corporation for 18 years.

A retired Marine, Lohr enlisted in 1983 after graduating from high school. In addition to USMC basic training, he completed legal clerk training, personnel administration and unit clerk courses. Lohr reached the rank of Lance Corporal, earning the Rifle Marksman Badge and Good Conduct Medal, as well as a letter of appreciation.

Outside of work, Lohr and his wife, Cathy, provide housing and mentorship for young adult amateur hockey players during the season. He is active in the Emanuel Baptist Church and volunteers his time helping a local farmer with livestock care and farm maintenance.

**Corrections Facility Maintenance Manager 3 Thomas Mook** (SCI Albion) -- is the epitome of excellence and dedication to the Department of Corrections, overseeing operations, coordinating projects and thinking up new ways to save money.

Most recently, Mook spent nine hours on a Saturday overseeing a contractor and his staff as they repaired a water leak that was impacting the heat and hot water in two housing units. He also recently installed a cardboard baler.
that will not only save the institution money in trash collections, but will earn proceeds from the recycling.

Mook started with the department in 1995 with the maintenance department and as laundry manager at SCI Cambridge Springs. In 2013, he was transferred to SCI Albion to become the facility maintenance manager and two years later was promoted to facility maintenance manager 3. He is always on call to answer questions and never asks his staff to do anything he would not do himself.

He is a trustee and treasurer of his church in Cambridge Springs, where he is also active in remodeling and expansion projects. Previously a full-time farmer, Mook has also been involved in his community’s 4-H Club for many years.

**Bureau of Community Corrections**

**Corrections Center Monitor Joseph Wojcik** (Erie CCC) -- has worked for the Department of Corrections for less than two years, but in that time he has been responsible for five life-saving incidents.

Twice in May 2017, once in October 2017, and twice on the same day in March 2018, Wojcik spotted reentrants in distress – either unconscious or ill – and began helping the individuals until emergency medical personnel arrived. It was Wojcik’s quick and appropriate response, through his application of Narcan and rendering first aid, that helped saved the lives of these five people.

Prior to joining the Department of Corrections in July 2016, Wojcik worked for the Erie Daily Times newspaper for 23 years as the advertising production manager.

He is a graduate of Checktown High School and the University of Buffalo. In his spare time, he volunteers at the Erie YMCA in both youth and adult programs.
Regional Licensed Psychologist Manager Dr. Ken Cairns (DOC Central Office) -- has served as the Western Regional Licensed Psychological Manager for the past five years. In this role, Cairns is responsible for the oversight of eight state prisons, supporting about 4,000 individuals receiving mental health care by about 100 mental health care professionals.

During this time, Cairns also led the quarterly auditing of the Disability Rights Networks lawsuit as it applied to all prisons in his region. Cairns’ reviews and management assisted with the department’s successful navigation and internal monitoring of a landmark settlement agreement that was reached in January 2015. Earlier this year, the internal monitoring of the Department of Corrections was closed, in large part because of the technical and clinical expertise of Cairns’ quarterly matrix audits.

In addition, Cairns has led a recent and significant revision of the department’s Residential Treatment Unit’s programs and policies. In fact, RTUs have been established at 14 different state prisons and serve as one of the primary housing units for seriously mentally ill individuals in the outpatient setting. He has also led the department in creating a program for first responders, providing support to critical incidents to help individuals rebound from a difficult experience.

Since earning his master’s and doctorate degrees from Case Western Reserve University, Cairns has served as an adjunct professor at several colleges and universities, and given numerous presentations on criminal psychology and crisis situations to state prison and law enforcement officers across the state. He joined the department in 1998, as a psychologist at SCI Pittsburgh. In 2001, he was named the licensed psychologist manager at SCI Greensburg where he served until his promotion to Western Regional Licensed Psychologist Manager in 2013.
Medal of Valor

**Corrections Officer 1 Barry Yount** (SCI Pine Grove) -- On Saturday, June 17, 2017, Yount was fishing with his brother-in-law at Yellow Creek State Park in Indiana County.

Around 8 p.m., as they were packing up their gear to leave, Yount and his brother-in-law, noticed a family launching a canoe into the water. A short time later, they heard faint cries of help.

Yount spotted an overturned canoe about 75 yards out from the water’s edge and, without hesitation, dove into the water and swam toward the canoe. All three members of the family were in the water, including a young boy wearing a life vest, and two adults – one of whom was in distress.

While helping the adult in distress, Yount assured the young boy that he would immediately return to help him. After using life saving techniques to pull the drowning adult to safety, he went back in to help the young boy. His brother-in-law helped the other adult retrieve the overturned canoe.

A retired U.S. Marine, Yount has been with the Department of Corrections since 2009. He was promoted to corrections officer 1 in 2010 and is currently employed at SCI Pine Grove.

Yount enlisted in the Marines after graduating from Marion Center Area High School. After completing USMC Boot Camp, Yount attended the Marine’s School of Infantry and Basic Security Guard School. Assigned to the Security Force Battalion, he was a member of the 3/2 Lima Company Infantry Battalion and the 1/8 Charlie Company Infantry Battalion. During his military career, Yount also earned 30 credits through the American Military University.
Mentor of the Year

**Unit Manager Amy Varner** (SCI Pine Grove) -- has been named Mentor of the Year for consistently helping others, actively recruiting both new mentors and mentees, and serving as a role model to both officers and staff assigned to her housing units.

Described as having an admirable work ethic, diligently doing the right thing all the time, and maintaining a positive interaction with both staff and inmates, Varner’s sense of humor helps defuse stressful situations and make problems more manageable.

After graduating from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Varner worked with individuals with mental health issues for five years before joining the Department of Corrections in 1998. She started as a counselor at SCI Greene, then transferred to SCI Greensburg in 2001. Six years later, Varner was promoted to unit manager. When SCI Greensburg closed in 2013, Varner transferred to SCI Pine Grove.

Varner’s mentee said she has appreciated the help adjusting to working in a correctional institution. Varner, she added, has provided insight and on-point information on managing situations as they arise.

Part of the mentoring committee since 2014, Varner now serves as the committee co-chairman. She is also the Certified Peer Support Specialist supervisor and serves on the Young Adult Offender committee.
Thomas Fulcomer Award

Corrections Activities Specialist Josh Fraley (SCI Laurel Highlands)

Fraley is the epitome of a team player.

Many times, he has pulled members of the staff together to work on department and labor relations bargaining issues.

He serves as the cool-minded team leader for all bargaining unit issues and leads his peers toward constructive solutions when the bargaining unit needs sound advice and direction.

Fraley often pulls double and triple duty, covering inmate activities when other staff members are pulled away for other responsibilities.

He does all this knowing that the time he sacrifices will probably go unrecognized and he will never gain attention for volunteering for high profile department programs. Still, he knows that without his sacrifice, other staff members couldn’t be released to volunteer.

In addition to regular program supervision, nearly half of all able-bodied residents at SCI Laurel Highlands can be found attending one of Fraley’s
Managing the largest number of call-outs in the facility is an overwhelming, time-consuming endeavor.

Fraley is on duty, working alone, every morning Monday through Friday. Throughout the winter months, Fraley has to share the facility with Security. Nevertheless, Fraley is able to keep all programs running efficiently in structured activities as well as open gym time.

He has never received a review with less-than-outstanding rating and his commitment to the Department of Corrections and the facility is unrivaled.

A graduate of Penn State University with a high school teacher’s certification, Fraley worked as a carpenter for 11 years and briefly taught at Rockview Area High School (where he had attended) before joining the department.

He started as a stock clerk at SCI Somerset in September 2011 and was promoted to corrections activities specialist three months later. In his spare time, Fraley works with his church’s youth group and volunteers with a Special Olympic mentoring program.

The Thomas Fulcomer Award is named for a beloved DOC deputy secretary who died in 2002 following a battle with Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. The award winner is someone who:

- is dedicated to working for the DOC
- dedicated to co-workers, inmates, family and community
- serves as a positive role model
- is well-respected and well-liked by all;
- takes the time during a busy schedule to really listen and get to know others
- believes in teamwork and works as part of that team
- has an exceptional work history
- is a compassionate, thoughtful, kind person

Also at the ceremony, those individuals killed by inmates were remembered, especially Sgt. Mark J. Baserman, whose name has been engraved into the DOC’s memorial.

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On May 9, 2018, the Department of Corrections announced that Major Michael C. Gourley, who led record cost savings, safety and security and efficiency improvements in the Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC), is among the recipients of the Governor’s Awards of Excellence.

The awards recognize commonwealth employees for exemplary job performance or service that reflects initiative, leadership, innovation and increased efficiency. Gourley is one of 47 state employees from 10 agencies to be honored by Governor Tom Wolf.

Beginning in 2016 and through 2017, Gourley focused his efforts on overtime reduction in the Bureau of Community Corrections. Because of Gourley’s efforts to streamline processes, fill vacant security positions and centralize scheduling, DOC was able to successfully reduce overtime costs by $500,000.

Gourley also targeted training compliance and completion for all BCC staff, especially front-line community corrections staff, leading to the highest rate of compliance yet within the bureau.
In the past year, Gourley also is credited with improving safety and security measures in BCC facilities, including increased searches, improving investigations and implementing new guidelines for the Management Operations Center.

“When you consider that more than 90 percent of all of those who are incarcerated return to the community one day, successful reentry is a critical component to corrections,” said Corrections Secretary John Wetzel. “Major Gourley’s efforts to improve so many aspects of community corrections, especially in the face of the challenges presented by the opioid crisis, have been exemplary.”

In addition, Gourley has overseen the elimination of the backlog in investigations within community corrections, improved the State Intermediate Punishment program by overseeing the implementation of the SIP-HOPE program, which aims at keeping non-violent drug offenders from re-offending. He also has used his relationships with local, state and federal law enforcement to respond to incidents and worked with Pennsylvania State Police to apprehend absconders.

“Major Gourley is one of the most highly competent and driven people I have ever had the good fortune to work with,” said Daniel McIntyre, director of the Bureau of Community Corrections. “He is always thinking outside the box to improve each and every area he supervises within the Bureau of Community Corrections.”

Gourley, a resident of Dauphin County, started his career as a corrections officer and was promoted to lieutenant before moving to the Bureau of Community Corrections with the rank of major. While working for the Board of Probation and Parole he was named Agent of the Year for 2012.

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**Fayette Recognizes Employees**

SCI Fayette officials recently recognized two employees who had been nominated for the Governor’s Award of Excellence – Deputy Superintendent forCentralized Services Rene Adams and Classification Program Manager Deb Hawkinberry. Hawkinberry was a finalist for the prestigious award.

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_Pictured, left to right, are: Deb Hawkinberry and Rene Adams._
How SCI Waymart Celebrated Special Weeks

MAY 7th—11th, 2018

MAY 7th—11th, 2018

MENU
MONDAY—Taco Bar, nacho’s & cheese and more...
TUESDAY—Pizza with toppings, pierogies, and ice cream
WEDNESDAY—The BBQ Cookout - Hamburgers, hot dogs with fixings and special guest chefs
THURSDAY—Breakfast for all—eggs, sausage patty, home fries and then some ice cream
FRIDAY—Pasta with a variety of sauces (alfredo, vodka, etc.) plus fresh bread sticks

NATIONAL NURSES APPRECIATION WEEK

THEY'RE BACK—FUN AND GAMES
MONDAY—Bean Bag Toss in ODR
0900—1100 and 1430—1600
WEDNESDAY—Skeeball in FTC Activities 1100-1300
FRIDAY—Mini Basketball in FTC Activities 1100-1200
PRIZES AND SOME GIVEAWAYS!!!
Greene Celebrates Corrections Employee Week

On May 7, SCI Greene kicked-off Corrections Employee Week by retiring the American Flag that flew over the facility this past year and hung the new colors for the upcoming year. Superintendent Robert Gilmore presented the flag to this year’s Fellowship Award winner, Corrections Activities Manager 2 Michael Smith.

The annual SCI Greene Fellowship award is presented to a corrections employee who displays dedication and loyalty to their profession and goes above and beyond to assist others. Mike is a genuine, caring individual who is a pillar of stability and trust. He sets the standard for commitment and quality of work and is very deserving of this award.

Greene employees also held a moment of silence to honor Sergeant Mark Baserman.

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Go Fund Me for Sgt. Baserman

As many of you recall, SCI Somerset Sergeant Mark Baserman died in February 2018 due to injuries he sustained during an attack by an inmate.

SCI Somerset coordinated the collection of funds for Sgt. Baserman’s family. As of last week, the campaign was completed with $47,213 having been raised.

“We wanted to take a moment to say thank you to all of the institutions, agencies and departments who contributed,” said SCI Somerset Superintendent Melissa Hainsworth. “We also wanted to say thank you to those who provided funds directly to the institution as well as for all of the memorial plaques presented to us honoring Sergeant Baserman. The support and kindness shown to SCI Somerset during this time has been in abundance.”

Superintendent Hainsworth shares a picture of the memorial wall SCI Somerset established with the items presented to the facility.

“Again, thank you all and please pass on to your staff heartfelt appreciation for all of the assistance, support, and encouragement through this difficult time,” Hainsworth said.
On May 8, SCI Greene officials held their 12th Annual Ceremony of Remembrance at the facility’s Memorial Wall to honor previous employees who have passed away.

The Ceremony opened with a Presentation of Colors by the SCI Greene Honor Guard, followed by opening remarks from Superintendent Robert Gilmore.

Sergeant Richard Crutchman and Courtney Vehar conducted a Reading of the Names.

“Taps” was performed by Honor Guard Member Timothy Wilcher, followed by a closing Salute.

The ceremony concluded with a Benediction given by Deacon Kosko.

Facility staff as well as family members of the deceased attended the ceremony.

Ninety-six names are presently displayed on the Memorial Wall.

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Dallas Welcomes Back Retirees

On May 8, 2018, as part of Corrections Employee Week, approximately 40 retirees, along with their guests, attended SCI Dallas’ annual retirees breakfast.

SCI Dallas Honor Guard opened the ceremony with the presentation of colors and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Lawrence Mahally welcomed all in attendance. The retirees’ breakfast is an annual event at Dallas that has been held for many years.

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Graterford Serves Up Employee Appreciation

In honor of Corrections Employees Week, management staff at Graterford cooked and served the staff at an old fashion picnic. Staff dined on hot dogs, hamburgers, even veggie burgers, pasta and potato salad, along with “Old World Italian Blueberry Cake.”

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Mahanoy Celebrates CE Week & 25th Anniversary!

On May 8, as part of Corrections Employee Week, SCI Mahanoy officials also celebrated the prison’s 25th anniversary. The prison opened in June 1993. In addition, prison officials invited local news media in for a tour of the facility. Reporters from the Pottsville Republican-Herald and two local TV stations toured the prison and attended the ceremony. In addition, local state representatives and county officials joined attendees, who were honored to hear from the prison’s first superintendent, Martin Dragovich. The event was followed by a wonderful lunch prepared by Mahanoy’s food service staff and that was paid for by the prison’s employees recreation association.
SCI Mahanoy’s first superintendent, Martin Dragovich addresses attendees.

Current Superintendent Theresa DelBalso and Mahanoy’s first Superintendent Martin Dragovich.
Fayette Holds Employee Picnic

On May 8, SCI Fayette employees were treated to a picnic in the visiting room. The menu included hot dogs, hamburgers, macaroni salad, chips and drinks.
Albion Holds Appreciation Picnic

In honor of Corrections Employee Week, SCI Albion held a staff appreciation picnic on May 9, 2018, for all three shifts to thank them for all they do. Several retirees also attended. The meal consisted of marinated chicken breast, ox roast, macaroni and cheese, pasta salad and a soft serve ice cream bar. Several other events took place daily during the course of the week, which included free coffee and water, omelets, free popcorn, an ACE clothing sale, daily prize giveaways (compliments of the prison’s employee association), and a $25 gift card was also given away daily (compliments of the Empowerment Committee).
Fight Crime – Invest in Kids

Earlier this week, Secretary John Wetzel participated in a press conference – held a SCI Albion -- that highlighted the Wolf Administration’s support for a significant increase in funding for early childhood education. At the event report was highlighted that covers the financial return on investment featuring some polling data from PA inmates.

Joining officials at the event was Senator Laughlin (R) from Erie who has an interesting proposal in the video, which you can view here:


This event also highlights the great opportunity criminal justice professionals can play in being proactive to prevent crime through education.

You can view the full report here:


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On May 4 Quehanna Boot Camp graduated 9 staff members from the Pennsylvania Correctional Drill Instructor (CDI) program. PA CDI is an 80-hour instructor’s course that officers successfully complete upon accepting employment with the Quehanna Motivational Boot Camp. This training is conducted after officers complete Basic Training at the Department’s Training Academy. The candidates participate in both classroom instruction and practical application of lessons including goals and philosophies, drill and ceremony, physical training, cross-gender training, confrontation/self-control, facilitation of tests and inspections, cognitive restructuring behavior, and routine day-to-day operations of managing boot camp housing units. Candidates must prove a thorough working knowledge of the course material through teach-backs and being evaluated by instructors. The CDI program is facilitated under strict military customs and principles where the candidates develop a sense of dedication to each other, loyalty to the boot camp program, and becoming an asset to the Department through buying into the role model concept and the principle that “One person can make a difference; together we can achieve anything.”
Bring Your Child To Work Day

Veronica Gambill-Harden, administrative officer at SCI Cambridge Springs, participated in Bring Your Child To Work Day, which was recently observed on April 26, 2018. Gambill-Harden began her participation in Bring Your Child To Work Day when she was an Officer for the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department. Although the Department of Corrections is unable to participate in this event due to obvious security reasons, Gambill-Harden was able to connect with the community to expose children to local court house operations. She accompanied her family members for an entire day at the Erie County court house, where they were able to speak with Judge Thomas Carney and spend some time with Judge John Trucilla and Judge Daniel Brabender in the court room and in their private chambers. Gambill-Harden took her personal time and leave from work to organize this experience to benefit the local youth.

“I think this exposure is extremely beneficial for today’s youth because it opens their eyes to the community happenings that occur outside the school walls,” Gambill-Harden said.

Pictured, from left to right: Desire Coleman, Jordan Smith, Veronica Gambill-Harden, Judge Thomas Carney, Dizareon Gambill and Joseph Jones.
PA State Archives Employee Shares Al Capone Info

By Tyler Stump, Archivist, Pennsylvania State Archives

In the spring of 1929, Al Capone left a meeting of mafia leaders in Atlantic City and was traveling back to his Chicago home when he was arrested in Philadelphia. The mobster was caught carrying and concealing a deadly weapon, a .38 caliber revolver. After a quick trial, Capone and his bodyguard, Frank Cline, both pled guilty and were sentenced to serve one year in Eastern State Penitentiary (ESP). If you visit the Eastern State Penitentiary historic site today, you can even see Capone’s cell as it looked at the time. But what most people don’t know is that Capone was secretly transferred to SCI Graterford the day before his release.

Newspaper articles published shortly before Capone’s March 1930 release date warned that the mob boss’ enemies were coming to meet him at the prison gates and crowds of onlookers started showing up at the ESP gate to get a glimpse of “Scarface Al” in person. Worried about violence and “possible harm, bodily or otherwise,” the ESP Board of Trustees and Warden Herbert Smith came up with a plan: release Capone from another prison. SCI Graterford, built in 1927, was only 30 miles north of Philadelphia and there was plenty of room for Capone and Cline. The two men were both quietly driven to Graterford in the warden’s private car. They spent their last nights as prisoners in a Graterford cell. The public didn’t catch on to the trick until it was too late.

The next morning Capone and Cline walked alone out of Graterford’s gates and into a Buick sedan that sped back to Chicago. Later that day, a crowd of two thousand reporters and curious Philadelphians were disappointed to hear that they wouldn’t get to see America’s most infamous mobster walk free.

“We certainly stuck one on your eye,” Warden Smith shouted to the crowd, “the big guy went out of here...we shot him out in a brown automobile.”

Al Capone’s year at Eastern State Penitentiary and SCI Graterford was the first prison sentence he ever served. Some newspaper accounts claim that he arranged to be arrested on purpose in Philadelphia gang assassins in Chicago after the 1929 St. Valentine’s Day Massacre. Capone always denied this charge, and a month after his release from Graterford said: “One thing I would like to set at rest is the report that I went into jail to dodge something. If I wanted to go to jail, I certainly wouldn’t...”
pick one in Pennsylvania. I would have looked around for one where there were
more conveniences.” Whatever the case, Capone’s stay at ESP and Graterford mark
an interesting chapter in Pennsylvania’s corrections history.

Administrative staff at SCI Graterford recently helped transfer a large collection of
their historical records to the State Archives in Harrisburg, including a 1930
Warden’s journal that describes Capone’s secret transfer and release from
Graterford. This journal is the only known record that confirms Capone spent time
at Graterford. Other items transferred to the archives include historic photographs
of prisoners and facility buildings, daily logbooks, Warden orders, and ESP annual
reports from the 1890s. These records will be preserved in the archives building
and will be available to visitors to look at. The State Archives also has Capone’s ESP
admission records and his parole order, personally signed by Governor John Fisher.

The State Archives is part of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
and preserves the historical record of the Department of Corrections and other
state agencies for future generations. Without these records, the stories and
experiences of the department could be lost. If you know of any historic materials
in your own office, contact your administration or PA DOC Records Retention and
Archive Work Group chair, Launa Kowalcyk (717-728-4058). If you would like to
know more about the State Archives, please visit www.phmc.pa.gov/archives.

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**SCI Somerset Holds FERT Training**

SCI Somerset’s Fire Emergency Response Team (FERT) conducted training in April
at the Somerset County Fire School training site.

