

Correctional Newsfront

The official newsletter of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, including the state prisons, reentry services, community corrections and parole supervision



2020 News ~ April to June

Week of June 29, 2020...

Williamsport District Parole and “The Link” – CareerLink’s Mobile Office Collaboration

On June 23, Williamsport District’s Community Reentry Parole Agent Amy Ramiza facilitated an in-person reentrant employment group with help from The Link, CareerLink’s Mobile Office. The Link was parked in Sunbury, and CareerLink staff Robert Eddy and Craig Kurtz were available to help reentrants who were struggling with joblessness.

The Link staff has been providing employment resources to local SCI’s (Muncy, Coal Township and Rockview) for years, but this was the first initiative involving parole reentrants who are residing in the community.

Reentrants who are local residents, and who have been struggling with unemployment issues, were referred to the group from their field agent, Agent Matt Kieski, and scheduled for attendance by Ramiza.



Also in attendance the day of the event were Parole Manager Penny Sines and Megan Bair, operations manager with PA CareerLink. All COVID-19 precautions were observed and followed, reentrant arrival times were staggered and all surfaces were sanitized after each participant left.

The reentrants were each given documents to explain programs which help people who have criminal records become eligible for and maintain steady employment. The reentrants were also provided with sample cover letters and professional statements that help tackle the issue of their criminal past.



The CareerLink staff was able to improve the resumes of the reentrants to include any skill or certifications that they received while serving their state sentences. The staff also helped with local job searches that the reentrants were qualified for and explained how the reentrants can utilize the CareerLink website on their own for job searching practices. Each reentrant will be contacted by Ramiza in the coming weeks for continued help in

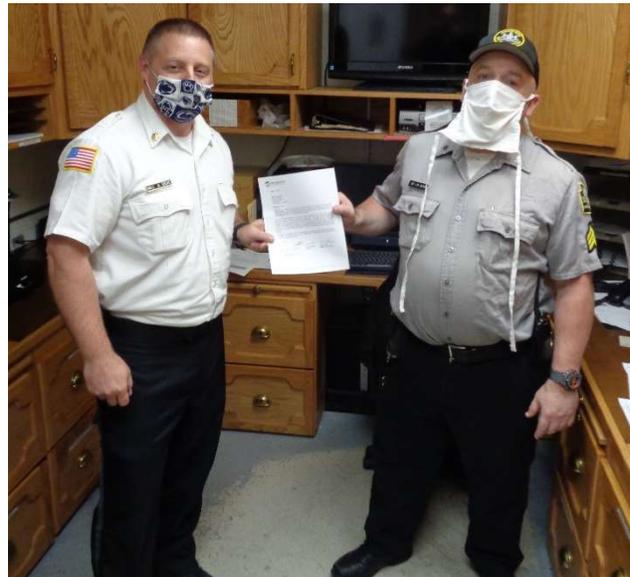
securing employment.

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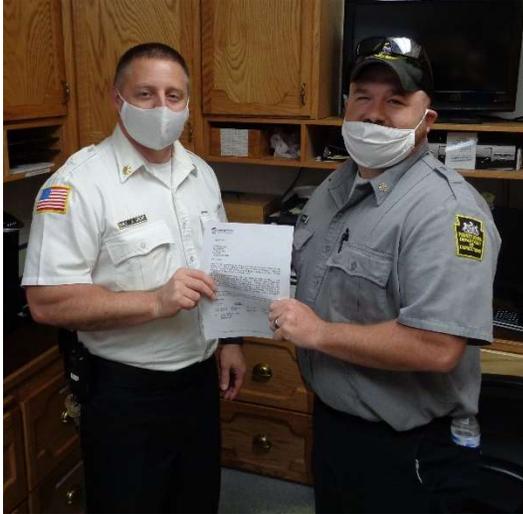
Smithfield Trio Recognized for Serving at Huntingdon

SCI Smithfield's Major Grove and Acting Captain Keel presented letters of appreciation to CO1 Shaw, CO1 Wesley, and Sgt. Grove from SCI Huntingdon Superintendent Kevin Kauffman and administrative staff.

In the letter, Kauffman expressed his appreciation to staff that answered the call for additional help at Huntingdon during their recent COVID-19 outbreak despite the knowledge of the hard work ahead and the increased potential of exposure to the virus. Shaw, Wesley and Grove volunteered to serve at Huntingdon and help out during the outbreak.