Prison officials would like to thank County Fireman’s Association and Somerset
Volunteer Fire Department for their continued support. Training for the FERT Team
is held yearly in April, May, June, September and October.

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Media Tour Held at Laurel Highlands

On April 10, SCI Laurel Highlands held a media tour. The only media outlet to participate was WJAC-TV. Superintendent Jamey Luther served as tour guide for reporter Dillon Richards.


Fayette Holds Media Tour

SCI Fayette held a media tour on May 9 that was attended by photographer Nathaniel Guidry and reporter Katishi Maake, who both are from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. In addition to the newspaper officials, Senator Pat Stefano and Fayette County Prison Warden Jeffrey Meyers and Chaplain Shawn Bush attended.

Tour guides included Superintendent Mark Capozza, Public Information Officer Lois Allen, Deputy Superintendent Rene Adams, Major Mankey, Major Trempus and Tonya Stuckslager.

Areas highlighted included medical, activities, the dog training program, Correctional Industries’ license plate factory, food services and the visiting room.
SCI Mercer Hosts Reentry Week Programs

To recognize National Reentry Month, SCI Mercer held a packed week of programs for the inmate population from April 23 to April 27. These programs were geared toward equipping reentrants with information to assist them in navigating challenges they may face upon release into their communities.

Adult Basic Education Instructor Noel Berkley kicked off the week with a presentation about Pathways to Success, and the library staff informed the attendees about the information located in the Career Center. Unit Manager Randy Rickert gave an abridged edition of his technology class, and Fern Torok, from the Community Counseling Center, gave a very interesting and informative talk on mental health to round out the day.

On Tuesday, Social Worker Ashley Smith spoke about the program, Reentry Planning While Still Incarcerated, which was very detailed in outlining many resources and programs available to the inmates while incarcerated. Parole Agents Marcy Hazlett and Christopher Distler presented information on the parole process and fielded many questions from the attendees. In the afternoon, Ebony Kirkland, from the Veterans Administration, spoke to the inmate veteran population about medical benefits, new policies and current veteran events.

On Thursday, Psychological Services Specialist Shelby Miller gave a presentation on how to deal with anxiety just before release. James, a Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS), presented his topic on Parole Tips. During this class, CPSS James went over what to do and what not to do before and during the parole process. Becky MacDicken, from the PA Department of Banking and Securities, informed the attendees about credit scores, banking and personal finances.

Friday rounded out the week with successful reentrant Matthew Kerr, from Matt’s Mutts University, giving an excellent speech about the Real-World Application of Thinking For A Change. He engaged the attendees, telling of his struggles after being released and how he overcame them.

The week ended with successful reentrant Richard Garland, Assistant Professor of Public Health Practice at the University of Pittsburgh, and reentrant Alexander Lewis from the Pittsburgh area, speaking to the population about their struggles and tribulations and how they succeeded when all odds were against them. Both men stressed that reentry starts as soon as an inmate steps foot into a prison and challenged the population not to waste their time, but to obtain a vocational trade certification and to educate themselves as much as possible before release.

More than 400 inmates took advantage of the week of reentry programming and several staff members also sat in on some of the programs throughout the week.
Comments made by participants on surveys of the week’s programming included:

- “I was very impressed.”;
- “All of these programs and speakers will benefit all inmates for reentry. I hope you keep this going and recommend it to other prisons to do the same.”;
- “Speaker for Pathways was great as well as all the speakers I heard.”;
- “Liked the veteran’s information and the credit report information.”

Becky MacDicken

Assistant Professor Richard Garland

Reentrant Alexander Lewis

Reentrant Matthew Kerr
Quehanna Boot Camp Reentry Week Events

Quehanna Boot Camp has been working hard to provide reentry preparation to both Boot Camp and State Intermediate Punishment (SIP) inmates.

During Reentry Week in April, reentrant speaker Mark Bunge spoke to Gold Phase Boot Camp, Senior Red Phase Boot Camp and SIP inmates within one month of release; Kathy Snavely of Harrisburg Area Community College and Lighthouse Consulting gave a presentation on “Starting a Small Business” to Gold Phase Boot Camp inmates; Reentry Specialist Michelle Dunn arranged for QUE staff to conduct mock interviews to help prepare inmates for real-world interviews; and a female SIP reassessment spoke with Gold Phase female Boot Camp inmates about challenges they may face upon release.

Reentry Specialist Dunn has done a commendable job with providing an array of speakers and events to help prepare our population for successful reintegration into society.

Library Assistant Kim Ralph helps an inmate with reentry research using supervised internet access.
Collaborative Effort Brings Irish Theatre Company to SCI Muncy to Perform “Mind Games.”

On April 14, Spanner in the Works Theatre Company gave two intense and compelling performances of “Mind Games” at SCI Muncy in the chapel. The performances were made possible due to a collaboration between the PA Attorney General’s Office, Every Great Reason Foundation, Spanner in the Works Theatre Company and SCI Muncy Staff (especially Superintendent Wendy Nicholas and Corrections Counselor 2 Teri Woodling).

This critically acclaimed play, designed to help individuals understand the dynamics involved in unhealthy relationships, was followed both in the morning and afternoon with lively and informative discussions led by Gary Gregory of Every Great Reason. Gregory, Executive Deputy Attorney General Robert Reed and Reentry Coordinator Charla Plaines spoke in the afternoon following the performance and discussion. Everyone stressed the importance of each of us doing our part to reduce (if not end) relationship violence and abuse.

Woodling invited Psychological Services Associate Sara Jarosievicz, Chaplain John Caudle, CCII Rhonda Hummel and CCS David Deibler-Gorman to attend to provide additional staff support and guidance for those attendees who were especially impacted by such powerful performances. Additional staff from Every Great Reason Foundation (Kim Wilson) and the Attorney General’s Office (Emily Shope and Julie Price) ate lunch with the actors, took a brief tour of the unit in which the SCI Muncy’s House of Hope inpatient trauma treatment program resides (led by CCII Woodling) and saw the critically acclaimed play.

SCI Muncy central kitchen staff, under the direction of Supervisor Jason Shaffer, and inmates provided the food.

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Forest Names EOM

SCI Forest officials have named Corrections Officer 2 W. Harriger as the prison’s Employee of the Month for May 2018.

In a letter to Sergeant Harriger, Superintendent Michael Overmyer said:

“You were nominated by your peers as being a model of professionalism in Corrections. On April 14, 2018, you performed the Heimlich maneuver on an inmate as he was choking and had become unresponsive. After completing this heroic task, you proceeded to assist with two inmates that were fighting. You are an outstanding officer by leading, training and teaching all those around you. You are a long-time member of CERT and FERT.”

~ ~ ~ ~

**E-MAILS!**

Former Inmate Contacts the DOC

“I am a former inmate of Cambridge Springs and I just wanted to give you an update on my improvement since my release. I am almost home three years and am doing great.

I am watching my grandchildren during the day, and I just got a job at Great Clips working three nights a week and every Saturday.
Ms. M in cosmetology gave me the confidence I have today. I give her so much credit for my success today.

I think of her often and how she taught me to believe in myself. She taught me to take one day at a time. That even helped me during my mother's death, to take one day at a time.

One last thing, she even taught me how to conserve, she would put bottles upside down to save every last drop, and today I find myself putting all of my containers upside to save every drop. Funny!

I hated prison and being away from my family, but I believe it helped save me.”

-Lisa

EDITOR’S NOTE: Congratulations, Lisa! Thank you for the kind email. We wish you continued success!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Thank you!

“I was recently at UPMC Altoona as a patient. I was admitted on April 30th around 5 AM and in very active labor. Because of how early it was, there was no valet service available, so my husband had to walk me into the lobby to wait until he parked our car. At that point, I was in tears and standing in the hospital lobby alone.

It was at this moment that a corrections officer approached me to see if I was okay! I never caught his name, but I did manage to see that his uniform had a tag that said SCI Houtzdale. He was the nicest man and an absolute God Send! He checked on me and once he realized I was in labor, he waited with me in the lobby until my husband got back. He was very reassuring and so very sweet to wait there with me. My husband and I are grateful for that few minutes that he took to stay with me and offer his assistance when we certainly needed it!

I feel terrible that I did not catch his name. I hope that with the information I provided about the times that I was there that morning, you are able to somehow locate this gentleman and offer him our thanks.”

-Mandy

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I Made It, Thanks to You!

“Unfortunately, I was incarcerated briefly at your facility in June and July of 2012. I was an out-of-state POV, so I was being held for Florida. I was housed in the medical block for legal reasons until they came and got me. I was hopelessly addicted to heroin and other drugs when I came in and being held for extradition is a lonely time. I’ve since done all my time gotten clean gotten off probation, started a family with two children, bought a house and have my own company.

I owe part of what I have to a CO who was working the medical wing at that time who was as much a friend to me as her job allowed her to be. Simply by talking to me which I didn’t have before I came in. She helped me through a hard time, and without her I know I would have lost my mind alone with my thoughts. More importantly she helped me realize a lot about who I wanted to be and how and where to start. She treated me with more respect than any other person had had for years up until that point. She spoke to me like a human at a time when I didn’t feel like one, and felt like giving up because I wasn’t worth it.

I don’t remember her name at all and it’s killing me because I want her to know she had one of the biggest parts and me getting where I am today. She’s heavier set and was working in the medical block 3 or 4 days a week during June and July of 2012. If whoever reads this could get this message to her that I say Thank you, and let her know I’m alive and ended up making it where I am now and I’m 4 years clean, it would mean the world to me.

I just want her and other COs to know that when they help those of us who seem worth it some of us turn out alright.”

-Doug

EDITOR’S NOTE: We shared this email with the appropriate facility.

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LETTERS!

Thankful for Laurel Highlands Programs

“My experience with the Transitional Housing Unit (THU) program has truly helped me become more responsible in many different areas of my life. Mr. Hartman has been the greatest instructor I have met during my incarceration. Knowing him along with the other instructors has been a
blessing. Some of the smallest words or thoughts have opened my mind to
different options in life.

When I first started, my mind was focused on getting out. After taking
Staying on Track, I realized that I had to set some realistic values that not only would get me out, but also help me to stay out. In the Relationships
class, I learned that I have to know myself before I can help anyone else.
After that piece of gold information which I already should have known, I
became a transformed person. Selfish in a Selfless way!

Another group I took which helped me in another way majorly was the
Budget Seminar. In this group I realized how important it really is to put
needs and savings ahead of my wants. It also helped me to realize that I
need to take time to think about what could happen in the future. Along with
Budgeting, the Insurance Seminar opened my eyes to some information I
would have never know had it not been for this seminar. This little piece of
information about term life insurance being better than whole life insurance
has helped me think more about life insurance.

One of the biggest transformations that took place was feeling responsible to
clean the group room. I had asked for a volunteer duty and that was the
duty given to me from Mr. Hartman. Throughout the time, I was able to help
three other men have volunteer hours and something to do. Overall, it
helped boost my confidence within myself.

To conclude, I would like to say that this THU program at SCI Laurel
Highlands has helped me to become a better person who is now determined
to succeed in everything I do. I have learned to set S.M.A.R.T. goals in
almost everything I do. Along with these few listed programs, there were
many more that coincided together to mold me into the man I am today.

Thank you and God bless you.”

-Edward

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Another Person Thankful for the THU

“I hope this letter finds everyone in the THU working hard and taking
advantage of all the opportunities presented to you. Remember, not
everyone is given a chance to better themselves through these programs.
Also keep in mind that not all of the programs will have a place in your
future. I recommend you take them also. You never know what insight you
may acquire from them. It was the classes I least expected to gain
knowledge from that have served me best. It is all about bettering yourself
and aiding your reentry to society. The more tools you take with you the
easier it will become for you.
Bobby, GOD BLESS YOU! Without you where would the THU be. I appreciate all of your help and guidance you have provided me. Take care of yourself and a big THANK YOU.

I would like to take minute to let everyone know what I have encountered after my release. I still to this day look over the papers (I chose to retain) from the THU programs. Yes, I kept these papers, yet disposed of most other things that had little to no usefulness in the life of someone looking to better themselves. Don’t live your lives in the past. Start anew. Use what you have learned there. If you put in the extra effort while there, your future will be much better. This is truly how I feel and what I have encountered in today’s society. Whether it is now I interact with others of a different mindset, how to speak more intelligently and without angst, how to plan things out, making lists that won’t overwhelm myself to finding work, etc. All of the programs have provided me something, even the ones I didn’t think would have. Keep you minds open, challenged, and busy making what you learn their part of your normal every day routine. Believe me, people will notice. When they notice, they will be there in aiding you when you least expect it. It is always easier to help someone who is doing the right thing and trying to help themselves. No one wants to help another who isn’t trying to help themselves. Is wish all of you the best and an early release.”

-Walter

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Community Corrections: 50 Years of Change, Giving Back
By Daniel D. McIntyre, Director, Bureau of Community Corrections

Community Corrections. The name doesn’t reflect the true work that occurs within this bureau that falls under the umbrella of the Department of Corrections. As the director of the Bureau of Community Corrections for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I have learned that we do so much more than just provide housing for those coming out of our state correctional institutions.

In today’s fast paced society, everyone must adapt and remain relevant in their particular areas. Community corrections is no exception. DOC Secretary John Wetzel has been clear that our reentrants need to return to the community better off than when we first received them. Those improvements don’t stop when released from the institution. The staff at community corrections centers takes his words to heart when working with this population.

The Bureau of Community Corrections began 50 years ago this year and managed pre-released individuals that were identified as doing well while incarcerated. They were still considered inmates, but were approved to live and work within the community. Pre-release was eliminated in 2013, as community corrections continues to be transformed.

Community Corrections provides housing for those that the Parole Board has deemed appropriate to return to the community and do not have a home plan. In addition, we also provide specialized services to many of those reentrants that need
additional support. Assistance with obtaining identification, connecting with medical, employment and housing, are a few of the services we provide. The Department of Corrections has identified and implemented nearly a dozen programs to support reentrants. They are:

- Day Reporting
- Housing Assistance
- Workforce Development
- Family Reunification
- Batterers’ Intervention
- State Intermediate Punishment
- Outpatient (AOD)
- Mental Health Treatment
- Sex Offender Treatment
- Mentoring
- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention

Each of these services assist with the successful return of reentrants into our communities. We have a long history of working with community partners and stakeholders in order to meet the needs of these individuals.

Last week I had the opportunity to meet with an individual that had been incarcerated for 40+ years and was recently paroled. The positive impact that the community corrections center had on him was evident. Having spent a short time in a center prior to returning home, the temptations on the outside were causing him to slip back into his old ways. He willingly returned to the center in order to have increased accountability, support services and additional structure.

His success has enabled him to become a mentor to others. This is a testimony to the combined efforts of many -- facility staff, counselors, monitors, social workers, directors, security personnel, parole agents and stakeholders in the community. All of these individuals serve a vital role in the rehabilitation of these reentrants.

The gentlemen offered up these words, "Without the staff here and the support I have received, I would possibly have fallen back into hard times and landed back in prison, but their support and willingness to take me back has enabled me to get back on my feet and I am once again looking forward to what the future has to offer."

The Department of Corrections has a dozen state-operated community corrections centers across Pennsylvania, but we also work with private contractors to provide specialized and group home housing. There are facilities that focus on the needs of individuals with mental health concerns, drug and alcohol issues, dual diagnoses as well as those reentrants that are considered hard to place. We provide booster programs to address anger management and address the criminogenic needs of this population.

Community corrections transitioned approximately 15,000 admissions through its doors in 2016 and another 12,000 in admissions in 2017.

What generally goes unrecognized is that the reentrants are already giving back on a regular basis to their communities; collectively performing tens of thousands of hours of community service yearly. Whether it be mandated hours or volunteer opportunities such as assisting churches with setting up chairs, cleaning up parks and preparing ball fields for spring-time activities are just a few community service examples.
Our Wernersville center has performed community service for municipalities and non-profit organizations within a 10-mile radius. West Reading Public Works Official Dean Murray took Wernersville up on their offer and responded to their efforts by stating:

“West Reading truly appreciates the assistance of Joe Hofer and his group of reentrants from Wernersville CCC for cleaning up our entry way to the Borough... The 200 block of Penn Avenue looks 1000 times better already. We want to thank you for your company and your assistance provided.”

BIG Vision Foundation, whose mission is to “develop today’s youth into tomorrow’s leaders through sports and community service,” recently thanked our Wernersville volunteers by saying,

“We at BIG Vision Foundation would like to take a moment to thank you for your recent support of assisting us at our sports complex in Leesport... All of us here at BIG Vision Foundation appreciate you and the men that were deployed to help us and we will speak highly of your program.”

A local pastor, after assisting him with set-up said,

"On behalf of the entire parish family of Saint Francis de Sales, I want to offer my many thanks and much appreciation to the 18 men and the supervisors who helped to unload, move and set up the 240 brand new chairs and kneelers for our worship space. Watching these men at work gives proof, once again, how God always provides THE BEST! God's choicest blessings be upon them for their time and service to the community”.

There are testimonies like these from all over the Commonwealth, from Pittsburgh to Scranton, Erie to Philadelphia and multiple locations in between.

The Bureau of Community Corrections, is maybe more fittingly titled the Bureau of Community Support and Reentry Services. Regardless, these centers have had an amazing impact by donating toys and crafts made by our reentrants across Pennsylvania to kids in local hospitals. These men and women have done everything from cleaning up streets and parks to even hosting an Easter egg hunt for kids that needed a well-kept large yard to experience the joy of the season. They have collected food donations for local charities as well as donations for animal shelters. Community corrections is vested in our communities.

“Community” is a vital part of our title, our 50-year history and our foundation.
The Bureau of Community Corrections wishes to be as supportive to the residents in our centers as well as those that live in the surrounding community. The individuals that reside in these centers have made mistakes, but many of them have become positive assets in their communities and continue to redefine their futures. It serves us all well to recognize the positive things that the reentrants within community corrections centers are doing within our communities and give them the support and second chances that they, as we all, deserve.

In The Centers…

**Preparing Inmates for Release from Prison**

Johnstown Community Corrections Center participated in a reentry week question-and-answer session at SCI Pine Grove on April 18.

Community Corrections Counselor 2 Dan Hornbake attended and assisted in fielding questions on preparation for reentry and what documents, identification and paperwork is needed prior to leaving the SCI to increase success into reentering society.

Inmates asked numerous questions about services available at community corrections centers, job opportunities, expectations, how to prepare, the Parole Board’s role, home plans, wrap-around services, house expectations and center rules. Overall, this was a very positive event to assist with inmates.

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Phila. CCC #2 Donates to Local Agency

In honor of Crime Victims’ Rights Week, Philadelphia CCC #2 reentrants collected items for children to be sent to Women in Transition (WIT) on Arch St. in Philadelphia.

WIT is an organization that helps women transitioning through divorce or other life situations after being abused within their relationships. The items are for the women’s children.

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Scranton CCC Donates to Local Charity

For April 2018 Donation Drive, Scranton CCC donated $1,500 worth of toiletries to the Women’s Resource Center located in Scranton, Pa.

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Dede Morgan and Zouhaier Jaouadi, officials for the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia, were visiting the Mock Prison Riots in Moundsville, West Virginia, when they decided they also would like to visit several Pittsburgh area probation, parole and community corrections locations.

On May 3, they met with officials from Community Corrections, PBPP and GEO Reentry Services to discuss the state parole system, diversionary programs and community corrections. A tour was given of Renewal treatment center.

PBPP worked in collaboration with Allegheny County’s Criminal Justice Advisory Board to provide information on the county court system, pre-trial diversionary programs and county probation.

The country of Tunisia is currently piloting a probation model. Currently there is no probation or parole system in Tunisia.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Deirdre Morgan, US Embassy, Tunis; Hearing Examiner Timothy Douglass; Western Regional Parole Director Jay Williams; Zouhaier Jaouadi, US Embassy, Tunis; BCC Western Regional Director Morris Richardson; Pittsburgh District Director Brian Helfrich; Contract Facility Coordinator Danielle Steele; Captain Robert Roche; Deputy Secretary of Field Services Christian Stephens.

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Week of April 30...

**CareerLink Staff Tours Mahanoy**

SCI Mahanoy provided a tour to staff from the Harrisburg CareerLink on April 24. Dorenda Hamarlund, DOC Career Pathways program manager, works closely with the Harrisburg CareerLink. During a monthly meeting, she asked CareerLink what industry in Harrisburg is most employers requesting. Hillary Lytle, customer service representative, responded that Harrisburg has a high demand for people with warehousing skills. That led to a tour of SCI Mahanoy’s vocational classrooms and Pennsylvania Correctional Industries commissary.

Accompanying Lytle was Matt Ross, Business Service Representative for WIOA/CareerLink. Both Lytle and Ross were astonished at the vocational curriculum offered to inmates. They primarily came to see the warehousing operation; however, Principal Chester Beggs provided a thorough tour of the education department. Throughout the tour, Lytle and Ross commented on how this tour will assist them in speaking with employers in Harrisburg. They can now speak first hand on the training inmates receive and how an employer can benefit by hiring a reentrant.

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Pictured, left to right: Dorenda Hamarlund, Chester Beggs, Hillary Lytle and Matt Ross.
Media Tours

Over the past few months DOC prisons have given tours to interested reporters. One recent tour of SCI Smithfield left such an impression with Huntingdon Daily News reporter Kayla Handy that she told prison officials she will write a series of articles with each building visited having its own piece. A general overview article ran on May 2, and one article will be featured on the front page each Saturday for the next four or five weeks.

During their visit of the prison’s Special Needs Unit, reporters were able to see the various murals that have been painted on the walls.

In an email to the prison’s public information officer, Lisa Hollibaugh, Handy said, “I had a grand time and am so very honored to be given a chance to see all that you do! ... I truly am inspired by the work and dedication Smithfield's staff has towards reducing recidivism and an inmate’s reentry into society.”

Kudos to SCI Smithfield staff!

SCI Smithfield’s dog training program was highlighted on the tour, and these puppies were stars of the day.
CSA Training Held at Academy

DOC corrections superintendent assistants (CSAs) gathered May 2 and 3, for a training session at the Training Academy.

The CSAs perform a variety of duties at their facilities, which include but are not limited to:

- public information officer
- grievance coordinator
- policy coordinator
- litigation coordinator
- release of information officer
- videoconference coordinator
- accreditation coordinator
- facility tour guide

The CSAs are brought in for training at least annually so the various Central Office staff who work with them can keep them informed of changes in their respective areas. This helps to ensure the CSAs performing their duties in their usual excellent manner.
New Superintendent Named to Lead at SCI Muncy

Corrections Secretary John Wetzel announced the appointment of Wendy K. Nicholas as superintendent at the State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Muncy.

“Wendy Nicholas has an extensive corrections career,” Wetzel said. “In her 20 years with the department, she has advanced through a variety of management positions which has gained her the knowledge and experience necessary to become an exceptional administrator and corrections expert.”

Nicholas started her corrections career in 1998 as a corrections counselor at SCI Mahanoy and transferred to SCI Muncy in September 2000. She then promoted through the ranks at Muncy, holding the positions of acting unit manager, corrections counselor supervisor/parenting director, corrections classification program manager, deputy superintendent for centralized services and most recently held the position of deputy superintendent for facilities management at SCI Muncy.

As superintendent of SCI Muncy, Nicholas is responsible for almost 600 employees and approximately 1,400 inmates. Muncy has many specialized units along with the department’s female diagnostic and classification center.

Joining Nicholas as part of the new management team at SCI Muncy is William Frantz, deputy superintendent for facility management. Frantz recently served as deputy superintendent for centralized services.

Also joining the team is Nicole McKee, who was promoted to deputy superintendent for centralized services. McKee previously held the position of corrections classification program manager.

In addition, Michael Rowe has been named major of the guard at the facility.
Ferguson Named Superintendent of Graterford

In April, Tammy Ferguson was named superintendent of SCI Graterford.

“Tammy uses a no nonsense style of leadership, and I expect that her leadership style will be valuable as we prepare to transition staff and inmates to the new prison, SCI Phoenix,” said Secretary Wetzel.

Ferguson began her career at SCI Smithfield in 1995 as a corrections officer. She moved progressively up the ranks. In April 2003, she earned sergeant stripes. Remaining at SCI Smithfield, Ferguson was promoted to lieutenant in 2005 and three years later she was named captain.

In May 2009, Ferguson transitioned to Central Office as a central region inspection captain. She remained at Central Office and was promoted to chief of security.

Transitioning to SCI Rockview in 2012, Ferguson was named deputy of centralized services. When SCI Benner Township opened, she moved to the neighboring facility in the same capacity. She was named superintendent of SCI Benner Township in October 2014.

Ferguson has served in the United States Air Force and Pennsylvania Air National Guard.
Western Region Parole Manager Matthew Sheaffer reports that the Altoona District Office hosted a Penn State Extension program called “Nutrition Links.”

“Nutrition Links” provides research-based nutrition education to help people and families with limited resources enhance their nutrition, increase their physical activity and develop life skills needed for self-sufficiency and better health.

Classes include hands-on activities and cooking demonstrations to reinforce the learning process.

While the class started with six reentrants, the two that finished the program are reported as having loved it.

Dottie Elder facilitated the program, and she did a great job!
Recruiting for Licensed Psychologist Managers

Recently, representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections’ Central Office Psychology Office and Public Safety Human Resources Delivery Center attended the Pennsylvania Psychological Association’s Spring 2018 Continuing Education and Ethics Conference at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh.

The goal of this visit was to extend the agency’s recruitment platform for licensed psychologist managers and to inform licensed psychologists about existing licensed psychologist manager vacancies within the Department of Corrections.

Additionally, and most importantly, the Department of Corrections’ representatives also discussed the agency’s pursuit of creative employment solutions for licensed psychologist managers through an existing private staffing contract. This groundbreaking solution is a new approach for the Department of Corrections in recruiting and hiring licensed psychologist managers and will afford enhanced employment options and flexibility to potential licensed psychologist manager candidates, in the form of part-time employment and multi-site coverage, based on institutional and clinical need, rather than the arbitrary deployment of these valuable resources.

Representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections’ Central Office Psychology Office and Public Safety Human Resources Delivery Center also will attend the Pennsylvania Psychological Association’s Annual Convention on June 13 – 16, at the DoubleTree Valley Forge Hotel in King of Prussia, Pa.

Pictured, from left to right, are acting director of the Psychology Office, Dr. Lucas Malishchak; Regional Licensed Psychologist Manager Dr. Ken Cairns; and Human Resource Analyst and Recruiter Paulette Smartschan.”
Cambridge Springs Hosts C.O.V.E.R. Event

SCI Cambridge Springs held a C.O.V.E.R. event at the National Armory in Cambridge Springs on April 18. The C.O.V.E.R. team raised funds to host over 130 employees and their families for a full day of training. Employees from SCIs Mercer, Albion, Forest, Dallas and Somerset also were in attendance.

The event featured speaker Earl Granville, a nine-year veteran of the Pennsylvania National Guard. Earl is a Combat Wounded Leg Amputee and an Adaptive Athlete who also brings awareness to the public about mental health issues after losing his twin brother to suicide while still on active duty.

Sergeant Major Bittenbender who is in his 34th year with the United States Army was also on hand to speak. He is currently employed in his 29th year with the U.S. Department of Justice in Allenwood, Pa. Major Bittenbender is the mentor for the Bureau Battle Buddy Program which is where C.O.V.E.R. got its root base.

Venus Azevedo-Laboda, founder of Boots on Ground, spoke about PTSD and suicide prevention at the event. Boots on Ground is an organization based in Erie County which provides suicide prevention and mental health issue awareness among both active and retired Veterans.
Natasha Amaral, SCI Dallas corrections counselor and U.S. Marine Corps veteran, who is the founder of the C.O.V.E.R. program, spoke about the vision of the program. Aramal and her husband, Kevin, were on hand for support and to share Natasha’s story of how the C.O.V.E.R. concept came to light.

The event was a great opportunity to get the message out to DOC employees and their families and to support the concept that it is okay to admit that you are not okay and to realize that in the end we are one giant family that needs to watch out for one another.

Special thanks go out to SCI Cambridge Springs C.O.V.E.R. committee members: Kevin Ace, Joe Armeni, Tami Caruso, Laura Chikar, C.J. Cole, Shawn Deal, Renee Dempsey, Sheila Doddo, Mike Feick, Stacy Frazier, Brian Fullem, Alicia Groover, Jessica Hotchkiss, Jodi Kenny, Casey Lang, Sara Molzan, Lonnie Oliver, Kelly Pesta, Jamie Schneider, Brea Simmons, Amy Skunda, Paul Smith, Shannon Willey.

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Benner Township’s C.O.V.E.R. Group is Up and Running!

By Billie Rupert, C.O.V.E.R. Group Leader

SCI Benner Township’s C.O.V.E.R. group is up and running! With a slow start at the initial forming, we are moving forward and looking forward to becoming a familiar Benner Township entity.

We would be remiss if we did not thank the State C.O.V.E.R. team for lending a hand and support during a recent staff suicide. Members made themselves available and were a presence within the facility, stopping to speak with staff as well as honoring our fallen Benner Township family member.

Sub-committees have been formed and are moving forward with several short and long-term initiatives to benefit our corrections family, as well as their own.

Sub-committees formed are: Fundraisers and Events, Resources (Communities both inside and out) and Recruiting and Training (Identify and Engage Staff).

With our first fundraiser, a Philadelphia Pretzel sale completed, we are in the midst of our second which is a 50/50 – because really, who can’t use some extra cash?!

One initiative is to introduce our committee as part of our new staff orientation. C.O.V.E.R. is also looking to hold a future event with staff and family members, as well as participate in some local community activities in the upcoming months.

Benner Township’s maintenance paint crew did an amazing job painting our logo on our entrance into the facility, and we look to be having our individual pictures with our names, work areas and extensions placed near the logo, so staff can readily identify our members.

Lots of discussions are going on as to what our vision is, and members are working to finish our mission statement.

We are so excited to be getting our group out there and letting others know that they do not have to do life by themselves – this is a difficult job and others are there to lean on.

Pictured, left to right, are: D. Myers, J. Rossman, B. Rupert, J. Habovick, M. Urbanick and J. Eaton.

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Chaplains Tour Eastern State Penitentiary

Twenty-three facility chaplaincy program directors (FCPDs) toured Eastern State Penitentiary April 25, to experience and grapple with correctional philosophies past and present. The tour was arranged through Sean Kelley, senior VP of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. Chaplains spent a significant time touring the Albert W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue built on the grounds at Eastern in 1924 as well as the chaplains’ office spaces.

While touring the synagogue, chaplains learned that although there were never more than 80 Jewish inmates at any one time, these prisoners were consistently looked after by volunteers from the outside Jewish community. Records show that as early as 1845, Jewish inmates were visited by local rabbis who provided them with counsel and religious reading material. During the 1920s, after the abolition of solitary confinement, the synagogue was created so that Jewish inmates could congregate and observe the Sabbath and various holidays.

FCPDs also toured offices which were originally built in the 1880s as Warden Michael Cassidy’s office. After his death, it was reconfigured to house the prison chaplains. The two-roomed Catholic Chaplain’s Office contains 23 murals painted by a single inmate, Lester Smith. He painted these murals in 1955 and used the signature “Paul Martin” to honor his two favorite saints, St. Martin DePorres and St. Paul.

Chaplains touring Eastern learned that when Father Edwin Gallagher, the penitentiary’s Catholic Chaplain (1952-1958) witnessed Smith painting in his cell, he invited the inmate to decorate the offices where he met with and counseled inmates. Smith painted nearly every day of his seven-month incarceration and left behind beautiful and moving images to inspire others. Most striking and personal is the mural of the kneeling prisoner seeking absolution through his confession.

The tour left lasting impressions in the hearts, minds and souls of the visiting chaplains. Some of their initial reflections are noted below:

“I realized the importance of understanding where we came from in corrections and where we are now.” -- Anonymous FCPD

“(Visiting Eastern was) an outstanding experience to understand corrections in the United States. (Our tour was) informative and our tour guide had a wealth of knowledge and understood the roles we play as chaplains in the 21st Century.” -- Rev. Stacy Shaffer (FRS)

“(To those who preserve history at Eastern) What an eye-opening experience! Thank you for finding the time, resources and energy to keep the past alive.” -- Rev. Sylvia Morris (SMI)
“It was a beautiful experience. It amazed me what people 200 years ago thought of doing for those whom everyone (else) turned their back.” -- Imam Basri Dursun (BEN)

“Very thought-provoking seeing how (corrections) was done in the past, how we do it now, and where we go from here as we reflect on our history and experiences.” -- Rev. David Klink (LAU)
OWDS Training Conducted

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole joined together to offer the first of two Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) trainings this year. The first training was held in Western Pennsylvania this spring, and the second will be held in Eastern Pennsylvania this fall.

OWDS is an intensive, 160-hour training that prepares individuals to assist the reentrant population in finding and maintaining employment. Thanks to in-kind support and grant funds, this training is available free of charge; however, sponsoring agencies are expected to cover travel costs.

The first 40 hours of onsite training was held April 9-13, at the Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood, Pa. Co-leads Janeen Christ, Western Region Reentry Administrator (DOC); and Matt Sheaffer, Parole Manager (PBPP); provided the first week of training to 22 individuals from Corrections, Parole, County Prisons, BCC, Labor & Industry and a variety of community-based organizations. The second 40 hours of onsite training will be held in June at the same location.
We would like to thank the following instructors who volunteered to provide training on various subjects during the first week:

- Penny Sines (PBPP)
- Robert LaBenne (PBPP)
- Traci Jacobson (DOC)
- Larry Powell (PBPP)
- Robert Hodapp (OVR)
- Stephanie Ackley (DOC)
- Michael Corson (PBPP)
- Rich Podguski (PBPP)

DOC employees interested in attending the upcoming Fall 2018 training in Eastern Pennsylvania, should contact Dorenda Hamarlund at dhamarlund@pa.gov for an application.

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**Race Against Racism 2018**

In support of diversity, the Department of Corrections and Probation and Parole supported the 2018 Race against Racism, in Harrisburg, Pa., on Saturday, April 28.

The DOC Statewide Recruiters set up an exhibitor booth with information regarding how to apply for employment with the DOC and PBPP.

Five Central Office employees were able to walk or run the race on Saturday.

Congratulations to Tiffany Epoca for winning 1st Place in her age group!

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Crime Victims’ Rights Week Donations

In observance of Crime Victims’ Rights Week, SCI Fayette officials collected donations of small stuffed animals, travel size board games, notebooks and journals. These items are being sent to the Washington Women's Shelter, which covers Washington, Greene and Fayette Counties. This project was spearheaded by Corrections Counselor 2 Gina Perry.

Inmates Donate to Shriners Hospitals for Children

The SCI Fayette Activities Department recently held a Candy Sale for the inmate population with the proceeds being donated to a charity. More than $2,000 was raised and will be donated to the Shriners Hospitals for Children.
Inmates Complete Unique Ministry

On April 30, SCI Graterford hosted the Education for Ministry Graduation, graduating three inmates from the program.

Education for Ministry (EfM) is a distance-learning program for adult Christian formation through theological education and reflection offered by the Beecken Center of the School of Theology at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

The group at Graterford is unique, in that they are the only group in the world (this is an international program) from a maximum-security prison.

The three men who graduated completed four years of training, and three additional men were recognized as mentors after having received that required training.

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Frackville’s CWP Picks Up Trash

On April 26, SCI Frackville’s Community Work Program (CWP) inmates were out and about collecting trash along route 209 between Brockton and Tamaqua.

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Community Work Program BEFORE and After!

SCI Benner Township’s Community Work Program inmates recently revamped Mill Hall Borough Council’s office. Nice work!

And Letter of Thanks...
Tree Tenders’ Training Program to be Held at Huntingdon

A Tree Tenders’ training program will be held at SCI Huntingdon on June 7. It will be open to all inmates in the prison’s outside housing units, but is mandatory for inmates on the prison’s nursery detail and Community Work Program (CWP) crews.

This training was developed by the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Penn State Extension. More than 5,000 Pennsylvania citizens have already received this eight-hour training.

Inmates will be taught the basics of tree care, including the benefits of trees, the biology of how trees work, how to care for trees and stresses on trees. The presentations are offered by professionals from Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Penn State University, Penn State Extension and the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society.

Tree Tenders’ training is for a variety of people, whether they simply want to learn more about properly caring for trees, educating others on the importance of trees, or career paths in urban forestry.

SCI Huntingdon staff hope to empower those interested in urban forestry career paths as well as to mobilize CWP-trained Tree Tenders into nearby communities to assist with care for their young trees. Many communities lack the resources and/or knowledge to adequately care for public street and park trees. Each participant will receive a certificate of completion.

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Hero Highlight

By Derek Oberlander, SCI Forest Acting Superintendent

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and commend the actions of several of our staff who showed outstanding character and courage by coming to the aid of two people who had just been involved in a motorcycle accident.

On April 23, at approximately 2:40 p.m., several of our employees were traveling home from the facility on Route 899 and came across the scene of a two-person motorcycle accident that had just happened. Our employees did not hesitate to render assistance.

They observed a man laying across the center yellow line of the roadway bleeding heavily from the head and a woman standing over him who had also suffered significant injuries in the accident.

Our staff was able to get the man and woman to the shoulder of the road and render aid. They also called 911, updated them on the condition of the accident victims and established traffic control to direct people around the accident.

These employees performed these deeds without concern for their own safety as other vehicles continued to pass through the accident scene while our staff
continued assisting these individuals. They assisted PSP and remained on the scene until they were cleared.

So, thank you and job well done to Lt. Dickey, CO1 Glenn, CO1 Hetrick and CO1 Anderson and any other staff who stopped and showed their devotion to service and the protection of our community. This is the character of Forest. Our staff always comes to the aid of those in need. It is an honor and privilege to serve with each of you. Thank you all for what you do and for who you are!

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**SCI Coal Township Medical Department Recognized**

PSCOA representatives, Corrections Officers Munson and Swartzlander, presented Corrections Health Care Administrator Karen Merritt with the **2017 Corrections USA (CUSA) Lifesaving Award** at the recent PSCOA Labor Management meeting held at SCI Coal Township.

The CUSA award was presented to SCI Coal Township’s Medical Department staff for their determination and success in saving Corrections Officer Hernandez’s life in August 2017. The Medical Department was previously recognized by Governor Wolf and Secretary Wetzel in November 2017.

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Students Tour SCI Fayette

On Friday April 27, three University of Pittsburgh students, along with Professors Chris Bonneau and Gabby Yearwood, toured the facility. The students signed up for the Inside Out Program in the fall and wanted to get a preview before they started class. School Principal Ed Bohna provided them with a tour of the RHU, CI, K Unit, E Unit, Library and the Education Department.

Golf League Gives Kudos

On April 25, the SCI Camp Hill Golf League presented the awards for the 2017 league championship to Corrections Food Services Manager (retired) Mike Enck and Corrections Food Services Damien Heidingsfelder.

The league would like to congratulate Mike and Damien for their efforts last year and wish them luck in the coming season.

This league, which has been around for longer than anyone can seem to recall, is a handicap for-fun league that is not limited to SCI Camp Hill or even DOC employees. Last year they had seven two-person teams.

If anyone is interested in joining the league, they should contact Mike McCutcheon at (717) 975-5255.
Reentry Week/Month Observances

Albion

In April, to recognize National Reentry Month, the following events were held at SCI Albion:

- Reentry staff and social workers toured the Erie Community Corrections Center (CCC) and attended the Erie Bayfront Career Fair.
- Inmates participated in a reentry library scavenger hunt in the library. Prizes were given for the most correct answers to a “reentry quiz.”
- Staff and inmates participated in a presentation for the Social Security Administration conducted by Wendell Patz. This was followed with a presentation by successful reentrant Stephen Durant.
- THU inmates participated in a special Money Smart class specifically for reentry week.
- Staff and Inmates participated in discussion with ASCRA Agent Lopez.
- Reentry staff conducted REAL COLORS for a team building exercise.
- Virtual Tour of Erie CCC for THU inmates and reentry staff
- Matt Kerr of Matt’s Mutts University (successful reentrant) presented to select inmates and staff.
Benner Township

During April, Benner Township officials provided inmates with a variety of speakers and information sessions relative to reentry, such as CareerLink, entrepreneurship, a presentation from Bureau of Community Corrections officials, banking and finance seminar and a reentrant guest speaker.

Camp Hill

As part of national reentry month, Transitional Housing Unit staff created a three-day workshop presentation for inmates with upcoming minimum dates. The purpose of the workshops and presentations was to create or illuminate a familiar face on the subject of reentry.

To accomplish this Larry Washington, THU speaker; Vladimir Beaufils, President/Chair, Sound Community Solutions; and Timothy White Jr, Miracle 4 Sure -- all successful reentrants -- came to the facility and presented their methodology for successful reentry. While their personal stories are unique, these individuals have proven that successful reentry is possible.

Through the presentations and backgrounds of the speakers, the inmates who participated were able to connect with their message of inspiration and hope. Washington, Beaufils and White all have truly “walked a mile in their shoes” and for the inmates, they respect the work these men are doing to make a difference in the lives of offenders.

Individuals say reentry takes a “team approach,” and the Unit Management concept of using corrections and parole staff is making positive change. However, the inclusion of individuals such as Washington, Beaufils and White, as part of the team, only strengthens the reentry initiative.

Coal Township

The Reentry Services Office (RSO) at SCI Coal Township coordinated several events to recognize National Reentry Week from April 22-28, 2018.

During the week the video “Out for Good – What It Takes To Stay Out Of Prison,” by Mike Davis played daily on SCI Coal Township’s movie channel. Also, all inmates were able to participate in an essay-style writing contest with prizes for the top three writers for the prompt: “What Does Reentry into Society Mean to You?”

On Monday and Tuesday, Reentry Coordinator Morgan Tom and Reentry Parole Agent Amy Ramiza facilitated a reentry art workshop for inmates in the RSO. Inmates created collages and posters with
positive reentry related quotes. Inmates also created a poster to be signed by those who pledge to “Get Out To Stay Out” for Friday’s event.

On Wednesday, Corrections Employment Vocational Coordinator Janet Bartholomew hosted staff from CareerLink’s “The Link,” that visits the institution monthly. During this visit, CareerLink officials entered the prison to speak to two larger groups of inmates about interviewing techniques and tips for individuals with a criminal history.

On Thursday, Veterans Administration Representative Edward Sesack visited SCI Coal Township to meet with inmate veterans to answer questions regarding veteran programs and additional options related to reentry.

On Friday, RSO participants were invited to the chapel to enjoy artwork created earlier in the week, reentry resources, networking and light refreshments provided by SCI Coal Township’s Food Service Department. During this time, RSO participants also signed the poster pledging to “Get Out To Stay Out.”