Superintendent Jamey Luther also expressed her appreciation for staff's selfless commitment to assist. It is yet another testament to the dedicated professionals of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections being there and ready to serve in times of need.



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Murals Help Social Distancing at Phoenix

SCI Phoenix inmates painted murals along the West and East medication lines to have a visual representation of social distancing for inmates waiting in line. This suggestion came from Infection Control Nurse Stephanie O'Neil, and it is a great way for inmates to visually see how far they should stay apart to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Check some of the murals out below!





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Staying Busy at Waymart

Inmates at SCI Waymart are staying busy with a variety of activities.

Some are busy playing corn hole, while one inmate made a drawing of an unknown city and is coloring it in. (See below.)

Others are playing PlayStation games and listening to their tunes off their inmate tablets. Some inmates are in quarantine in anticipation of starting their jobs in the Cosmetology Shop and other shops as well.



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Inmate Organization Provided Cookies to Coal Township Inmates

The SCI Coal Township Triumph Inmate Organization, under the direction of Paul Randell, CAS, sponsored a Dave's Awesome Cookie giveaway to the inmate population.

The giveaway was a "thank you" to the inmate population for their continued support throughout the years and the hardship during the COVID-19 situation. The cookie pack consisted of: chocolate chip, M&M, oatmeal raisin, and snickerdoodle.

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Fun Fact Friday Begins at Waymart

Each nostril of a human being register smell in a different way.

Smells that are made from the right nostril are more pleasant than the left.

This was the first fun fact submitted for Fun Fact Friday at SCI Waymart, a new morale-boosting activity sent to staff every Friday. Matia Rosentel, clerk typist, has a dry erase board in her office and puts a new fact on it every day and submits them for Fun Fact Friday for the whole staff to enjoy.

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Around the Centers...

Kintock Center Adds Murals

On May 18, The Kintock Group began a new mural arts project inside of Classroom 3. The facility had Kintock Appreciates the Arts Program (KAAP), and during the pandemic painting moved from canvas to the walls, including in a classroom, computer lab and the main corridor.

In the past KAAP facilitated art classes, teaching techniques, history and styles. Now the focus has become more about the actual art and creating the murals throughout the facility.



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Tomorrows Hope Holds Corn Hole Tournament for Staff, Residents

Due to COVID-19, Tomorrows Hope has implemented numerous activities for its residents to help pass the time. This past week the facility held a corn hole tournament for the residents and staff.

The competition was fierce and competitive—though it was all about having fun. The winner from the staff tournament played the winners from the residents' tournament. In a best of three series, the staff won the first-ever Tomorrows Hope corn hole tournament!



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Kintock Employees Enjoy Free Lunch

On March 23, Kintock's corporate office approved free lunch for employees on a daily basis. Each shift is provided lunch all 7 days of the week. A Kintock HR representative comes to the facility each day and provides a lunch to all employees. The meals are purchased from providers in the vicinity of Kintock's facility to assist the local business owners in the neighborhood. The meals have increased staff morale during this difficult time and have allowed staff to save on spending money on lunch each day. Lunch will be provided by Kintock to all of their employees until further notice.

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Week of June 15, 2020...

K9 Unit Opens New Facility

The DOC's Drug Interdiction K9 Unit has a new training area.

With the assistance of SCI Laurel Highlands, the Western Region K9 handlers put together a training facility that enables the handlers and their K9 partners to train in "real world" conditions. The team put together three mock cells, a mock dorm, library, office, restroom and locker room. With the generosity of SCIs Somerset, Fayette and Greene, the handlers were able to outfit the training areas with everything needed to make them as real as possible. The sight and smell of the areas are so close to the real thing that it will help keep the K9s acclimated to the correctional settings they normally work in.



The DIU also celebrated its 25th anniversary in May!



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Waymart Honors Staff for Service Milestones

SCI Waymart recognized more than a century of DOC experience recently when it presented certificates for 25 and 30 years of experience and dedication to the DOC

to employees. Included in the ceremony was Employee of the Quarter Lt. Joshua Zofcin.

Pictured from left: Richard Troiani, 25 years; Deputy Superintendent on Facilities Management James Cirelli, 30 years; Edward Staback, 30 years; Joe Kandrot, 25 years; Superintendent George Miller; Lt. Joshua Zofcin, Employee of the Quarter; Tim Schweinsburg; Deputy Superintendent for Forensic Services Bobbie Bassett; and Deputy Superintendent for Centralized Services Joe Grillo.