Dallas

Highlights from the week included:

- Monday, 4/23: Education Focused
  AM: Solomon Truck Driving School, Technical School and PHEAA
  PM: We conducted mini employment workshop covering resume and interview tips, resources for interview attire, mock interviews

- Tuesday, 4/24: Continuity of Care
  AM: Presenters from different community agencies – Mental Health, Family Reunification, Drug & Alcohol, etc.
  PM: Services offered at SCI Dallas – VSU, RSO, Vivitrol, D&A, Treatment Specialists, Psych Services and the groups they offer

- Wednesday, 4/25: Community Resources
  Veteran Services, PTSD information, Community Peer Specialists

- Thursday, 4/26: Philadelphia Day
  AM: Visits from reentry services from the Philadelphia Area – Impact, Fair Shake, Rise, Mentoring Programs
  PM: Visit from successful reentrant

- Friday, 4/27: Parole
  AM: Q & A session with parole staff
In recognition of Reentry Week, SCI Fayette’s Reentry Services Office (RSO) held its 2018 Spring Reentry Fair on April 30. The fair was attended by 112 inmates during two sessions.

During the morning session, SCI Fayette’s Social Worker Tony Rivera spoke about the RSO program. He included information on how inmates register for the RSO as well as the different workshops that are available through the program.

Next, Elaina Ingalls from MHA Health Insurance Navigators gave a presentation on the process of getting health insurance, the different types of health insurance plans and resources for finding which insurances are offered in different parts of the state.

Lastly, Attorney Kate Bosomworth from the Fair Housing Law Center gave a presentation on renter’s rights, specifically addressing what rights returning citizens have when seeking housing from PHA’s and private landlords.

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session was kicked off by Ted Washington from Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. Washington, a formerly incarcerated individual and now successful citizen himself, spoke about his personal journey and what changes he needed to make to successfully reenter the community. He also spoke about his job as an employment developer with PCSI and the opportunities that are currently available in the job market.

Next, Dr. Holiday Adair and Peggy McGarry from California University of Pennsylvania spoke about how higher education affects both a person’s thought process and income potential, many of the online programs available worldwide through Cal U, and what the admissions process entails.

Finally, Brian Reese from the Fayette County Drug and Alcohol Commission ended the afternoon by speaking about the case management services that are offered to assist with addiction recovery. Reese highlighted Vivitrol, a new and highly successful medication being used to treat opioid and alcohol addiction. Drug and Alcohol Treatment Specialist Matt Brown also spoke to the inmates about how they can participate in the Vivitrol program at SCI Fayette prior to their release.
Graterford

- On April 20, SCI Graterford was visited by representatives from the New Options, More Opportunities (NOMO) Foundation, which is led by Rickey Duncan. NOMO is a mentoring-based organization made of those who have been formerly incarcerated. They focus on successful reentry not only for the returning citizen but to their families through the prison’s Fathers And Children Together (FACT) program. They presented the population with information on employment, dealing with trauma and many other aspects of reentry.

- On April 23, SCI Graterford welcomed Dr. Olugbenga, from Glorious Unfolding and Rashid Salahud-Din from Connection Training Services. They ran a workshop on trauma and covered aspects such as: What is a traumatic event? How do people react after traumatic event? What can I do to help overcome the trauma? How can I deal with flashbacks and nightmares? How can I recognize and overcome avoidance, low mood, anger? Their presentation stressed the importance of following up on mental trauma, seeking appropriate treatment, and how important these aspects are to successful reentry.

- The final event for Reentry Month was held April 27. A Form Fair was held for inmates to assist them in completing forms for birth certificates, social security and non-driver’s license identification.

Greene

- As part of Reentry Month, Reentrant Jamar Williams visited SCI Greene and educated inmates about the expectations once they are released from prison.

  Williams works as a Training-to-Work Case Manager within the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative Re-entry Program. He spent 14 years within the recidivism cycle, beginning at age 14. Upon release from a five-year federal prison sentence, he received formal training to earn an associate’s degree in accounting as well as his Enrolled Agent Licensure from the IRS. While working as an accountant, he began to
see that change was needed in the reentry process. This personal revelation prompted him to reach back into the prison system.

Williams began as a mentor for the Foundation of HOPE. For three years he has regularly motivated newly released reentrants through speaking and facilitating groups at the U.S. Probation Office for the Western District of Pennsylvania. In 2015, he created his own mentoring program called, Living on Purpose. He has helped equip hundreds of men and women in his area through co-facilitating Parenting and Relationship Classes in the Allegheny County Jail.

He has presented on both the national level and state level regarding reentry. One of which is the 4th Annual Vision Reentry Summit entitled “Looking Forward to the Future of Reentry” and the Drexel University 24th Annual Forensic Rights and Treatment Conference entitled “Current & Future Trends: Broadening Our Perspectives in Rehabilitation” respectively.

Williams continues to serve the population in collaboration with others in areas that are deemed critical for successful reentry. Two programs that have been initiated for the population are “Employment Group 101” and “Life Coaching.” He endeavors to be a catalyst towards reducing recidivism through equipping and restoring the lives exiting incarceration. Williams actively seeks opportunities to speak and present to bring about change. He can be contacted for such engagements.

Other reentry related activities during National Reentry Week included presentations about finances and credit ratings, job search resources and a variety of reentry related resources in the community.

- On April 23, SCI Greene welcomed Becky MacDicken, from the PA Department of Banking and Securities. MacDicken held a discussion on credit reports and banking basics followed-up by a question-and-answer session.

Houtzdale

In support of National Reentry Month, the SCI Houtzdale Veteran Services Unit (VSU) and Reentry Services Office (RSO) continued to place a heavy emphasis on the delivery of reentry based services. Through the VSU and RSO collectively, the many workshops, programs
and seminars assist reentrants in gaining an awareness and understanding of supportive services that are available to assist them in making a positive reintegration into the community.

Activities of note included, but are not limited, to:

- On April 4, Kari Heeter from the Dubois Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) held a seminar for VSU and RSO reentrants. OVR assists people with disabilities that present a substantial impediment to their employment.
- On April 5, Holly Chase from the Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Agency (PHFA) conducted a reentry finance workshop called, “Protect Your Potential.” This workshop focused on educating reentrants to identify and manage risks to their financial stability.
- On April 11, Darron Thompson from Impact Services conducted a job readiness workshop for reentrants. The job readiness workshop aims to help reentrants obtain employment as well as identify soft skills necessary to maintain employment.
- On April 12, Keith Fenstemaker from the Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC) met with reentrants on available BCC services designed to aid in the reentry process.
- On April 24, Daniel Hornbake from the Johnstown CCC met with both RSO and VSU participants to provide an overview on services available through his center while also answering questions participants had related to community corrections centers.

Additionally, facility staff facilitated a Computer Basics Workshop for all RSO participants. The workshop is designed to not only educate reentrants on technology but also provide information on the practical use of the equipment and how it can aid in making them more efficient. The facility has also dedicated multiple reentry computers, which assist reentrants in meeting their employment, healthcare and treatment needs.

While many of the challenges the reentrants will face are similar to one another, everyone will have different obstacles in front of them. Each reentrant needs to be as thoroughly equipped as possible to negotiate whatever challenge they may face. It is the goal of the VSU and RSO programs to assist reentrants in managing all aspects of this process specifically in the following four areas: employment, housing, healthcare and treatment.

**Huntingdon**

On May 10, the Education Department at SCI Huntingdon will hold its annual Career Fair in the prison’s outside housing unit. Participants will receive information on job and career possibilities, education
opportunities and housing options available upon their release into their communities.

Planning for no more than 50 participants, mock interviews also will be provided for interested inmates.

In addition, Reentry Services Office staff have started healthy living classes and just completed a section on couponing and budgeting. Each inmate was given pretend $30 and each had to prepare two meals a day for seven days, 14 meals in all, using a weekly flyer from the grocery store.

Inmates will participate in an employment workshop where “surprise job interviews” will be conducted to show inmates that interviews may happen on-the-spot. Staff will stress the inmates’ need to be prepared for an interview at any time.

Laurel Highlands

- On April 18, to acknowledge National Reentry month, SCI Laurel Highlands held a panel presentation in the chapel for the general population inmates entitled “Reentry: Reception to Release and Beyond.”

The reentry process was outlined beginning when one arrives at an institution, as one progresses through the DOC parole consideration staffing, pre-parole, parole hearing, preparation for release, and finally to services available to parolees upon and after reentry.

The panel consisted of Reentry Specialist Rebecca Witt, Reentry Parole Agent Tim Ross, Regional Parole Manager Larry Powell and Assessment, Sanctioning and Community Resource Agents (ASCRA) Michael Corson and Annette Pannebaker.

Other reentry related events included:

- Annual ‘Speak Up’ Competition for THU inmates -- Participants who have completed the public speaking workshop competed, each preparing/delivering a speech - “What Does Your Reentry Mean To You?”
• “Reentry Begins at Reception” Presentation – This is a NO FAIL explanation of what one should know to prepare for reentry; and included a progressive panel presentation from reception to supervision provided by corrections counselor, pre-parole agent, hearing examiner, institutional parole agent and finally an ASCRA from the street.

• Weekly Informative Reentry Programming Presentations -- Presentations were given on all housing units that were delivered by the THU Liaison, THU Program Assistant and staff from the Transitional Housing Unit Team.

• Reentry Veterans’ Resource Informational Packet – the prison’s Veterans Coordinator Mr. Vello distributed reentry resource packet to veterans.

• The Stressors of Reentry and How To Cope – Psychological Services Specialist Mr. Parish delivered a presentation regarding the stress that is related to being released and the overwhelming obstacles of staying out of prison. He was joined by two THU participants who provided personal testimonies of the trials and tribulations of their specific experiences.

• National Reentry Month Art Contest -- Art contest, open to all general population inmates, with prizes being awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Submissions were on display in a common area for both staff and general population to vote.

• “Who Are You?” -- An informational packet detailing the necessary steps to obtain required identification PRIOR to release was distributed during weekly Reentry Presentations on all housing units.

Mercer

For this special week, SCI Mercer staff planned the following events for inmates:

• April 23:
  0900-0930 – Pathways to Success
  0930-1000 – Career Center
  1000-1100 – Technology
  1310-1400 – Community Counseling Center

• April 24:
  0800-0900 – Reentry planning while still incarcerated
  0930-1100 – Parole Information
  1310-1500 – Veteran’s Administration
April 25:
0900-1030 - Mark Weir to present his “Who am I? - The Art of Self-Realization” Workshop.
1030-1100 – Second Chances – TEDx Admiral Jonathan Greenert
1310-1400 – CROMISA
1400-1430 – Fair Housing - Southwestern PA Legal Services

April 26:
0900-930 – Coping with the anxiety just before release
0930-1000 – Greif of losing a loved one or friend while incarcerated
1000-1030 - Parole Tips
1310–1530 - PA Department of Banking and Securities

April 27:
1310-1530 - Richard Garland and Alexander Lewis – Former inmate speakers.

Pine Grove

On April 18, Johnstown Community Corrections Center (CCC) Counselor Daniel Hornbake and DOC Regional Reentry Administrator Janeen Christ spoke to Transitional Housing Unit inmates about the CCC placement process, CCC support and work opportunities, system changes and transitional living.

SCI Pine Grove hosted two workshops in the chapel on April 24. Members of JARI of Cambria County, Sue Babik from Federal Probation and Pam Scoran of Cambria County Probation, spoke about the Transitional Re-entry Advisory Committee (TRAC) program and the ever-increasing opportunities and benefits to reentrants in every county in the state.
Goodwill Industries Members Mindy Rickabaugh and Justin Silvis conducted a separate presentation on the benefits, costs and realities of expungement and what it means in terms of employment opportunities.

**Retreat**

- On April 18, SCI Retreat’s Social Worker Carrie Greene and Parole Supervisor Jack Aversa arranged for the founder of FairShake Reentry Resource Center, Sue Kastensen, to present on the topic of reentry. More than 200 inmates gathered in the gym to listen to the presentation about the tools and resources the FairShake website can provide to help individuals who are being released from prisons, their families and other community stakeholders. Kastensen’s materials are frequently used in SCI Retreat’s reentry preparedness groups and workshops, so to have her present was a great honor and very well received.

- A Career Fair was held for inmates on April 27. During this event inmates could speak with the following:
  - PathStone: Presented by Tony DiMattia and one intern from the University of Scranton
  - RSO Team and Parole: Presented by Penny Sines and Mary Ritsick-Bonawits
  - FairShake: Presented by Carrie Greene and Jack Aversa
  - SPCA: Presented by Joe Stoltz
  - NAMI: Presented by Magen Washilewski
  - CareerLink: Presented by Heather Pekala and Robert Pisko
  - GEO Reentry Services: Presented by Kristen Smith and Stacey Kittrick
  - Wyoming Valley Alcohol & Drug Services: Presented by Cammie Anderson and Jamie Flynn
  - LCCC: Presented by Edward Hennigan and Cindy Malkemes
  - VA Rep Wilkes-Barre: Presented by Jessica Butler
  - Centers of Excellence - Clean Slate Center: Presented by Jim Beach
  - Berks Connections/Pretrial Services: Presented by Kerry Kerschner
Smithfield

On April 25, a career and reentry fair was held at SCI Smithfield. Inmates close to being paroled were invited to attend the event. The goal of the event was to help inmates with resources as they prepared for their return to the community. Information provided included educational opportunities, career opportunities, mental health information, public assistance and healthcare coverage, etc.

Represented at the event, in addition to institutional staff, were Juniata College, Penn Highlands Community College, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, CareerLink, Geo Re-Entry Services, Skills, Mental Health Association, Public Assistance Office and Parole.

Staff and inmates pictured seated at the tables are undergoing mock job interviews to help the inmates with their interviewing skills and techniques. They are offered feedback on how to improve and sell themselves at interviews.

Inmates at the event shared that they were very eager to get out of prison and start a new life on the right foot and succeed for themselves and their families and stated that these fairs and resources will help them step in the right direction.

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In The Centers...

Pittsburgh CCC Participates in Faith Lutheran Church Quilting Day

By Melanie Thomas, Parole Agent

For approximately six years, the Pittsburgh Community Corrections Center (CCC) ladies have helped the Faith Quilters on our Spring Quilting Day at Faith Lutheran Church.

Our quilting groups at Faith Lutheran work on quilts eight months out of the year. In September they are packed and sent to a warehouse in Baltimore, MD, through Lutheran World Relief, where they will be distributed to anywhere in the world. Last year, the ladies helped us work on eight quilts.
Faith Lutheran Church sent a total of 42 quilts, which is the most that we have ever sent. The ladies help us to pin the layers of fabric and backing, knot the quilts and create quilt tops to be sewn later.

These quilts are more than just a blanket; they can be used as a wall in a house, they can be spread on the ground to sell produce at a market and they can be wrapped around a woman to hold her child as she works in the field.

These blankets are made and given with love and care. Quilts are one of the most requested items.

We sent 216 quilts since 2012.

On April 7, 2018, we had six ladies from Pittsburgh CCC attend our Quilting Day. Together, with other members of the congregation and the Faith Quilters, we were able to knot 11 quilts, with a 12th quilt about 75 percent knotted. When the edges of these quilts are bound, that will bring our total number of quilts to 32, bringing us very close to our goal of 43 quilts. Thanks to the ladies, we are closer to reaching our goal and hope to continue working with the ladies for years to come.

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**Pittsburgh CCC Assists Faith Lutheran Church**

By Melanie Thomas, Parole Agent

Since February 2011, the ladies of the Pittsburgh CCC have been helping to serve at my church spaghetti dinners at Faith Lutheran Church in White Oak, Pa.

Over the years, these ladies have helped to set up tables, serve at the dinners and clean up after the dinner. These ladies have become invaluable to us at Faith Lutheran Church.

In October 2010, we remodeled our sanctuary space and started having spaghetti dinners along with member giving. Since then we have paid back about 85% of the $184,000 loan, thanks to regular giving, spaghetti dinners and a few generous donations from our members. We could potentially have the original 20-year loan paid off by the end of 2019.

During this time, we have had a small group of loyal members of Faith Lutheran Church who would volunteer to be servers during the dinner. Over
the years, this number has diminished, due to congregation members’ health and mobility problems. Thanks to the ladies from Pittsburgh CCC, some of these spots have been filled, and we have been able to not only stay on track towards our goal, but to exceed our expectations.

Over the years, the ladies have said they have enjoyed serving at the dinners and meeting members of the community. Some ladies have also said they have enjoyed helping others and reevaluating their life choices and goals.

Some of the members of our congregation have been very welcoming to the ladies over the years and they are all appreciative for the help. It's a lot of work, both behind the scenes and the day of for a spaghetti dinner to be successful. With the ladies’ assistance, we can be confident that our dinners will be successful.

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Pittsburgh CCC Donates to Humane Society

In April, the Pittsburgh Community Corrections Center continued its nearly five-year commitment to the Humane Society of Westmoreland County by donating various items to the shelter. Pittsburgh CCC reentrants donated 32 containers of cat litter, 36 bags of food, canned food, paper towels and laundry detergent. The CCC is a major supporter of the Humane Society of Westmoreland County.

The Humane Society of Westmoreland County is dedicated to meeting the challenge of “rescue.” Each month nearly 400 dogs and 400 cats pass through the doors of the Humane Society of Westmoreland County in need of veterinary care, spay/neuter or rescue and adoption. All of the dogs released to the shelter are spay/neutered, vet checked, vaccinated according to age, tested for Lyme disease and heartworm and treated for all parasites. The dogs are well socialized and exercised while in their care. They are walked three to four times a day and have play time in the one-acre dog park on the shelter property. The shelter cats are free roaming with screened porches to enjoy fresh air and climbing. All cats/kittens are spay/neutered, vet checked, tested for feline leukemia and aids, vaccinated and treated for all parasites. In addition, the Humane Society has low cost “clinic hours” twice per week for the residents of Westmoreland County.
At approximately 6 a.m. on April 30, DOC K9 teams and 40 parole agents, along with parole supervision and community corrections staff, conducted a search of contract facility Kintock Erie.

Every area of the center along with every reentrant housed at the center was searched.

The DOC/PBPP conducts such searches of contract and DOC-operated community corrections centers to ensure the facilities are contraband free.

As a result of this search, 22 packs of suboxone, 2 bags of heroin, 10 bags of K2, a variety of unlabeled medication and drug paraphernalia was recovered.

This was a great team effort, where everyone works to ensure the safety of community corrections centers.
“Juvenile” Lifers Support Group Held

On April 23, Philadelphia Community Corrections Center (CCC) #2 held its monthly Juvenile Lifer Support Group meeting. Held in the center’s conference room, 11 “juvenile” lifers (JLs) and five parole agents attended the meeting.

During the meeting reentrants discussed a range of topics from motivation to be successful and doing what is asked of them by their parole agents to the strength of the support among themselves.

They encouraged each other in areas of need and discussed why some JLs do not come to the support groups. Some released JLs report that they do not attend because they are trying to move forward with their lives and put that portion of their past behind them. The ones that were present report that they enjoy coming, and they requested to have additional information on employment and other opportunities within the community.

The May group meeting will not be held due to Memorial Day. The group will resume meetings on the fourth Monday in June.

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Community Corrections Turns 50 This Year!

Here’s some historical information on Philadelphia Community Corrections Center (CCC) #5:

It opened May 19, 1982, and closed on October 23, 2009.

It was operational for more than 27 years.

The center housed a male population and was located at 1221 Bainbridge Street in South Philadelphia. With the exception of Riverside, Progress and Wernersville CCcs, Philadelphia CCC #5 was one of the “newer” state centers established and the only state center that opened in the 1980s (based on available records).

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On April 25, Governor Tom Wolf applauded and thanked the Senate for unanimous passage of a package of justice reinvestment initiatives, known as JRI 2, introduced by Senator Stewart Greenleaf.

"Passage of JRI 2 legislation will establish solutions to the challenges that incarcerated individuals and those on parole face, ensuring fair, consistent sentencing, probation practices that are evidence-based, and initiatives that expand communications and compensation for crime victims," Gov. Wolf said. "I applaud Senator Greenleaf and the entire Senate for passage of these important pieces of legislation that will help achieve the goals of a vastly improved criminal justice system.

"The commonsense reforms under JRI 2 will help save taxpayers money and ensure that when people have served their time without incident they are able to reenter society in a timely manner so that our taxpayers are not footing the bill for extended prison stays after an individual has served their time.

"JRI 2 will invest more resources in our county probation system to improve outcomes and increase the use of evidence-based best practices so that we can improve supervision and training to help probation officers work with individuals and make sure that we are only requiring those who present a real risk to go back for further supervision.

"JRI 2 will also help improve sentencing guidelines to further reduce recidivism and will update sentencing guidelines to make sure that we are doing all we can to emphasize risk reduction and help make sure that people are only serving time in accordance with their violation – rather than ordering longer sentences for smaller violations."

The JRI2 package of bills include:

**SB 1071**: Provides for release of ‘short-sentence’ offenders once a minimum sentence is reached and certain provisions are met, including no commission of violent crimes or certain sexual offenses, no gun or high-volume drug delivery offenses, and no misconduct while incarcerated. This will provide significant cost savings for the state.

SB1071 also streamlines the process of accessing substance use disorder treatment for incarcerated individuals, which can lead to earlier release from prison.
SB 1070: Reinvests savings generated by this bill will be used to create an Advisory Committee that will approve and finance the use of best practices in probation supervision statewide, using evidence-based practices to help county probation departments assess the unique risks and needs of each individual on probation.

SB 1072: This bill improves the flow of information to crime victims by prosecutors and police and improves victim compensation for losses incurred during the crime.

“We need to work to make our criminal justice system more fair, more equitable and more focused on rehabilitation, which JRI 2 will help do. Since I became governor, I have worked hard to reform our system so that it leads to better outcomes and saves taxpayer dollars – while also leading to less crime and fewer victims,” Gov. Wolf said.

Governor Wolf led a call-to-action for criminal justice reform legislation, including JRI 2, at a press conference with Senator Greenleaf on April 12 at the Dauphin County Justice Center.
Staff of the Bureau of Standards and Accreditation gathered in Altoona, Pa., for a bureau meeting on April 24, 2018. Established in 2012, the bureau consists of 22 employees, across the state and at central office, who perform a diverse variety of functions. These functions include pre-sentence investigations for Mercer, Venango and other counties, background investigations for Pardons Board applicants including commutations, audits of field supervision units, PREA and delinquency processing of absconders. Staff received updates on the aforementioned functions and were treated to an afternoon of Real Colors facilitated by Rich Podguski of the Bureau of Offender Reentry Coordination. Feedback about the event was very positive. Auditor Jeff Boozer commented, “I really appreciated getting together with everyone, and it was nice to know that our efforts with the Pardons Board reports were appreciated. The Colors information was very insightful!”

Acting Bureau Director Krista Callear coordinated the event and wanted staff to know how important and very much appreciated their efforts are.
DOC Officials Attend BetaGov Pracademia Symposium

Eight Pennsylvania DOC employees recently traveled to BetaGov’s New York offices recently to participate in what they called a pracademia symposium.

According to BetaGov, they support the conceptualization and the conduct of field-initiated research as randomized controlled trials. To build sustainable research capacity, they emphasize a learning model called "Pracademia," offering practitioner training, workshops and knowledge-sharing sessions. Topics include trial design, randomization, ethics, project implementation, regulatory requirements, data analysis and preparing findings for dissemination.

Joining Pennsylvania’s group were approximately 30 others from various police departments, corrections departments, probation systems and even from Mexico and Nigeria. Topics discussed included using text messaging to contact parolees, peer mentoring, day reporting rooms, wellness trials, and much, much more.

In addition to allowing individuals to share information about their special projects, the symposium also allowed for networking, which is resulting in possible collaborations.

PA DOC employees who attended the pracademia symposium were:

- Deb Sahd, special assistant to the secretary
- Dr. Bret Bucklen, director of Planning, Research & Statistics
- Bob Flaherty, chief of Data Analysis, Planning, Research & Statistics
- Michele Hiester, chief of Research & Evaluation, Planning, Research & Statistics
- Daniel McIntyre, director of the Bureau of Community Corrections
- Rhonda Tomcavage, Crisis Intervention Team training project manager
- John Sawtelle, classification and program manager, SCI Forest
- Richard Kustenbauder, unit manager, SCI Smithfield

Learn more about BetaGov by visiting:  http://betagov.org/

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Corrections Officer is a Hero!

SCI Graterford Corrections Officer S. Skursky, who had been on vacation at a resort in South Carolina, recently saved the life of a drowning boy. The boy, who had removed a safety grate from a pool suction pipe, was trapped underwater. Skursky raced in and provided underwater rescue breathing while the boy was submerged for about eight minutes. During Skursky’s efforts, EMS was called. The boy survived.

Screenshot from NBC Nightly News

Watch NBC’s coverage here:  https://www.nbcnews.com/nightly-news/video/boy-survives-after-being-trapped-underwater-for-close-to-eight-minutes-1219238467808

Ludgate Award Presented to Parole District Office Director

On April 26, the 2018 Ludgate Excellence in Leadership Award was presented to several individuals, including Mercer District Office Director Dan Pustinger.
The Ludgate Award honors collaboration and recognizes the crucial role that strong leadership plays in fostering new relationships and spearheading innovations that provide a cohesiveness throughout the criminal justice system, and establishes a network of care continuity of resources throughout the community and public health systems.

The award was created in 2011 to honor Judge K.M. Ludgate (Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Berks County) for her exemplary leadership of the Berks County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB), which has allowed it to stay on the cutting edge of new statewide CJAB initiatives since its inception in the 1990s. A member of PCCD’s Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, Judge Ludgate has always exhibited
remarkable dedication and determination in promoting and supporting the concept of county planning through organized, collaborative CJABs.

Congratulations, Director Pustinger!

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Criminology Students Visit Prison

Dr. Maria Garase’s Advanced Criminology Course students visited SCI Albion on April 10th to have a face-to-face discussion with the inmates who are part of the SCI Albion Think Tank on Restorative Justice.

What the students had to say about their visit:

“Going on the prison tour showed me how inmates can be successfully rehabilitated. Despite all of them being there for life sentences, the showed how they were able to ignore that and become better people. Even though they are not able to be released, they did not stop them from impacting people such as us. Many of the theories used in class explained their criminality from the past. They were all very respectful and kind. I hope to return again soon.”

“Visiting SCI Albion and speaking with the inmates is always a great experience, getting to see the justice system through the perspective of those on the other side is extremely eye-opening. I love discussing theories and rationales with the inmates because their reasoning is always different than what I expect. Their opinions on oppression of the poor and those who are hopeless is very sad; however, hearing about their morals was very inspiring. Their voices need to be heard more by the people who work in the justice system today and are able to start implementing changes.”

“One of the main things the inmates talked about was the idea of social learning theory and how they learned crime through people such as family members. For example, an uncle who taught his nephew how to sell drugs. After being "in the game" for a while they would then pass down the
techniques and rationales they use to commit crime. This looks at the idea of cultural transmission theory and how traditions of criminality are passed through generations. This experience really helped to open my eyes and provide a humanized aspect to prison inmates. As many of the inmates said just because they are in prison they are not just a number but still people just like everyone else.”

Thanks from Dr. Garase:

“I am writing to express my sincere appreciation for allowing my students to visit SCI Albion on April 10, 2018, for the purposes of having a face-to-face discussion with the inmates who are part of the SCI Albion Think Tank on Restorative Justice. This is the second time we ‘met’ as part of a series of discussions on criminological theory and crime policies for my Advanced Criminology class. We had a teleconference earlier in the semester, but the actual dialogue with the inmates was just exceptional. Honestly, it was a very enlightening experience and they reinforced many theories and policies that we talked about in class (without any prompting)!

It was a pleasure to work with Valarie Kusiak, Brenda Atkin, Haley Atkins, and Tammy Jo Rodgers. They assisted with the coordination of the inmate discussion and inmate movement details; they were invaluable in the planning of this event.

The discussion format allowed my students to ask questions about criminological theory, and the inmates then related their particular stories to concepts we had discussed in class. It appeared that both the students and the inmates learned a lot about the real-world application of theory but at the same time learned to humanize how and why crime occurs. Additionally, we discussed how policies, both good and bad, are derived from theory. The students and the inmates engaged in a great dialogue about crime, conditions that make crime ripe to occur, and ways that crime can be prevented.”

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Moore Smeal: “What Women Bring to Corrections”

Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal’s opinion editorial about “What Women Bring to Corrections,” was recently published in GOVERNING.


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Learn more about this event by listening to our podcast (using Firefox or Chrome web browsers) here: podcast.cor.pa.gov
Shining Light’s Impact at SCI Frackville

After 10 days of rehearsals, Bible studies and much hard work, 29 men from SCI Frackville stepped onto Shining Light’s stage and made an impact on the facility that will not soon be forgotten. The men wove their own stories and faith into a 45-minute production of spoken word, music, drama and dance with the help of the Shining Light Ministries team. The group shared the message that God created all of us for a purpose, that He is with us in our struggles, and gives us hope for the future.

Shining Light brought in four expert artists along with their staff, band and tech team to run two weeks of an intense but rewarding program called an Impact Workshop. Rehearsal began at 1 p.m. and finished at 8 p.m. every day, and included a group warm up, team building exercises, large group rehearsals, individual team rehearsals and small group discussions. For this workshop, they used a Bible study called "What On Earth Am I Here For?" based on a book, The Purpose Driven Life, by Rick Warren. Shining Light Executive Director Jeff Bohn says, "Each person is created with a plan and a purpose for their life,” and this truly became the theme for the entire workshop.

The workshop process may sound simple on paper, but it challenged the men of SCI Frackville in unique ways. Participant Anthony D. sums it up well. He said, "The transformative experience of this workshop has made me a better man and has increased my faith ten-fold. All my activity after the workshop has had a new direction and purpose. I’m a lot more eager to know what God’s plan is for me.”

Many men didn’t know they could sing, dance or act, but discovered new gifts when they took a chance trying new things during this workshop.
Shining Light’s technical director, crew and band arrived a few days before the show to set up their lights, stage and screen projection. The men began on-stage rehearsals that culminated in a dress rehearsal that was attended by 25 staff and administrative personnel from SCI Frackville, who offered a great deal of encouragement.

Coming out of this uplifting dress rehearsal, the men were ready for the two performances for their peers on Saturday January 27, for over 450 men and officers. After the final joyful chorus of their last song, "Brighter Day," there was a time for comments from participants and audience.

One participant from the theater team said to the audience, "I'd never acted a day in my life...I hope that what you saw here will inspire you guys to do something more courageous and step out of your comfort zone, because we stepped out of our comfort zone to do something that we never thought we could do."

The comments from the audience after the performance were very positive. One audience member from SCI Frackville said, "You woke me up a lot. This is my wake-up call."

Another called the production “the best program in the state of Pennsylvania.”

Another said he thought it was going to be corny and almost didn't come, but said "you all hit the nail on the head with this."

All supported the excellent work of their peers on stage with enthusiastic applause.
And last but not least: this was Shining Light’s first Impact Workshop, at any facility, with perfect attendance! Each of the 29 men from SCI Frackville showed up for every minute of every day, making the final production the best it could possibly be for themselves and for the rest of the population.

And as participant Kurt D. said, “This workshop changed the culture of the facility, even beyond the participants.” In every way, it truly was an “Impact” Workshop.

NOTE: Shining Light Ministries has visited several PA DOC facilities this year.

Forest Inmates, Employees Donate to Charity

SCI Forest’s Inmate Organization -- Hope For Change -- raised $2,000 and, along with SCI Forest staff, donated 224 pairs of pajamas to Venango County Children and Youth Services.

Hope for Change raises money through a quarterly make-your-own-bag fundraiser and donates the money to various charities. Hope for Change also purchased yarn that inmates in SCI Forest’s Special Needs Unit are making into pillow blankets. These items also will be donated to Venango County CYFS, so they can be given to children along with the pajamas.

Pictured are two of the inmate organization’s staff liaisons -- Ben Fiscus and Cindy Hays -- who delivered the pajamas to Venango County CYFS Outreach Supervisor Matthew Haines and CYFS Program Director Courtney Hartle.

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Clark Speaks at LaSalle Forum

For Reentry month, SCI Graterford’s Major of Unit Management Gina Clark was a guest speaker for the Sister’s Returning Home forum at LaSalle University. This event was a collaborative effort to support women returning to Philadelphia. Clark talked about the female transition unit that will be part of the new SCI Phoenix and the barriers that it (the FTU) shatters having the unit so close to the area. “We are bridging the gap between women who are incarcerated, their families and the community,” Clark said.

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Benner Township, Church Host Book Drive

SCI Benner Township and Christ Community Church partnered to host a children’s book drive to help promote the love of reading, foster deeper relationships and reach the community ... one book at a time. SCI Benner Township Employees Althea Kent, Holly Quist and Greg Mains, along with Pastor Jareida Hall of the church, sorted through approximately 1,500 collected books. The books were divided between the Centre County Youth Service Bureau, the Centre County Juvenile Detention Center and the children of incarcerated individuals at SCI Benner Township. The books will be located in Benner Township’s Visiting Room. During a visit with their parent, children can choose a book, read it with their parent and then take it home when they leave.

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Laurel Highlands Holds 3rd Annual Speak Up Competition

The 3rd Annual Speak Up Competition was held in SCI Laurel Highlands’ Transitional Housing Unit (THU) on April 9 to kick off National Reentry Month. Ten THU participants delivered a speech “What Does Your Reentry Mean To You” to a panel of guest judges that included Superintendent Jaime Luther, Deputy Superintendents Michelle Houser and Michael Tsikalas as well as Classification Program Manager John Cree and Major Ben Grove.

A variety of speeches were made sparking a range of emotions from remorse, happiness and fear. Tears as well as laughter were present during the deliveries. The top two winners were awarded monetary prizes which are credited to their inmate account.

The superintendent put it eloquently when she said (regarding population), “These kinds of events remind us of the human element, gives us some insight into each of these guys’ personality, as well as his personal trials and tribulations.”

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PSU Students Tour SCI Mercer

On April 24, Professor LaVarr McBride and 24 students from the Criminal Justice classes of Penn State University’s Shenango and Beaver Campuses toured SCI Mercer. Corrections Superintendent Assistant Andrea Shiock led the tour with the assistance of Superintendent’s Secretary Amanda Bistransin, both of whom fielded many questions from the group.
Each semester McBride schedules his class to tour the facility in order for the students to learn more about the environment and the services available to the inmate population. Giving students a firsthand look at the environment of a prison may help guide them in their future career choices.

Despite the rainy weather, the group had the opportunity to tour the reception unit and the therapeutic community unit, as well as Mercer’s education department and the library. Staff who work in these areas gave the students an overview of what they do on a daily basis. One student commented that it was good experience for him and all agreed that it was beneficial for them as well. Several students stated they would like to work in either the corrections or parole fields.

![Students visit the reception unit where Officer Stone explained how the unit runs daily and the number of inmates who process through the unit yearly.](image)

Schools/colleges interested in touring SCI Mercer as part of their curriculum may contact Ms. Shiock to make arrangements.

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**Mercer Celebrates Administrative Professionals Day**

Acting Superintendent Lee Estock, Deputy Superintendent William Woods, Acting Deputy Superintendent Shane Dady and all of the Mercer administrative staff and department heads honored the facility’s clerical staff on April 25 - Administrative Professional Day. This occasion was a way to thank
each of them for the hard work they do on a daily basis and for doing it well. Each one is a valuable asset to the facility and it was a pleasure to recognize them.

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**Greene Recognizes Administrative Professionals Day**

On April 25, Administrative Professionals at SCI Greene were recognized for their dedication and commitment to excellence in their job. A luncheon was prepared by the Dietary Department, and dessert was offered as a nice way to recognize these individuals for their hard work. Administrative staff also offered their parking spaces to them to help celebrate the day.

![Administrative Professionals at SCI Greene](image)

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**Fayette Staff Speak to LaRoche College Students**

On April 18, SCI Fayette Superintendent Mark Capozza and Captain Mark Mozingo presented to Professor DeAmicis’ Introduction to Corrections class at LaRoche College. Center of photo is Professor DeAmicis (retired Captain following nearly 30 years of service at Allegheny County Jail) with Superintendent Capozza to his right and Captain Mozingo to his left, surrounded by the students of his class.

![Fayette Staff with students](image)
On April 25, the group toured SCI Greene, where they visited several areas of the facility and spoke with prison officials about programs and services that are offered to the inmate population.

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Benner Township Hosts Summit

Benner Township hosted its first IHOPE Education Summit on April 18.

IHOPE stands for Inmates Helping Our Prison Environment – the prison’s inmate organization.

Activities Specialist Chad Miner reached out to Penn State last year to begin to offer educational opportunities for the inmate population. Penn State generously offered to volunteer graduate students and a full professor to teach these courses. They have also donated the books, notebooks and art supplies.

To date, inmate have been offered a philosophy class, creative writing, art and entrepreneurship. The long-term goal is to offer college level courses that can provide inmates with college credits.

Also at the summit, the prison’s “Youth at Risk Group” and the inmates that are involved in the IHOPE newsletter were recognized.

Present from Penn State University was Dr. Eduardo Mendieta, Efrain Marimon, Brandon Eby and Jeffery Lee. Richard Brown represented the Breaking the Chainz Organization.

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MacDicken Continues Financial Education Efforts

As part of Reentry Month, Department of Banking and Securities (DOBS) Outreach Specialist Becky MacDicken continues to educate inmates about financial matters, including monitoring credit ratings once they are released from prison.

MacDicken has provided this helpful information to inmates in the DOC’s transitional housing units, reentry services offices, the general inmate population and for “juvenile” lifers.

Becky has worked in the Pennsylvania Department of Banking and Securities (DOBS) for more than 12 years with the majority of her work being financial education outreach and training. Under the new DOBS Deputate of Financial Services for Consumers and Business (FSCB), Becky is working to deliver more financial education to state employees, the disabled community and incarcerated populations. She previously worked at the Pennsylvania Office of Financial Education as the workplace financial education specialist, helping businesses bring financial education to their employees.

Prior to her time at DOBS, Becky spent 16 years in Washington, DC, working in Congress as a communications director, and as a lobbyist for small business interests.

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It’s Spring – Time to Clean Up Roadways

On April 19, SCI Retreat’s community work crew was busy cleaning up Route 11.

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Success!

SCI Albion Warehouse Operations Instructor Art Hilinski shares info from a reentrant who took his class:

“I was hired by the VA Hospital and am earning $17.45 to start using the skills learned in your class.”

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Benner Township Holds Crime Victims Ceremony

SCI Benner Township held its Fourth Annual Crime Victims Ceremony on April 11, 2018. The ceremony included readings, a moment of silence, posters with artwork and crime/victim related facts. Guest speaker was Minister Karen, who was born and raised in a small town where she learned the importance of strong family values and community at a very young age. She tragically lost her daughter at a young age; she was the victim of a homicide. Minister Karen has had a life-long passion and heart for helping people. She plans to continue speaking with others to promote responsible living.

Which Came First?

Discovered on the grounds of SCI Graterford is this truck with a tree growing through it. It begs the question, which came first, the truck or the tree?
Mercyhurst Students Tour Cambridge Springs

A criminal justice class from Mercyhurst College and a Psychology class from Allegheny College toured SCI Cambridge Springs on April 24, 2018. Amy Boylan (superintendent assistant) and Dave Wescott (safety manager) escorted two professors and 13 students throughout the facility, giving them a chance to see three different housing units. Elizabeth Scarborough (social worker) spoke to the group about parenting and social work aspects of corrections. Rose Tarquinio (AOD manager) educated the group on the programming aspects of the therapeutic community and also encouraged the students to consider a career in corrections. Progressive Unit inmates presented the Canine Partners For Life puppies and gave some background about the program and the benefits that it has on the inmates and the community.

![Image of students during tour]

In The Centers…

Pathways Reentrants Perform Community Service

Reentrants residing at the Pathways Unit of the Wernersville Community Corrections Center participated in another community service event. Pathways staff sent out an email to all boroughs within a 10-mile radius of the center offering spring clean-up help to any community. West Reading Public Works Official Dean Murray responded saying they needed help with bridge clean-ups along a major strip of road in West Reading.
Once again Pathways staff and reentrants were up for the challenge and spent a full day working with public works staff removing garbage from under bridges and along the road.

Dean Murray was extremely grateful for the help and thanked everyone for helping them get the area cleaned. Dean sent the following statement on the organizations behalf:

"West Reading truly appreciates the assistance of Joe Hofer and his group of reentrants from Wernersville CCC for cleaning up our entry way to the Borough this morning. The 200 block of Penn Avenue looks a 1000 times better already. We want to thank you for your company and your assistance provided."

Center staff continues to reach out to the community offering their assistance. Building positive relationships in the community through community service has become a priority for them. Stay tuned for their next project, when they help a local borough remove a community pool cover and spread mulch in the park.

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**Crisis Intervention Training**

Sharon Community Corrections Center Director Joel Murray, Counselor Eric Patton and Center Monitor James Shaw recently attended a 40-hour training to become certified Crisis Intervention Specialists.

The training, which was held at Penn State Shenango, provided classroom instruction to more than 20 individuals from Mercer county police departments, the county jail, probation and parole and the Sharon CCC.

"By becoming certified members of the Mercer County Crisis Intervention Team, these employees have an enhanced understanding on how to respond to individuals with mental health disorders and who are experiencing a crisis," said Morris Richardson, director of the Bureau of Community Correction’ Region 2.

Morris said the intervention techniques focused on communication skills, patience and the utilization of support services to ensure that the crisis is managed safely, respectfully and with the utmost dignity to the individuals involved.

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**Drug ID Training Held**

On April 19, Bureau of Community Corrections officials welcomed Chief John Goshert to their Region 3 office to present his Drug ID – Current Drug Trends training. The training was opened to parole employees as well as to those from surrounding state prisons to help everyone understand the new and ever-changing drug culture. Keeping informed and on top of the latest trends
is paramount to the security and safety of our prisons and the employees and inmates who work and live in those prisons.

During the training, participants learned the identification of commonly abused substances, including their effects, methods of ingestion and paraphernalia associated with their use.

One participant said, “This training will help me do my job better, because now I know what to look for.”

Another said, “I wish I would have had this training on day one of my career.”

“We appreciate Chief Goshert’s willingness to educate our staff, and we are excited that he will return to the Pittsburgh area in September to conduct additional trainings,” said Bureau of Community Corrections Major Michael Gourley.

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Tunisian Officials Tour Pittsburgh-Area Centers

On May 3 and 4, justice officials from Tunisia will visit Pittsburgh-area community corrections centers.

More about this will be provided in an upcoming issue of this newsletter!

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Community Corrections Turns 50 This Year!

Here’s some historical information on the Erie Community Corrections Center (CCC):

- In January 26, 1977, a second Erie Center for women opened. It closed on December 31, 1981.

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Week of April 16...