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Waymart Staff Pick Up Litter

On June 4, a clean-up crew from SCI Waymart picked up garbage and debris on Carbondale Road in Waymart. Called "Project Canaan," volunteers from Waymart collected approximately 20 bags. A big shout-out for each and every one of these staff members!



Volunteers with Project Canaan included: Timothy Schweinsburg, Linda Evans, Jim Salak, Deputy Superintendent for Centralized Services Joe Grillo, Dave Gorman, Major Jeff Gibson, Joe Karlavige, Tim McDermott, Dave Chapel, Amber Muchal, Nate Mihal, Monica Fortese and Chris Altemier.

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Albion Inmates Support Local Food Bank

Inmates at SCI Albion saw what was happening in the community and around the world and wanted to help in any way they could.

They decided to make a donation, collected from their personal funds, to the Second Harvest Food Bank. Numerous inmates participated and raised a total of \$730.50! This donation will help provide meals to families in need during this difficult time.

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Laurel Highlands Staff Enjoy Free McDonald's

The Empowerment Committee at SCI Laurel Highlands wanted to show the staff their appreciation, so on June 3, all staff were treated to McDonald's hamburgers and McChicken sandwiches. One of each sandwich was provided to all three shifts. Staff were very thankful and enjoyed the sandwiches.



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Muncy Creates Table Dividers for Safer Dining

SCI Muncy maintenance staff have fabricated plastic table dividers to install in the inmate dining halls.

Muncy can only feed 216 inmates at a time—and that was before COVID-19 hit—so there was a need to find a way to make dining safer with social distancing. Take a look at the creations being installed at every table:



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Four Pups Graduate Pine Grove Program

On June 11, the Train, Assist, Inspire, Loyal, Serve (T.A.I.L.S.) puppies graduated their primary training at SCI Pine Grove. They will return to New Hope Assistance Dogs Inc., in Warren to complete secondary training for placement with a client, either a child or Veteran.

Zeke and Zack turned one year old on June 15, and Freedom and Tony will be a year old on August 6, 2020.

Pictured from left: Freedom, Zeke, Zack and Tony

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Phoenix Staff Enjoy Free Pretzels

SCI Phoenix staff were treated by its Empowerment Committee to free Philly Soft Pretzels on June 11. Each person received one free pretzel during lunch.

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Hendricks Retires After Lengthy Career

After nearly 35 years with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, chief of population management, Jennifer Hendricks retired on June 12, 2020.

Hendricks began her corrections career at the State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Coal Township as a records specialist. She eventually became the records administrator and worked to create the Centralized Sentence Computation Unit.



Jennifer Hendricks with her husband, Brian, who retired from the DOC on Dec. 28, 2019.

Throughout her career, Hendricks was elected to the Board of the National Association of Extradition Officials, she was the Interstate Corrections Compact coordinator and assisted in the implementation of JNET, Megan's law and DNA testing for the department.

Hendricks was one of the first employees in the Office of Population Management (OPM), where she became the chief of population management. During her time with OPM, she was instrumental in implementing the Inmate Assignment Decision Support System and assisted with the closure of four prisons (SCIs Pittsburgh [twice], Cresson, Greensburg and Graterford).

Hendricks spent her last three months helping the DOC manage the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to career highlights mentioned previously, Hendrick's corrections career included:

- Working for a week with the FBI Profilers from Quantico reviewing some inmates to determine if they had the potential to be serial killers.

- Working with IT contractors to create and implement a sentence computation program that could compute the underlapping sentences and show all crimes and automatically create the DC-16 Sentence Status Summary.
- Assisting with the move of inmates from SCI Graterford to SCI Phoenix.
- Participated on the original committee to implement the Security Threat Group Management Unit program.
- Assisted with COVID-19 to stop all inmate movements and also to move inmates within the system.

DOC officials thank Hendricks for her work over the years and wish her the best as she begins the next chapter of her life.

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Frackville Supports CO After Fire

On May 24, SCI Frackville CO Ruddy suffered an unfortunate event: His home and all his belongings were destroyed in a house fire.