**Donation Made to Catholic Charities**

On April 16, Jean Johnstone, the executive director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, came to SCI Huntingdon to accept a donation in the amount of $2,500 from Catholic Chaplain Father Matthew Baum. These funds came from the 2018 Saint Dismas Parish Holy Name Society Fundraiser. Over the past four years, the Saint Dismas Parish Holy Name Society has raised and donated more than $8,300 for the benefit of The Saint Vincent DePaul Society and Catholic Charities. These funds have directly benefited the homeless, the working poor and have given the inmate population at SCI Huntingdon a wonderful opportunity to have a positive impact in the wider community.

Father Matthew Baum presents $2,500 check to Jean Johnstone, executive director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.
SCI Mercer Hosts 2018 Annual Career/Reentry Fair

SCI Mercer’s Education Department held its Annual Career Reentry Fair on April 17th in the gymnasium for inmates within two years of their minimum sentence date. This event was organized as an effort to assist inmates with making community connections in preparation for their imminent release from prison.

The event was well attended by 138 inmates who were able to connect with representatives from 26 local organizations. Each agency was provided a table with a sign to identify the agency and to display literature about the services each had to offer. The reentrants could gather information from the agencies, ranging from family services to educational opportunities to local employment opportunities. Agencies attending included:

- PA Careerlink, Sharon
- Department of Probation & Parole, Mercer County
- Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission
- Community Counseling Services, Hermitage
- Sharon and Erie Community Corrections Centers
- Thomas Construction, Grove City
- Greater Erie Community Action Committee
- Gaudenzia Erie
- Vocational Rehabilitation, Erie
- Amachi, Pittsburgh
- Sheet Metal Worker Local 12, Pittsburgh
- Renewal, Inc., Pittsburgh
- Region 3 Bureau of Community Corrections, Pittsburgh
- Trails Ministries, Beaver Falls
- Job Training for Beaver County, Inc., Monaca
- Department of Corrections Culinary School, Harrisburg
- Mental Health Association of PA, Harrisburg
- DOC Western Regional Reentry Administrator, Mechanicsburg
- Fairshake, Wisconsin
- SCI Mercer Inmate Employment
- SCI Mercer Vocational Programs
- SCI Mercer Library Services

Providing information from these various agencies is helpful to the reentrant in preparing them to become more successful once released from the prison system and may also assist them with obtaining gainful employment in their community.

Accreditation Certificate Received

At the administrative staff meeting on April 4, Acting Superintendent Lee Estock congratulated everyone on having a successful American Correctional Association (ACA) audit and presented staff with the accreditation certificate.

The facility’s accreditation panel hearing was held in January 2018 at the ACA’s winter conference, at which time the panel approved and awarded the facility a three-year reaccreditation. SCI Mercer was found to be 100% compliant with mandatory standards and 98.8% compliant with non-mandatory standards at their July 2017 ACA audit.

All Mercer staff are recognized for their hard work and teamwork in preparation for the audit.

Pictured left to right are: Acting Classification Program Manager Lisa Graves, Unit Manager Randy Rickert, Lt. Vernice Phillips, LPM Kathy Kocherzat, Training Coordinator Melissa Filer, Clerk Typist 3 Amanda Bistransin, Unit Manager Wendy Rouda, Business Manager Janet Molnar, Superintendent Assistant Andrea Shiock, Food Service Manager Dennis Sansotta, Health Care Administrator Karen Feather, Acting Superintendent Lee Estock, Unit Manager Greg Giddens, Activities Manager April Harvey, Facility Maintenance Manager Larry Boggs, Acting Deputy Superintendent Shane Dady and Major Rodney Painter.
Albion’s “Guardian Pledge”

SCI Albion’s Suicide Prevention Committee has created a “Guardian Pledge” for staff and inmates to sign which encourages everyone to work together as a team to prevent suicide and save lives.

This pledge was written and created by one our Certified Peer Support Specialists, who has worked diligently toward suicide prevention in the institution.

This Guardian Pledge has also been hand painted by the inmate on a mural which is displayed in the Education Building lobby.

Many staff and inmates have signed the pledge and now have their names (last names only) written on a feather which is affixed to the mural.

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The Guardian Pledge

I hereby pledge to be a Guardian for those struggling with thoughts of suicide, and an advocate for those without a voice. I will seek to gain the knowledge needed to understand and prevent them from pain. With this knowledge I will be equipped to recognize the warning signs of someone who may be contemplating suicide and take it all... 

• Watch for those who feel that no one else is listening
• Be the one to hear them when no one else will listen
• Listen closely to those who feel no thought (all hope) is lost
• Be a light for someone who’s stuck in darkness
• Understand the pain that hides behind their words
• Not be afraid to seek out help if someone is contemplating suicide
• Share and ask for assistance when someone threatens to harm themselves or take their own life
• Encourage them to seek help
• Do what is necessary to save the lives of those who feel their loss is better
• Share your compassion and understand that I can make a difference in someone’s life

By signing this I am taking the first step toward preserving the lives of those around me and definitely give the part of me to anyone in need.

Signature: ____________________________
DOC Veterans Outreach Program

On April 16, Ryan Yoder, the DOC’s statewide veterans’ coordinator, and Chip Gilliland, chief of the DMVA’s Reintegration and Outreach Division spoke to veteran inmates about their military service benefits.

Topics discussed included services available through the DOC Veterans Services, VA benefits and Veteran Services Unit (VSU) availability.

Yoder gave a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted statistics on incarcerated veterans and provided an overview of paperwork they can fill out to receive benefits during their incarceration and upon their release. The services available through the VSU program were discussed at length. The inmates were encouraged to participate in one of the DOC’s three VSU’s. A fourth one for male inmates will open when SCI Phoenix becomes operational.

Also discussed was a potential program like the Reentry Services Office (RSO) but will be geared toward veterans. This new unit will be called the Veterans Services Office and will be placed at DOC facilities that do not have VSU’s. This program will be geared toward incarcerated veterans and will assist them in getting copies of their DD214 (military discharge documentation), enroll them in the VA system and allow them to receive a VA identification card.

A question-and-answer session concluded the event.

Facility staff thank Yoder and Gilliland for providing this information to inmates. The program was coordinated by Corrections Counselor 2 Mary Suchevits.

Yoder and Gilliland also visited SCI Camp Hill on April 3 to provide inmates there with the same information. Visits to all facilities are underway.

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Albion Recognizes Crime Victims’ Rights Week

SCI Albion held seminars for staff in honor of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

On April 10, Edinboro University Professor Dr. Elaine Rinfrette delivered a presentation on “Vicarious Trauma,” which is a special form of counter-transference between traumatized clients and the professionals who assist these clients. Essentially the professional may undergo a transformation caused by the exposure to the client’s traumatic incidents.

On April 11, Pittsburgh Division FBI Supervisory Intelligence Analyst Matt Trosan, Erie Resident Agency FBI Senior Supervisory Special Agent Mark Beneski and Erie Crime Victim Center staff member Carol Finotti delivered a presentation on “Human Trafficking.” Human Trafficking is a form of modern day slavery in which traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to control victims for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or labor services against his/her will.
Huntingdon’s Crime Victims’ Rights Week Activities  
By Tim Strait, SCI Huntingdon Treatment Specialist

Each year, there is a week at the beginning of April that is dedicated to the victims of crime. In 2018, Crime Victims’ Rights Week was held April 8 through 14. Each state correctional institution in Pennsylvania was asked to recognize the sometimes forgotten faces of crime. In response to this, SCI Huntingdon supported The Abuse Network’s Emergency Shelter.

The Abuse Network is a non-profit organization serving victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and other crimes. Between staff donating items and the monies collected on the April 6 and April 20 casual dress days for non-uniform staff, SCI Huntingdon was able to provide the emergency shelter with needed items such as diapers, baby wipes, laundry detergent, fabric sheets, Lysol spray, Clorox wipes, bed sheets and gift cards to Sheetz and Giant. These items are used for the shelter and for the shelter residents when they move out on their own. Ms. Barton, who represents The Abuse Network, is very appreciative and thankful for what we do for her agency!

In an effort to further recognize victims of crime and to get their messages out, SCI Huntingdon facilitates an Impact of Crime Class each year. This program, which generally lasts from May until August, is victim driven and involves victims of crime speaking directly to inmates in a classroom setting. Each inmate must meet specific guidelines to attend this program, including taking full responsibility for his actions, not blaming anyone for the choices they’ve made, remaining misconduct free for at least 12 months and having a commitment to complete the program in its entirety. What makes this program so special are the victim speakers who volunteer their time, often driving several hours to get here, to present their “stories” to the class. With every speaker, the message is clear ... take responsibility and put yourself into the shoes of a victim.

Each speaker paints a clear picture of how they were impacted emotionally, physically, financially and spiritually. Our Impact of Crime Speakers at SCI Huntingdon include:

- Speaker 1 – His 12-year-old niece was murdered in Bedford County.
- Speakers 2 and 3 – Their daughter and two grandsons perished in a domestic violence related arson that took place in Westmoreland County.
- Speaker 4 – Her daughter was the youngest passenger aboard Flight 93 that crashed in Somerset County during the September 11th attacks.
- Speaker 5 – At the age of 18, she was kidnapped from her apartment and sexually assaulted.
- Speaker 6 – His 18-year-old daughter was killed by a drunk driver in Centre County.
- Speaker 7 – As a teenager, she was kidnapped and held captive in the woods of Huntingdon County for eight days.

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Retreat Inmates Hear from Speakers

On April 13, SCI Retreat offered two guest speakers to their inmate population for National Crime Victims' Rights Week: Tammi Burke from the Victim's Resource Center and April Kemp of Marley's Mission.

Houtzdale/Quehanna HNT Receives New Equipment

In February, the Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT) from SCI Houtzdale/Quehanna Boot Camp received a new rescue phone. The previous rescue phone had been sporadic with technical glitches, which would possibly make HNT ineffective during a real-life situation. In the past, it had been refurbished in hopes that would fix the technical problems that the team experienced; however, the refurbish only lasted a few months. Thanks to the administrative staff and their dedication to ensuring that special teams have the necessary equipment to function properly, the new phone was ordered and arrived at the facility in February. Along with the new rescue phone, the HNT also was authorized to purchase two tactical gear bags and new polo shirts for current team members.
Employees Participate in C.O.V.E.R. Activity

SCI Cambridge Springs employees and others in the community joined to watch the inspiring documentary of Kevin Hines’ road to recovery following his suicide attempt at the Golden Gate Bridge. The Movies at Meadville premiered *Suicide: The Ripple Effect* on April 4. Tickets were sold out with 112 in attendance. The movie was arranged by Clerk Typist 2 Alicia Groover. For more information and details on how to schedule a showing of *Suicide: The Ripple Effect* at your local movie theater, visit suicidetherippleeffect.com.

Kevin Hines will be in Franklin, Pa., on Friday, June 1, for the 3rd Annual Suicide Prevention Rally hosted by CSP of Venango County. The event will take place at the Franklin Bandstand Park from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Attendance is free and family friendly.

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Reentrant Addresses Members of Congress

Parole Agent 2 Thomas Wines, who works for the Philadelphia County Wide Division Mental Health Unit #2 in Philadelphia, reported that one of his reentrants, Michael Dominquez, traveled to Washington, DC, on April 16 to speak with congress persons and their aids about reentrants obtaining employment and the challenges reentrants face when attempting to obtain employment. Dominquez was invited to Washington by the CEO Group in Philadelphia, which is a workforce development provider.

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Mercer Recognizes Sexual Assault Awareness Day

April 6 was teal ribbon day at SCI Mercer in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Day. Photos show administrative staff handing out teal ribbon stickers to all the staff. Staff wore the ribbons in support of eliminating sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Admin staff pictured in the photos:

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
Fayette Highlights New Murals

Overseen by the Activities Department staff, SCI Fayette inmates recently installed murals on LB and LD (RHU) blocks.

Wonders of the World…

(Continued on next page)
During the last week of March and first week of April, a total of 10 different reentrants from Pathways CCC participated in another large community service event. Pathways was notified by David Poland of the BIG Vision Foundation, of Leesport, Pa., that they needed people to assist in getting local baseball fields in Berks County ready for the upcoming season. Once again Pathways was up for the challenge and spent three full days in freezing
conditions working with the staff at BIG Vision to clean up the fields, remove garbage, spread seed and fertilizer and install the bleachers in anticipation of opening day. Dave Poland was extremely grateful for the help and thanked Pathways for helping them get the fields prepared. Poland sent the following thank you letter to Wernersville Community Corrections Center (CCC) Director David Kopinski:

“We at BIG Vision Foundation would like to take a moment to thank you for your recent support of assisting us at our sports complex in Leesport, PA by deploying some of your good men that require community service hours to lend a hand with some manual work.

All of the men who had worked at our sports complex had followed instructions and were industrious as well as respectful in their interactions during their 8-hour workday. Without the 6 gentlemen’s help of working a total of 3-days at our non-profit, we would have struggled to complete our tasks in the timeframe that we had desired. All of us here at BIG Vision Foundation appreciate you and the men that were deployed to help us and we will speak highly of your program.”

The mission of the BIG Vision Foundation is to develop today’s youth into tomorrow’s leaders through sports and community service; promote volunteerism and giving back; and drive our local economy.

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Supporting Local Animal Shelter

In March, the Scranton CCC held a food drive for the True Friends Animal Welfare Center located in Montrose, Pa. Reentrants donated more than $3,000 worth of dog food and items.
Week of April 9...

**DOC Recognizes Crime Victims’ Rights Week**

The Department of Corrections is recognizing Crime Victims’ Rights Week (April 8-14) by holding commemorative events at all 25 state prisons and state community corrections centers.

“Crime Victims’ Rights Week is a time when inmates in all Pennsylvania prisons are asked to recognize the consequences of their actions and give something back to those who were victimized,” said Corrections Secretary John Wetzel. “We believe we are the only state to hold events in every institution.”

Across the state, prisons are hosting dozens of programs, including writing and art contests that incorporate poetry, songs and essays on this year’s theme of “Expand the Circle, Reach All Victims.”

Prisons have organized fund-raisers for victims’ services groups and service day activities, including making teddy bears and blankets for children at shelters, and facilities are showing victim-focused movies, holding impact-of-crime classes and providing presentations from crime victims. Several prisons are hosting events focused on trauma care for staff.

“Each year we set aside time to reflect upon the harm done to our crime victims in Pennsylvania,” said Jennifer Storm, Pennsylvania’s Victim Advocate. “While crime victims are at the center of all the work we do, it’s important to designate this time specifically to acknowledge them. I am proud to say that for three years in a row all of our state institutions and community corrections centers are doing something to honor crime victims. When we actively engage in repairing the harm done, we pave the way for fewer crime victims.”

The focus of the DOC and Office of Victim Advocate on victims’ rights in prisons extends beyond the week of special recognition to include:

- **Day of Responsibility.** Most prisons have victim-related speakers come in to speak to inmates one day each year, followed by group breakouts for the inmates and citizens who are invited to attend.

- **Impact of Crime classes.** A voluntary, interactive and educational program designed to raise inmates’ awareness about the impact of crime on victims and increase their level of accountability and empathy toward those they have harmed.

- **Inmate apology bank.** Inmates may write letters to victims or victims’ families, which are then sent to Office of Victim Advocate where they are reviewed and held until victims wish to receive them.
• Crime victim restitution. DOC inmates work at various jobs to pay their fines, restitution and victim compensation. In 2017 the total distributed from state prison inmates was $7.2 million.

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April 8 – 14, 2018, is National Crime Victims’ Rights Week

Every year DOC facilities hold events for inmates and staff that remind everyone about the impact crime has on victims. Below is a listing of facility events:

**Albion:**

Artwork Contest -- This year's logo and slogan will be painted in the vestibule of each housing unit (1 per housing unit) by 04/07/18.

• The painted version is to exactly match the provided printed version.

• Staff will vote via e-mail to determine which rendering is closest to the original.

• Each inmate on the winning housing unit will receive one large size candy bar.

Inmate Television Channel

• Daily from April 8 to 14, various movies centering on victims will be shown on the inmate television channel. They may include but are not limited to: The Glass House, I Am Elizabeth Smart and Cleveland Abduction.

• Daily from April 8 to 14, various quotes from Howard Zehr’s book “Transcending: Reflections on Crime Victims” will be posted on the Inmate Television channel.

Donations

• Cash slips to donate money to the Erie Crime Victim Center will be available to the Inmate population.

Inmate Corners Basketball Shooting Tournament

• This is a 3-point shooting contest which pairs inmates in a head-to-head match-up. Each team consists of two inmates who reside on the same housing unit.

• This event will take place on Saturday, April 14, in the gymnasium.

• Inmates will make a $2 contribution to the Erie Crime Victim Center to participate in the event as a player or a spectator.

• A leaderboard will be maintained on the inmate television channel, and it will be updated throughout the day.
Didactic exercises

• Impact of Crime (mini course) conducted by Mrs. Hiebner and Mrs. Ransom. It will be offered to 30 inmates from general population. Admission will be based on the first 30 request slips received. It will run from 04/10/18 – 04/12/18 (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) from 1430 – 1530 hours.

• On April 9 a discussion panel with Erie Crime Victim Center staff members Sara Scarberry and Miriam Brisley will be held for general population inmates and any interested staff.

• Seminar (for staff only) with Edinboro University Professor Dr. Elaine Rinfrette, who will discuss Vicarious Trauma with staff on April 10.

• Human Trafficking seminar (for staff only) conducted by FBI agents Matt Trosan & Mark Beneski, and Erie Crime Victim Center staff member Carol Finotti on April 11.

Spreading the word

• Inmates will be apprised of the events via the inmate television channel and memorandums (unit managers will post the memorandums and a copy of the inmate television channel flyer on housing unit bulletin boards by 03/30/18.

Benner Township:

An Inmate Creative Poster Contest: This contest will focus on and help our community empathize with the trauma of victimization. Participants will be invited to submit artwork that conveys remorse and empathy for their actions. The art pieces will be judged, and the top three pieces will be placed on display during the Crime Victims Ceremony.

Big Screen Movie Fundraiser: April 12th, the showing of a newly released video will be offered to the general population. Concessions will be offered during the movie. All proceeds generated from the concession items and admission will be donated to the Centre County Women’s Resource Center.

A Ceremony will be held in the Chapel recognizing/honoring victims on Wednesday April 11th from 1:30-3:30pm. A victim speaker will be the guest speaker for this event. This ceremony will also include the presentation of awards for the top three pieces of artwork submitted in the creative poster contest, staff will read the Poems, “The Elephant in the Room” and “The Starfish,” a moment of silence will be held, and victim related posters and various crime statistics will be posted in the chapel.
Various brochures will be made available to both staff and inmates.
Crime facts and quotes will also be placed on the inmate channel.
Daily quotes in honor of Crime Victims week will be sent to all SCI
Benner Township employees via email from 04/09/18-04/13/18.

Cambridge Springs:

Movies: Special movies will be scheduled and aired on the institutional
channel during Crime Victims’ Rights Week. Inmates will be asked to
submit a short essay on one movie that impacted them, identifying the
victim and the services the victim has available to him/her in the
movie.

Bulletin Board Contest: There will be a bulletin board contest offered to
the general population during Crime Victims’ Rights Week. The boards
will include all information for the Inmate Apology Bank and the Victim
Offender Dialogue Program.

Big Screen Movie Fundraiser: On April 11th the showing of a newly
released video will be offered to the general population. Inmates
wishing to attend will be asked to donate unused hygiene products. All
items collected will be donated to Crawford County Women’s Services.

Mark Weir’s Motivational Workshop, “Life - Live It Fully Everyday”: A
deply reflective and introspective look into our lives and how we live
our life. This workshop focuses on healthy, open and honest
community discussion about our lives and where we “fit” into this thing
called Life. After participating in this workshop, participants will
formulate and be able to articulate how they plan to live their lives out
fully every day.

Community Service Day: On April 14, a community service event will
be offered to the general population during Crime Victims’ Rights
Week. Inmates will take part in several different community projects.
The day will include making teddy bears, painting pictures, assembly
no sew blankets and making make-up/cosmetic bags. Items will be
donated to local victim service agencies in Crawford and Erie County.

Camp Hill:

Activities Department:

•Art Drawing Contest – the diagnostic and classification center and
general population inmates will be asked to submit a drawing for the
contest around the theme, “Expand the Circle – Reach All Victims.”

•The Activities Department staff will collect and judge the drawings.
Submissions must be entered no later than April 8, 2018.
Chapel:

- The bells will ring Monday through Friday, April 9 – 13, at noon.
- There will be a prayer/meditation service Tuesday, April 10, from 0930 – 1030.

Education Department:

Hosting OVA staff and victim speakers on April 12, from 0830 – 1100. Based on last year’s turnout, an estimated 75 to 100 inmates from are expected to attend.

Chester:

National Crime Victims Awareness Conference: April 10th (0830-1530)

The goal is to help inmates understand what impact their crimes have had on their victims, to bring awareness to how crime is impacting our communities and society and to foster healing and understanding.

Coal Township:

- Victim speaker presentation on April 12, in the Chapel.
- Writing contest to include poetry, song and essay utilizing this year’s theme of “Expand the Circle, Reach All Victims.”

Dallas:

Play appropriate movies/information about crime victims on the inmate TV channel.

Post inmate made posters depicting the impact crime has on victims. Hang posters in reentry coordinator’s classroom. Discuss the posters with inmates to help them internalize their meaning.

Post crime statistics in the library.

Publicize information about victims and potential mental health challenges the may face.

Monday, April 9: Discuss different chapters from Victim Awareness Education in the school. Each instructor will present and discuss the information covered in the chapter they pick. Inmates attending more than one class will be exposed to different information.