The Frackville family was asked to step up and help out, and they did just that with donations to the Ruddy family for more than \$2,600 and enough donated items to fill a van. The Empowerment Committee, Rec, PSCOA, Bobby wilt Foundation, SCIF Pride and PSCOA all donated more than \$4,000.



On June 3, Deputy Superintendent for Facilities Management Nathan Wynder and Lt. Dennis Reichert donated the items to the Ruddy family.



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Phoenix Psychology Employee Defends Dissertation, Earns Doctorate

Matthew Reese, a psychological services specialist (PSS) at SCI Phoenix, recently defended his doctoral dissertation at the School of Behavioral Sciences of California Southern University and earned the degree of Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D). Dr. Matthew Reese successfully defended his dissertation titled "Social Deficits in Autism: A Study in Reciprocal Social Dynamics" in March 2020.

Congratulations, Dr. Reese!

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DOC Leadership Participate in International COVID Phone Conference

On June 11, the DOC leadership team participated in a phone call with the International Corrections and Prisons Association on COVID recovery measures and resuming services.

The call was led by Doug Dretke, executive director of Sam Houston State University's Correctional Management Institution of Texas. In addition to the DOC, individuals from Australia, Moldova, Gambia, Kosovo, Canada, Bermuda, Turkey, Colombia participated.

DOC Sec. John Wetzel shared about the overall efforts by the PA DOC to mitigate COVID while supporting the population and the staff. He explained providing support in a very myopic way making this effort a focus of the agency.

Director Jeremy Tucker, Department of Justice from Australia, shared their strategy, which mirrored the efforts of our agency.

The two-edged sword is to balance the community openness and staff exposure while restricting the agency protocols to ensure continued mitigation of the COVID spread within the closed congregate environment.

Other participants in the call shared their efforts to mitigate COVID, including challenges such as remote visits, expanded inmate/family communications, testing strategies, isolation/quarantine protocols, mental health services provided to inmates, adaptation of facilities, social distancing and segregating yards.

Also discussed was the development of a website that allows jurisdictions to input data into the model to determine disease spread potential. PA DOC's Dr. Bret Bucklen was crucial in developing the model, which can help a system to return to a new normal while taking virus introduction points and staff exposure into consideration. The software models the impact of an uncontrolled spread, including isolation spreads, impact on tertiary system, possible deaths and even reduction of staff.

Others shared their experiences to mitigate COVID-19 within their systems; Bermuda, for example, shared that it has no cases inside of its facilities.

All agencies worked to ensure continued family communication throughout the mitigation process.

“We very much enjoyed Secretary Wetzel joining us yesterday for the information exchange,” said Dretke.

This link is to the virus spread model developed by New South Wales and the DOC’s Bret Bucklen: <https://github.com/The-Kirby-Institute/covid19-closed-pop-models>

For more on the ICPA, visit: <https://icpa.org/>

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Original Puppy Program Grad Returns to Coal Township

Layla was one of the first round of dogs to join Coal Township’s FIDOS Program in 2014. She was so sweet, gentle and beautiful that everyone immediately fell for her—so much that Layla became the “Jail Dog.”

Coal Township adopted Layla and she stayed until she was finally paroled last year when she was adopted by Unit Manager John Dunn (pictured at right with Layla.)

She loves her new home and is adored by the Dunn family! Occasionally, Layla comes back to visit the prison. Everyone loves seeing her and feeding her a treat, but at the end of the day she knows she will be heading back home where she is spoiled even more than she was at the prison (if that’s even possible).

Layla loves car rides, keeping a watchful eye on her neighborhood, ice cream, her amazing posturepedic doggie bed and her human siblings, parents and grandparents!

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QBC Grad Shares Story of Success

Quehanna Boot Camp Building Trades Teacher McCullough was contacted recently by reentrant Brian, who was one of McCullough’s most recent masonry graduates. Brian completed the NCCER Masonry Level 1 program at the Boot Camp, which he finished during the early stages of COVID-19 with small group cohort instruction.



Brian said he tried a temp agency when he was first released and was only able to find factory work at low wages. He contacted a masonry contractor and said at first nothing was available (somewhat due to the pandemic). He contacted them again later and once he advised them he completed a Masonry Level 1 program at the Quehanna Boot Camp, he was instantly put through to set up for an interview.

He was proud to say that effective June 15, he started work with a masonry contractor making \$17 an hour with health insurance, retirement and paid time off.