Wednesday, April 11th: The Recovery Unit will have a panel discussion of how their actions impacted people they victimized.

Friday, April 13th: An Impact of Crime group will start. A short presentation from Victim’s Resource Center will be given followed by a
crime victim talking about how they were victimized, trauma they experienced and their life afterward

**Fayette:**

Victim speaking event scheduled for April 10:

In honor and memory of all crime victims, SCI Fayette officials invited guest speaker Janice Dankovich to the institution to talk to approximately 65 inmates and staff. Dankovich shared with the inmates in attendance how her son, Geoff, struggled with his drug addiction and eventually lost his life. She also answered several questions posed by the inmates and gave them hope that if they are dealing with the same issues, they should continue to fight for themselves and their families.

Poster contest will be held.

Coloring pages will be offered to the children in the inmate visiting area and will be hung in the visiting area through the month of April.

Mini informational sessions will be provided throughout the month of April to the inmate population and will include information on the Inmate Apology Bank, Impact of Crime Class and other informational sessions relative to current events.

Crime victim statistics will be posted on the inmate channel.

A motivational speaker is being reviewed for possible presentation to staff.

Inmate population will be collecting donations for the Washington Women’s Shelter.

Staff participation is also encouraged through donations of stuffed animals, hand-held travel games and notebooks/journals. All donations will be submitted to the Washington Women’s Shelter.
Forest:

Hope For Change (Inmate organization at SCI Forest) has pledged $2,000 to purchase pajamas for foster children. This is being organized by the Office of Victim Advocate (Venango County Drop Off).

K9 trainer Paul Anthony is speaking to inmates about the impact the K9’s trained at SCI Forest are having in assisting crime victims in the community.

Western PA Care for Kids had to cancel their speaking engagement at SCI Forest during the week however are tentatively planning on giving a presentation to inmates in late April.

Impact of Crime letters are tentatively scheduled to be sent out on 4/11/2018.

Victim Offender Dialogue Program is currently happening at SCI Forest.

Preliminary plans are being made to create murals in the SCI Forest visiting room related to crime victims’ awareness.

Frackville:

Guest Speakers throughout the week:

• Hate Crimes Victim
• Marley’s Mission (Equine therapy for victims): On April 12, April Kemp from Marley’s Mission spoke to the inmate population and staff about the impact of crime on a family and the organization she created to promote healing to victims of crime. A check for $820 was presented to Ms. Kemp by the HOPE organization that they raised by having a Hoop Shoot Fundraiser. Pictured, left to right, are Superintendent Kathy Brittain, counselor Jill Marhelko, April Kemp and Activities Manager Pete Damiter.
• Jennifer Storm, Governor Appointed Victim Advocate
• Office of Victim Advocate staff (Karen Laird and Nicole Evans)

Hoops Shoot Fundraiser: Staff and inmate involvement with all proceeds going to Marley’s Mission
Art Contest

Victim Themed Movies: Five movies to be shown on the inmate channel during the week.

**Graterford:**

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Workshop: Thursday, April 12 (sponsored by the Let’s Circle Up Restorative Justice Project)

Air videos on the Graterford in-house channel with victim awareness themes

Post signs throughout the institution with this year’s theme: “Expand the Circle: Reach All Victims.”

**Greene:**

Crime Statistics/facts/quotes regarding the theme, “Expand the Circle, Reach All Victims,” will be displayed in various areas around the facility as well as on inmate bulletin boards.

On April 12, Rev. Cornell Jones, former chaplain at SCI Pittsburgh, currently is working for the City of Pittsburgh and the Bureau of Police. He is the program coordinator for the Group Violence Intervention. He and Darnell Drewery, director of the Community Outreach for the Center of Victims of Violent Crime in Pittsburgh, spoke to a group of 45 inmates about how crime victimizes others.

**Houtzdale:**

Opening Ceremony: Tuesday, April 10, to include a guest speaker and Apology Letter Writing Symposium. Also will include a group panel discussion to address the concerns and questions of those in attendance.

Youth Summit/Guest Speaker: Wednesday, April 11: This event is designed to build positive dialogue with the younger inmate population to highlight the characteristics of a positive and productive man.
Day of Responsibility/Guest Speaker/Closing Ceremony, Thursday, April 12: This seminar will challenge participants to consider the impact of their actions on others (victims, family, community, etc.) and most importantly living a responsible life. The closing ceremony will consist of an open microphone to permit inmates to share any changes they encountered during the week.

**Huntingdon:**

Collection of items to be donated to the Abuse Network throughout the month of April.

Two casual dress days for non-uniform staff will be scheduled during the month of April with the proceeds being used to purchase items from a needs list provided by the Abuse Network.

**Laurel Highlands:**

Ms. Dana Benn and Mr. Gene Galentine will start the Impact of Crime class in April.

The Activities Department will place information about NCVRW and the impact of crime on the dedicated channel.

Selections highlighting stories of crime victims will be aired on the dedicated channel each day.

Alcohol and Other Drug staff will conduct seminars on the impact of crime and on this year’s theme, “Expand the Circle: Reach All Victims.”

Similar seminars will be conducted on the Limited Privilege Housing Unit and the Transitional Housing Unit.

A presentation will be given to general population inmates and will feature a video with Debra Germany followed by a discussion and presentation of victim facts/statistics.

The Phoenix Group (inmate organization) will donate $500 to a local victim services agency (recipient to be determined).

**Mahanoy:**

Crime Victims’ Rights Week Victim Presentation on April 10.

Collection of supplies for local domestic violence shelter.

**Mercer:**

Impact of Crime Class will show and discuss a domestic violence awareness movie and/or host a speaker.

Carpentry Class will make building blocks out of scrap wood to be donated to the Lawrence County Crisis Center for their children’s programs.
Activities Department will host a sexual abuse speaker on April 14.

A 5K for PJ’s: On April 14, participants will have 1.25 hours to complete 14 laps. Participants will donate $3 to the PJ Drive for OVA. T-shirts will be available for purchase.

A poster contest based on the theme “Expand the Circle, Reach All Victims,” will be held during the week.

From 0730 hours on April 14 to 0730 hours on April 15, no movies will be shown on the inmate movie channels. Also, the radio stations will be set to channel 1 during this time.

The Inmate Activities Committee will sponsor two fundraisers to benefit OVA’s PJ Drive.

A candy and nut sale from Howes. Inmates who attend the program on the 14th will receive their order. All others will receive their orders the rest week. A flyer on synthetic marijuana and heroin will be attached to each order.

The proceeds from a novelty sale.

**Muncy:**

Bulletin Board Competition: Bulletin board (BB) campaigns are among the most effective strategies for showcasing our NCVRW activities because of their wide reach. Each BB is strategically placed in high-traffic areas, which will help spread important messages throughout the facility regarding our NCVRW activities and messages.

Specifically, we can challenge each block to raise awareness about major victims’ issues, including:

- Domestic violence,
- Human trafficking,
- Child abuse, and
- Elder abuse

Art Contest and Exhibit: Art is a powerful medium to convey their experiences. This contest will help our community empathize with the trauma of victimization. Participants will be invited to submit artwork that conveys their interpretation of their own personal experience. The art pieces will be judged, and the top three pieces will receive corresponding awards. 1st Place Ribbon, 2nd Place Ribbon and 3rd Place Ribbon. All art will be on display in the visiting room through the end of April 2018.

Spoken Word: Performing arts activities deepen the entire community’s understanding of what it means to be a crime victim by allowing people to use their talent to shine a light on the challenges
crime victims face. The contest will encourage our community to express their experiences and share their knowledge through words.

Notable Quotables: We will host a Quote Contest and publish the following on our inmate TV channel.

Inspiration: A key NCVRW goal is to inspire and motivate our community to support victims’ rights. Our speeches, announcements and presentations will benefit from including powerful quotations to underscore this message of collective support.

Poetry and Essay Contest:

• Poetry: Each participant as they come to the stage. It is the participant’s responsibility to announce both their name and the poem’s title.

• Each recitation is limited to 3-4 minutes.

• Essay: Writers will submit non-fiction stories of their diverse experience as long as it connects to the subject of: “Expanding the Circle.”

Make the Chain Campaign: This contest will test the participant’s ability to summarize their involvement with crime into one sentence. This sentence will be transcribed onto a paper chain. The paper chain will be on display in the visiting room during the recognition ceremony.

Recognition Ceremony: We look to honor public officials and criminal justice professionals who have shown concern for victims:

• Victim Service Agencies, i.e., rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, district attorney’s victim advocates, and homicide support organizations. By collaborating with other victim service agencies that share our mission and challenges, it will produce wider audiences and a more powerful impact for our events. This is an opportunity for us to make that connection between victim advocates allowing us to collaborate and ultimately pinpoint the current gaps in the community’s response to victimization.

• Healthcare Professionals – Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs)
• Law Enforcement Professionals
• Prosecutors
• Community Corrections Professionals
• Mental Health Professionals
• Youth-Serving Organizations. The reasoning behind this is because young people are more likely than any other age group to be victimized by crime. Potential organizations include the YMCA and YWCA, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters.
This day will tentatively take place in April 2018 which will potentially consist of guest speakers, all artwork, essay and poetry contestants, and performances.

Public Awareness Posters: Provide each housing unit with copies of public awareness posters on Crime Victims with Disabilities, Crime Victimization, and Sexual Assault.

Distribute Crime and Victimization Fact Sheets: Each of the NCVRW Crime and Victimization Fact Sheets provides a snapshot of current research and victimization in the US.

Sexual Violence: This is an opportunity to reinforce PREA under another program. Distribute Sexual Violence Pamphlets containing information surrounding the topic.

**Pine Grove:**

Sexual Abuse Awareness Challenge: On April 6, the institution sponsored a Sexual Abuse Awareness Challenge in conjunction with Governor Wolf’s “It’s on us.” Money was donated for each employee that wore teal on that day. The Alice Paul House will receive the donation. A presentation of the check is pending a confirmed date.

Rocky Bleier’s visit QB for Life Program: On April 11, Rocky Bleier will be at Pine Grove in conjunction with the Quarterbacks of Life Program.

Victim Awareness Art Competition: The facility is sponsoring an art competition for the inmates. A committee will select the artwork that best represents the acknowledgement of victim’s/victim awareness. The winner will have his work incorporated in a mural that will be displayed within the institution.

OVC Crime Series Brochures: An email will be sent out daily to staff with a OVC series brochure attached. Topics will include stalking, child abuse, domestic violence and impaired driving.

Institutional Channel: Crime Victim Awareness movies and posters will be played on the institutional channel.

Armstrong County MADD Panel Presentation: The facility has contacted Armstrong County MADD to do a panel presentation (Indiana County does not have a chapter). Confirmation and date are pending.

Indiana Drug Coalition: The facility has contacted the Indiana Drug Coalition to do a presentation. Confirmation and date are pending.

**Quehanna Boot Camp:**

In observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, the Quehanna Boot Camp is going to build a wooden, outdoor bench with placard that states, “This bench has been donated to Clearfield County
Victim/Witness Office by the Quehanna Boot Camp in observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week April 8-14, 2018.” It will be donated to the Clearfield County Victim/Witness Office located outside of the courthouse.

Art Contest: All entries will be showcased at the facility.

**Retreat:**

Poetry Contest: Poetry must reflect and incorporate the effects of crime on victims and their families.

Guest speaker: Tami Burke from the Victims Resource Center of Luzerne County will share stories and conduct a speaking engagement on the effects of crime on victims and the community. Event will take place for the inmate population on April 13.

Fundraiser by the inmate organization: The Community Development Organization (C.D.O.) will be conducting a Tastykake sale offered to the inmate population. Funds raised will benefit Victim Resource Center of Luzerne County and Marley’s Mission of Clark Summit, Pa.

**Rockview:**

The national theme will be included in the in the Prayers of the Faithful at all services, in the Intercessory Prayers at all services, and in the Service Reflections at all services in both English and Spanish.

Crime Victims’ Rights Week posters will be displayed throughout the prison, in both English and Spanish.

Notable Quotables posted on chaplain bulletin boards.

The proclamation will be posted on chaplain bulletin boards.

Gwen Rocca has presentations/seminars that week that all pertain to victims’ awareness/impact.

The Lifer’s Organization will donate money to the Women’s Resource Center.

The Education Department is offering a writing contest to recognize Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

**Smithfield:**

The C.O.V.E.R. committee will present staff entering the institution on April 8, with a small blue ribbon to be worn to draw awareness to all crime victims and remind everyone of their duty to commit themselves to returning reentrants to society at a lower risk of victimizing others than when we received them.

A donation box is being placed in the lobby for the week for staff wishing to donate items to Huntingdon House, a local domestic
violence shelter. They need cleaning agents, cups, child sippy cups, baby bottles and pillows.

The annual “Day of Responsibility” is being held on April 11, to highlight Crime Victim Awareness Week. The agenda includes keynote speaker Peggy Ann Bradnick Jackson, who will recount her very personal story of a crime that terrified a community for eight days and thrust the small town of Shade Gap into the national headlines in the spring of 1966.

On April 13, the C.O.V.E.R. committee wishes to have an organized walk around the perimeter of the institution in honor of victim awareness. An approved casual dress day for non-uniform staff is in place, and staff are encouraged to wear blue.

The Smithfield Inmate Organization (SIO), in conjunction with the Education Department, will sponsor an art/writing contest. The theme of the contest is: “Expand the Circle, Reach All Victims.” Art submissions will be placed on display at the Day of Responsibility. The winning essay will be read during the DOR.

**Somerset:**

Art, essay and poetry contest will be held for the inmate population, focusing on the them for National Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

**Waymart:**

Posters honoring crime victims will be prepared by the inmates in standardized programming and will be displayed in common areas in the institution.

A clothesline project and a pinwheel garden project are planned for the therapeutic community.

Reentrants that are participating in the Substance Use Disorder therapeutic community will decorate a bulletin board in honor of crime victims.

SCI Waymart’s annual geranium sale will take place in April in support of the Wayne County Victims Intervention Program.

**Community Corrections:**

Philadelphia CCC #2- Donating kids’ toys to the Women’s Domestic Violence Shelter.

Philadelphia CCC #4- Donating kids’ toys to the Women’s Domestic Violence Shelter.

Harrisburg CCC- Making a monetary donation to the YWCA of Harrisburg.
Wernersville CCC- Donating toiletries to Berks Safe (shelter for woman and children).

Scranton CCC- Donating toiletries to the Women’s Resource Center of Scranton.

York CCC- Donating toiletries to the YWCA of York.

Erie CCC- Donating journals and art supplies to the Crime Victims’ Center of Erie.

Johnstown CCC- Donating towels and sheets to the Women’s Help Center.

Sharon CCC- Donating toiletries, towels, blankets, school supplies, toys, diapers and baby wipes to AWARE of Mercer County.

Pittsburgh CCC- Donating toiletries, towels and wash cloths to the Women’s Center and Shelter of Pittsburgh.

Progress CCC- Making a monetary donation to the Domestic Violence Shelters of Southwestern PA.

Governor Wolf Supports Marsy’s Law for Crime Victims Constitutional Amendment

On April 11, Governor Tom Wolf backed Marsy’s Law, which proposes a state constitutional amendment securing permanent, enforceable rights of victims.

"It is important for us all to reflect on how we can improve the lives of crime victims in Pennsylvania," Governor Wolf said. "Marsy’s Law will amend the state constitution to provide crime victims with equal protections and participation in the process. Victims and their families deserve equity. I thank the Senate for approving this bill unanimously and I urge the General Assembly to continue advancing Marsy’s Law."

The proposed amendment stipulates that there be notice of hearings and other proceedings, protection from the accused, notice of release or escape, full and timely restitution, proceedings free from delays and with prompt conclusion, the ability to confer with the government’s attorney and information on all of these rights.

The Senate recently advanced Senate Bill 1011 unanimously and sent it to the House. The bill is also supported by Pennsylvania’s Office of Victim Advocate and the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association.

"While Pennsylvania stands out as a leader in victim service delivery and protective legislation, we are one of only 15 states that do not have constitutional
amendments for victims,” said Jennifer Storm, Pennsylvania Victim Advocate. “We have many laws that offer meaningful opportunities for victim engagement, but no enforcement of those laws. Marsy’s Law would seek to uphold the promises our legislature and the Wolf Administration have made when passing laws to protect victims, by also enforcing them.”

Governor Wolf also announced that the Capitol building in Harrisburg will be lit purple in honor for Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

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**DOC/PBPP Consolidation Continues**

Consolidation efforts continue at DOC and Parole. Representatives from the DOC and Parole gathered at the DOC Training Academy on April 4 to continue their work on the agency consolidation. Approximately 400 employees from all areas of the agency are involved in 20 committees. The goal of the day was for all committees to meet in person and then report back to the entire group all of the successes thus far on the consolidation efforts. We are three months into the initiative and committees have made significant progress thus far.

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Teaching Inmates Arboriculture

News media was invited to SCI Rockview on April 11 to cover a new class that is being offered to interested Forestry Camp inmates. Thanks to a partnership with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), inmates are learning about arboriculture, with the intent of providing inmates with a skill they can use upon release from prison.

At the prison James Savage, who is an instructor of arboriculture at Pennsylvania State University, teaches the inmates at SCI Rockview the same thing he teaches Penn State students. Savage said there is a huge demand for general workers in this field. He said that while it’s not a popular field, it is a fun, great job that is physical. “If you are a good athlete and enjoy a challenge, this is a great job,” Savage added.

When asked about how the inmates are reacting to the training, Savage said, “Any time you teach, the first couple of days people are afraid and then they learn to trust the equipment. It’s a fun progression to watch.”

Savage said the outdoor classroom at the prison is great, and he said the guys are fun.

“Initially I thought, ‘What have I done,’ but once I got to know the guys, I actually enjoy working with them. It’s a good experience for me, and hopefully it’s a good experience for them that will lead to them getting jobs once they are released from prison.”
Devin, one of the inmates involved in the program and who is afraid of heights, said the program builds confidence. When he’s up in a tree, he tries not to think about the height. He believes the hands-on training and repetition helps to make the duties easier and helps to build confidence.

“There are not a lot of trees where I’m from, and I hope to get into this industry upon release from prison,” Devin said.

Anthony said it feels awesome to have this opportunity and to be able to start a career upon his release from prison.

“This is an opportunity I wouldn’t necessarily have had. This gives me the ability to tell future employers that I’ve got the skills they are looking for and hope that they would give me a chance.”

When asked about the hands-on experience, Anthony said, “Things look completely different and feel different from a tree. You can’t get these skills from just a book or classroom, you need to get the hands-on experience of actually being up in a tree. This is a neat program that gives you the ability to do other things besides climb trees. It’s more than just pruning trees. I hear there is a big demand for people who can do this type of work, so you can leave prison with a high chance of being hired upon release from prison.

Crews from WJAC-TV and WATM-TV covered the outdoor training experience.
“Pursuing Your Passions”

Franklin & Marshall College holds regular networking lunch events with a variety of officials and dignitaries. On April 10, DOC Secretary John Wetzel participated in F&M’s “Pursuing Your Passions” lunch discussion by speaking about prison reform and other issues related to incarceration.

“What a cool forum – lunch discussion with bright young minds. Thanks for the opportunity @FandMCollege @FandM_NewHouse,” Wetzel tweeted.

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Pajama Drive Held

SCI Fayette participated in the 2018 Pajama Drive for Foster Children, with employees donating a total of 40 pajama sets that will be used for children placed in foster care. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and SCI Fayette employees were happy to assist with this wonderful cause.

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WHYY Interviews Secretary Wetzel, TOPIC: Graterford Inmate Suicides

On April 5, DOC Secretary John Wetzel was interviewed by WHYY’s Nina Feldman about the recent rash of inmate suicides at SCI Graterford. Over the past three months, five inmates have died by suicide.

Wetzel confirmed that his agency is concerned about the suicides, saying it is not ordinary to have this many suicides in a short period of time. On average, the DOC experiences seven annual inmate suicides across the entire state prison system.

Wetzel said that gaps in communication between county prison officials and DOC officials during an inmate’s intake process into the DOC are being reviewed to see how communication can be improved, especially for areas involving an inmate’s mental health.

Another contributing factor to the suicides could be the DOC’s plan to move Graterford’s inmates to the new SCI Phoenix. Many Graterford inmates have lived most of their lives at the prison, and the thought of moving to a new prison can create anxiety for some inmates. Officials are working to make the transition easier for inmates.

Wetzel also is arranging for Lindsay Hayes, a national expert on prison suicide prevention, to work with the DOC on this issue. The DOC brought Hayes to Pennsylvania about a decade ago to work with county prisons when they were experiencing a high number of suicides and suicide attempts.

The suicides happened as the DOC has been working to improve conditions for its mentally ill inmates. Wetzel said that approximately 30 percent of DOC inmates require some form of mental health treatment.

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Governor Wolf Leads Call-to-Action for Criminal Justice Reform

Governor Tom Wolf today joined Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel, legislators and advocacy groups in a call-to-action for criminal justice reforms that are long overdue and necessary to provide consistency and uniformity in the system.

“The debate about how we can fix our criminal justice system is complicated, and over time that debate has changed to reflect the modern realities and issues present in our system,” Governor Wolf said. “I believe that we can improve the criminal justice system, so that we can protect victims while also ending a cycle of incarceration that has left so many people feeling trapped, helpless, and without an opportunity to return to society after they have been released.”
The governor outlined a package of eight reform initiatives, including:

- **Justice Reinvestment Initiatives (JRI2)**, which seek to provide for fair sentencing, increase parole supervision and use of community-based programs, among other reforms.
- **Bail and Pre-Trial Reforms** to ensure that everyone has a right to a fair trial and that risk-assessment tools are consistent across the commonwealth.
- **Post-Conviction Relief Act Expansion** to reduce time sensitivity by increasing awareness of when rights expire so defendants can make an informed plea decision. Currently if a defendant pleads guilty, they are foreclosed from post-conviction relief; this needs to change so all defendants, regardless of plea, may attempt to prove their innocence.
- **Review/Implement the Goals of the Sentencing Commission**, which include adopting a standardized, single assessment tool model used from pre-trial until parole completion.
- **Probation/Parole Revocation and Resentencing** to create uniformity in probation revocation procedures and ensure a correlation between risk and probation lengths, resulting in better supervision.
- **Comprehensive Clean Slate Legislation** currently being considered in the General Assembly and the first step in establishing a much more comprehensive clean slate law in the commonwealth to provide an opportunity for persons convicted of greater offenses, including felony convictions, to reenter the community with success.
- **Indigent Defense** is a critical part of the system that can have a large impact on volume, cost, and human effects and is needed in Pennsylvania to ensure the independence and quality of counsel under the Sixth Amendment.
- **Stepping Up Initiative**, which was launched statewide in April 2017 and via summit in December 2017 along with a data-driven project by Dauphin County to examine its criminal justice system, with the goal of reducing the number of people who have serious mental illnesses in the county prison. The findings from that project will be made public at the end of this month and will be used to develop policy and programming recommendations.

The governor was joined by Senator Stewart J. Greenleaf in announcing these reforms. Sen. Greenleaf has been a champion of criminal justice reform and is the Senate Judiciary Committee chair.

“At one time, Pennsylvania had a 65 percent recidivism rate – that is a failed system,” said Sen. Greenleaf. “Since the landmark passage of criminal justice reform legislation in 2012, following our first round with the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, we have reduced our inmate population by over 3,300 inmates, seen a sharp decline in the recidivism rate and saved the state over $400 million. While we have made great progress in recent years reversing the unintended consequences of the past, there are still great injustices built into the system which must be rectified.”

“We need to do the work to make our criminal justice system fairer, more equitable, and more focused on rehabilitation,” Governor Wolf said. “Since I
became Governor, I have worked hard to reform our system so that it leads to better outcomes and saves taxpayer dollars – while also leading to less crime and fewer victims.

“Let’s continue to work towards building the criminal justice system we all want to see in Pennsylvania.”

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**DOC Removes Hard Soled Boots**

The DOC informed inmates earlier this month that hard-soled boots are no longer permitted to be possessed by inmates.

Inmates were advised to arrange to get rid of their boots. Options available to inmates are:

- Inmates have until May 11, 2018, to ship their boots home. Inmates will not be reimbursed for the cost of their boots, but inmates will be reimbursed for the cost of shipping.

- Inmates can arrange with their unit manager to send boots home with a visitor. If this option is chosen, inmates have until June 1, 2018, to send boots home with a visitor. Inmates will not be reimbursed for the cost of their boots.

- Inmates who do not wish to send their boots home, either by visitor or by shipping, must turn in their boots by May 11, 2018. Inmates will not be reimbursed for the cost of their boots.

- Inmates can donate their boots to local organizations and should work with prison staff to facilitate such donations. All donations shall be completed by July 1, 2018. Inmates will not be reimbursed for the cost of their boots.

- Inmates being released by September 1, 2018, can have their boots held for them until their release from prison.

Boots left at the facility can be donated to other state agencies (such as veterans homes), and that will be coordinated by facility staff.

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On April 2, two of Dr. Courtright’s classes (CRIM 370 – Probation, parole, and community-based corrections, and CRIM 295 – Criminal Justice Ethics) were privileged to hear from two Pennsylvania State Parole Agents. Many topics were discussed in these classes, such as the typical job responsibilities of a parole agent, job and internship opportunities within PA State Parole, how to avoid reentrant manipulation, various ethical issues in probation and parole work, the best educational and experiential preparation for the job, among other topics. Agent Johnson works as a field agent in the Pittsburgh area and Agent Kuffer works as an institutional parole agent at SCI Albion, so students were able to learn about both roles and job functions.
Benner Township Names EOQ

Superintendent Dr. Robert Marsh was pleased to announce that Corrections Officer 1 (Posthumously) S. Colyer; Corrections Officer 1 K. Swanson; and Corrections Counselor 2 Barb White have been selected as SCI Benner Township Employees of the Quarter for the 2nd quarter of 2018. These employees were nominated by their co-workers and were selected by the Employee of the Quarter Committee. Their nominations and selection were based on their outstanding service to the mission and their commitment to excellence.

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CCAC Students Tour Prison

On April 10, students from Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) toured SCI Fayette and were very appreciative for the chance to see the inside of the prison. They toured a housing unit, the education building and Pennsylvania Correctional Industries, which makes Pennsylvania license plates and other items from within the prison.

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Frackville Names EOQ

Congratulations to SCI Frackville Clerk Stenographer Monica Capone for being named Employee of the 2nd Quarter 2018.

Pictured, from left to right, are Training Coordinator Al Smith, Monica Capone and Deputy Superintendent for Facility Management Jaime Sorber.

SCI Mercer Hosts Informational Session for the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program

As a kick-off to Reentry Month in April, on March 28th SCI Mercer’s Activities Department and members of the Pittsburgh Inside Out Program, along with professors from Duquesne, Westminster and Slippery Rock Universities, held an information session to discuss the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program. This event was open to the general population of SCI Mercer and to staff. Eleven outside guests, 25 staff members and 67 inmates attended the event.

The idea of the Inside Out Program was conceived in a prison classroom over 20 years ago and has now grown into an international movement comprised of more than 100 correctional and higher education partnerships, hundreds of trained instructors, two dozen think tanks and more than 300,000 students worldwide who have benefited from these life-changing courses.

The mission of the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program is to create opportunities for people inside and outside of prison to have transformative learning experiences that emphasize collaboration and dialogue that invite them to take leadership in
addressing crime, justice, and other issues of social concern. Education in which we are able to encounter each other, especially across profound social barriers, is transformative and allows problems to be approached in new and different ways.

The program is a semester long course where incarcerated individuals and college/university students are brought together in the same setting, read the same assignment, write papers and engage in discussion together each week. Studying together and working on issues of crime, justice and related social concerns, those inside and outside of prison can catalyze the kinds of changes that will make communities more inclusive, just, humane and socially sustainable.

Duquesne University Professor Norman Conti presented an informational session for the incarcerated men and staff. Professor Sarah Kuehn and three students from Slippery Rock University, along with Professors Kristenne Robinson and Shannon Smithe and three students from Westminster College, and Maggie McGannon from the Allegheny County DA’s office, participated in several activities with the staff and inmates, which are used during the Inside Out Program. Inside Out Prison Exchange trained inmates Christopher and Robert were also part of the discussion panel during the informational session.

After the activities were completed, a question and answer segment was held to allow the inmates to ask the professors questions about the program.

It is anticipated that this program will begin at SCI Mercer in the Spring of 2019. Inmates who attended the event were very interested in the program and look forward to it beginning at this facility. The inmates felt that this type of program will assist them once they have been released to their communities.
Coal Township Named EOQ

SCI Coal Township Corrections Officer 1 R. Morey was recently recognized as Employee of the Quarter for the First Quarter of 2018.

Officer Morey was nominated by his supervisors and recognized for his proactive approach in combating contraband/drugs in this facility. His initiative and knowledge of policies/procedures is his driving force in fighting the battle of illegal drugs at SCI Coal Township. Officer Morey has proven time and again that he cares for the safety and security of the institution and his fellow coworkers. Morey is a valuable member of the Security Threat Group Committee and continues to provide accurate information regarding gang-related inmates and their activities. He monitors inmates assigned to his unit and through his observations it has led to positive urine test results and contraband finds. Officer Morey takes pride in his job performance.

Congratulations on a job well done!

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Long-Time Employee Retires

SCI Waymart Human Resources Director Gerald Seibert retired on April 6, with 21 years of DOC service.

His Waymart coworkers commemorated the event on April 3 with a breakfast reception.

Congratulations, Gerald, on your retirement. Waymart staff will miss you!

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Bleier Takes “Quarterbacks of Life” Program to Pine Grove

On April 11, Rocky Bleier was at SCI Pine Grove in conjunction with the Quarterbacks of Life Program. Quarterbacks of Life is a component of the Beating the Odds Foundation. This group is comprised of men and women who chose to fight through incredible setbacks in life, and in the end, won over adversity. They travel around the country sharing their stories with America’s youth to inspire and motivate them to achieve success in their own lives. Through their stories, they spread the key point of the Beating the Odds Foundation: By never giving up, every person can design his or her own destiny.

At SCI Pine Grove, Bleier and his group spoke to inmates and employee veterans who served during the Vietnam era.

He autographed pictures for staff and inmates and presented a Vietnam Era pin to staff member William Olp who also served in Vietnam.

Bleier presents pin to SCI Pine Grove employee William Olp.
Narcan Boxes Placed Throughout Facilities

Since Gov. Tom Wolf signed an opioid disaster declaration in January 2018, the DOC has placed Narcan throughout its facilities, including its Central Office. The purpose of these placements is for quick response to an overdose and/or accidental exposure to opioids. The specially-marked boxes are located with regular first aid boxes and AEDs, and staff has been trained in the use of the administration of Narcan. Web based training also will be offered to staff, and the boxes will be regularly inspected to ensure fresh doses are always ready for use.

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Poster Presented at Recent Conference

On February 27, 2018, SCI Retreat Teachers Carrie Andrews and Susan Robachefski presented a poster at the annual Pennsylvania Department of Education Conference at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. The theme of the poster was, "What Local Education Agencies (LEA's) Need to Know about Correction Education." They received positive feedback from public school teachers and the public, who didn't know how education is done in correctional facilities. They were picked out of at least 50 entries to present their poster.

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Sexual Assault Awareness Day

On April 4, DOC employees were encouraged to wear teal in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Day. Pictured below are SCI Frackville staff.

SCI Frackville’s administrative staff recognizing Sexual Assault Awareness Day -- Patti Zurick, Jen Newberry, Beth Lazusky, Supt. Kathy Brittain, Dawn Jacobs and Laura Schaeffer.

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Forest Names EOM

Corrections Officer 1 R. Geer was selected as SCI Forest’s Employee of the Month for April 2018. Geer was nominated by his peers as being a model of professionalism who works in an organized and systematic way. He teaches inmates priceless organizational skills and is very professional with everyone he meets.

Congratulations, Officer Geer!

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Recognizing Sgt. Baserman and More

During a recent visit to SCI Somerset, Pennsylvania Correctional Industries Director Khelleh Konteh and his staff presented Superintendent Melissa Hainsworth with a PCI-made plaque in honor of Sgt. Mark Baserman. Baserman was brutally assaulted by an inmate, and who later died of injuries he sustained during that February 2018 assault.

Director Konteh also recognized the prison’s laundry staff for doing a wonderful job assisting the prison during and following the tragic incident. The plaque, which names SCI Somerset laundry staff as PCI’s employee of the 1st Quarter of 2018, says:

“SCI Somerset and PA DOC recently experienced a traumatic situation of a loss of a fellow staff member at the hands of an inmate. Throughout this highly emotional incident, all personnel from SCI Somerset Laundry Division’s tireless devotion to duty and willingness to complete your assigned tasks have not gone unnoticed and are appreciated.

Thank you for going above and beyond your duties to ensure the mission of PCI ‘Teaching Inmates to Work in Pennsylvania’ and our customers’ needs were met. A fellow staff had fallen yet you worked through it. Many days staff spent countless hours working so no customer would go without their laundry. The leadership, dedication and staff’s teamwork and energy permitted the laundry division at Somerset to continue to run smoothly and efficiently.

PCI appreciates the effort that you all make to maintain a positive attitude even when faced with a challenging situation.

Please keep up the good work.”
SCI Smithfield Holds “Day of Responsibility”

Several years ago, DOC facilities began holding Days of Responsibilities. The day is intended to provide a way for inmates to take ownership of their criminal behaviors that led them to incarceration and discuss with outsiders and other inmates important topics such as impact of crime. The days usually consist of outside speakers, inmate speakers and breakout discussion groups.

SCI Smithfield held its annual Day of Responsibility on April 12.

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Rockview Inmates Learn about Health Coverage

April is Reentry Month. Ensuring reentrants have access to health care is an important part of achieving success in the community.

At SCI Rockview the Reentry Services Office provided inmates with a presentation by Ellen Schellenberger, a certified healthcare marketplace navigator. Schellenberger discussed health coverage options available upon release. Her purpose is to assist individuals to enroll in insurance programs through the Health Insurance Marketplace as established through the Affordable Care Act and expanded Medicaid by providing outreach and assistance. Pamphlets were distributed to those in attendance and a question and answer session was held.

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Agents Take the Plunge

On January 19, agents from the Philadelphia and Reading District Offices participated in the Eastern Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Pa. Together they were able to raise more than $2,000 for Special Olympics Pa. This is a yearly event that agents from the state have participated in for the past eight years.

Pictured, from left to right, are: Jon Lukens, Donald McMonagle, Jeffrey Weaver, Richard Russell, Tonia Bottino, Caitlin Krulock, Zane McGowan and Jarred Brunner.

Agent, Daughter Take the Plunge

On February 26, Reading Sub-Office agent Donald McMonagle traveled to Pittsburgh with his daughter, Amanda, to participate in the Pittsburgh Super Plunge for Special Olympics Pa. Together they were able to raise more than $7,500 for Special Olympics while plunging 24 times; which helped their team, Pittsburgh Port Authority, win the Battle of the Badges with a total team effort of over $90,000!
Updating Area Reveals the Past

At SCI Huntingdon this spring, Superintendent Kevin Kauffman’s area is being updated with new paint. Ken Holmes, CWP foreman, is pictured tearing off some old paneling that was in bad shape.

When he pulled the paneling away from the wall, imagine his surprise to find a cubby hole and a message from SCI Huntingdon’s past (also pictured).

Since this area used to be a residence for the warden and his family, we believe the cubby hole may have been some type of pass through between rooms or even an old dumbwaiter. The message included a penny from 1977, and said: “This ‘cubby hole’ closed in the process of installing new paneling on this office on this date of 2-17-77.”
Before the cubby hole was covered with drywall, Superintendent Kauffman and his office staff placed a new message and new penny, along with the 1977 message and penny, back into the cubby hole for a future superintendent and his staff to find.

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**Competing over Pajamas**

SCI Albion’s Empowerment Committee participated in a friendly competition against SCI Cambridge Springs to collect pajamas for the Office of Victim Advocate for Child Abuse Prevention Month. In total, Albion collected 91 sets of pajamas and Cambridge Springs collected 150. Even though Cambridge Springs won the pajama drive, the items all go to the same place for the same cause. The drop off location was at PennDOT in Meadville where staff were photographed depositing the collected items.

![Pajamas](image)

*Pictured, from left to right, are: SCI Albion’s Patty Thompson and SCI Cambridge Springs’ Heather Taylor and Tonya Turner.*

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In The Centers...

Wernersville CCC Gives Back

Wernersville Community Corrections Center (CCC) is giving back to the community by donating mattresses and linens that the center can no longer use to a homeless shelter and an animal shelter.

Officials at Opportunity House in Reading were very pleased to receive 17 mattresses and bags of linen and blankets. They are at max capacity, and the mattresses could not have come at a better time.

Ruth Steiner’s memorial SPCA in Pine Grove now has 17 mattresses and blankets. The dogs now have something to lay on instead of a hard, concrete floor.

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BCC staff participates in Evidence Based Practices Training

Bureau of Community Corrections (BCC) program staff participated in the 4 Core Competencies training facilitated by the Carey Group with separate two-day sessions at the DOC’s Central Office and in Pittsburgh. The trainings were well attended, and the participation and energy were strong as evidenced by the questions and dialogue between the participants and the facilitator. Additionally, staff learned about the use of Brief Intervention Tools (BITS), which will enhance interactions between staff and reentrants.
About the 4 Core Competencies: The areas of professional skills that research has demonstrated to be effective in reducing risk among offenders: building a professional alliance, engaging in skill practice, effective case planning and management, and appropriately using rewards and responses to noncompliance.

About Brief Intervention Tools (BITs): BITs are short, user friendly, versatile tools that were developed particularly (but not exclusively) for spontaneous situations. The 6 BITs tools are:

1. Making a decision
2. Overcoming Automatic Responses
3. Overcoming Thinking Traps
4. Problem Solving
5. Thinking Traps
6. Who I spend Time with

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Pathways Reentrants Help Local Church

On March 5, 18 reentrants from Pathways, which is part of the Wernersville Community Corrections Center (CCC) that focuses on providing services to individuals with mental illness, participated in a large community service event.

Pathways was notified by Father Ed Essig of Saint Francis de Sales that he needed assistance at his church in Robesonia, Pa. Father Ed stated that his church was receiving new chairs and that they needed help with them.

Reentrants arrived at Saint Francis de Sales and got to work!

First, 240 chairs needed to be removed from the church and placed in a storage area. Next, a tractor trailer pulled up from Texas and had 240 new chairs and kneelers that needed to be moved to the church, unpacked, assembled and placed in rows.

The reentrants attacked the project and helped transform a vacant hall back into a fully functioning church. Father Ed was ecstatic and appreciative for the help that day and sent the following statement on the churches behalf:
“On behalf of the entire parish family of Saint Francis de Sales, I want to offer my many thanks and much appreciation to the 18 men and the supervisors who helped to unload, move and set up the 240 brand new chairs and kneelers for our worship space. I also want to acknowledge their dedication and their focus in accomplishing the work that needed to be done. With so many chairs coming halfway across the country, I’ll admit I was anxious as to how it would all turn out. Yet, watching these men at work gives proof, once again, how God always provides THE BEST! God’s choicest blessings be upon them for their time and service to the community”.

Pathways continues to reach out in the community in a positive manner, offering assistance in many endeavors. Building positive relationships in the community through community service has become a priority for us. Stay tuned for next week’s update when we share the results of a project with a youth sports program in the community.

Cleaning Up Roadways

On April 7, approximately 15 TLC reentrants, two employees, Employment Housing Coordinator Doreen White and Director Nicole Miller participated in a highway clean up. This section of highway 180 was adopted by TLC some time ago.

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Effectiveness of the Body Scanner

In the latter part of 2017, DOC officials began testing a body scanner at Wernersville CCC because that facility was seeing a high number of overdoses and contraband finds. The body scanner is similar to a very low dose x-ray machine. Reentrants stand in it while the machine takes images of their bodies. The scanner can see items hidden in clothing and shoes, and it can see items that may be hidden in body cavities or that have been swallowed.

Knowing about the scanner and concerned that a parolee had concealed contraband inside of her body, a parole agent requested that the female parolee -- who had been housed at ADAPPT in Reading -- be taken to Wernersville CCC to be run through the body scanner. The request was approved, and as the parolee was about to enter the body scanner, she reached into her pants and pulled out one lighter, five grams of tobacco, two packs of rolling papers and two suboxone strips which had been packed inside of three condoms.

The parolee was returned to SCI Muncy as a parole violator.

Kudos to the parole agent and to BCC staff for allowing the scanner to be used on individuals other than Wernersville CCC reentrants.

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BCC conducts “Real Colors” Training

On March 23, the Bureau of Community Corrections conducted “Real Colors” training for managers and supervisors who work in BCC Region 3, which is the western part of Pennsylvania. Trainings for Region 1 and Region 2 employees were held in January and February.

Region 3 employees participate in “Real Colors” training.
BCC Director Daniel McIntyre was pleased with the energy, participation and feedback of the staff involved in the three regional trainings and was grateful to the training facilitators – Richard Podguski, Penny Sines and Jesse Zortman -- for offering their time and considerable talent to BCC.

“Clearly, ‘Real Colors’ training afforded BCC employees additional insights in working with each other and the reentrant population and sets the stage for additional trainings in Risk, Needs, Responsivity (RNR), Core Competencies and Brief Intervention Tools (BITs) in the spring of 2018.”

About Real Colors: The Real Colors Adult Personality Instrument is a simple, intuitive system for identifying the four temperaments (Blue, Gold, Green or Orange) common to all people. It provides users with an effective tool for understanding human behavior, for uncovering motivators specific to each temperament and for improving communication skills. The Real Colors Adult Personality Instrument serves as the foundation for dynamic workshops designed to address common organizational issues such as leadership, stress reduction, conflict prevention, team building, improving customer service and much more.

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**Scranton CCC Reentrants Donate to Animal Shelter**

Reentrants at the Scranton CCC brought two vans full of dog food and other various dog supplies to the “TRUE FRIENDS” animal shelter located in Montrose, Pa. This effort was coordinated by Corrections Counselor 2 Ken Jordan (pictured right), and he was assisted by monitors Zachery Major (center) and Larry McIver (left). As “TRUE FRIENDS” officials said, “This will keep us in food and supplies for months to come.” They were ecstatic and appreciative for the help and generosity from the Scranton CCC reentrants. This is community service at its finest.

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Easter Egg Hunt Held at Sharon CCC

A holiday tradition continued this year with the annual Easter Egg Hunt held on wooded grounds of the Sharon Community Corrections Center (CCC). Close to 200 children and adults attended the event, sponsored by West Hill Ministries, on Palm Sunday. Scattered around the grounds were 3,000 eggs filled with candy. The West Hill Ministries also gave away two hams and prize baskets filled with stuffed animals, toys and snacks. Judging by the looks on these happy faces, the kids had fun filling their baskets with treats.