Brian wanted to thank the facility for all the staff has done and in giving him the opportunity to complete the Masonry Level 1 program.

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Around the Centers...

CTC Erie Reentrants Clean Up Outside

Male reentrants at CTC had the opportunity to work outside, build skills and engage in positive social recreation in the fresh air. Trees were trimmed, beds were weeded and mulch was spread at the facility.



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Tomorrows Hope Honors Memorial Day

On Oct. 18, 2019, Tomorrows Hope CEO Rich Metzger initiated a Tomorrows Hope Veterans Day initiative to bring awareness and support for veterans to the reentrants at the facility. Tomorrows Hope has three veteran contracts that house homeless veterans on-site.

The project was well-received by the reentrants, and it consisted of refurbishing of the Veterans Memorial Fountain and placing flags throughout the facility. Reentrants re-opened the memorial fountain on May 22, 2020, and held a small ceremony in remembrance of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. To show their support, a cookout at Tomorrows Hope facility for the reentrants and veterans was provided and held on Memorial Day. Due to COVID-19, the event was limited to those living at the facility.

This outreach and support to veterans is only a small token of thanks for the sacrifice that has been made by so many.



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SIP Reentrant Continues to Thrive Despite Tragedy

Reentrant David was in the State Intermediate Program (SIP) during his stint in community corrections. He remained a stellar participant in the program until his sentence completion—despite both of his parents being killed in an auto accident when they were on their way to visit him while he was a resident at CCC #4 in Philadelphia.

After their death, David fell into a morbid state of pain and depression and struggled with all aspects of his life, especially his urge to start using drugs again as an escape from his emotional pain. It was at that time that the center director, his counselor, his counselor at his SIP treatment provider Gaudenzia Outreach, and the SIP treatment team wrapped their arms around him, in support and human caring, and held onto him throughout this period of grief and despair.

David ultimately survived the loss of his parents without using drugs again and has continuously participated in his own success since that time by meeting all conditions of SIP while never breaking any rules or receiving any misconducts. In

fact, during and since his time in the SIP program, he has completed college, earned a degree in psychology and continues working at his current career steadily. He has also gotten married, helped so many people and, along with his wife, has purchased a home. He also continues to pursue his commitment to his recovery by making 12-step recovery meetings on a regular basis, sharing his experience, strength, help and hope freely to the newcomers he has met therein, thus paying it forward.

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Week of June 1, 2020...

Waymart Supports Local Food Pantry

SCI Waymart Lieutenant Delbert Worth and Clerk Typist II Kathy Millard have led the facility's food drives for the Wayne County Food Pantry Program since 2005, and this spring the facility stepped up to donate once again.

This year's theme is "Hunger Knows No Season," and canned donations of tuna fish, beans, fruits, vegetables, soup, rice, mac & cheese, pasta, pasta sauce, oatmeal, cereal and more were given by the employees of Waymart.



Lt. Worth placed containers throughout the entrances, picked them up and delivered them to the Wayne County Office of Human Services in Honesdale on May 29. He thanks everyone for his or her support and generosity throughout the years.

Looking forward to more kindness in November for the Feed-A-Friend Program for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday!

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Certified Peer Specialists Keep Serving During Pandemic

Certified Peer Specialists continue to offer services to their peers during the COVID-19 pandemic. While CPS' are very familiar with offering support to their peers during a difficult emotional time or to support a peer living with mental health symptoms, providing support during an historic pandemic was not an event our CPS' were prepared for.

However, SCIs across the state have been innovative in allowing this important program to continue while maintaining fidelity to the purpose of what a CPS does.

Although many CPS' only have been able to provide services on their units, they have stepped up to the challenge and offered support whenever needed to their fellow peers, even at a time when they too are experiencing the impact of isolation. As one CPS said, "I'm currently housed with 60 inmates on an open-dorm setting, and they all have things going on within themselves. I'm not exempt from having my own ups and downs, and I myself have to go to a CPS for hope and encouragement. The main thing I give to anyone struggling is hope and to let them know they are not alone and that we are in this together. I am hopeful things will go back to normal... the guys need us."

Another CPS said, "I'll continue to do what I'm doing, even more if it's asked of me. I take the initiative to talk to anyone on my unit and express empathy and care every time I talk to them. This makes me feel better."

One CPS on SCI Waymart's Personal Care Unit said, "Although I am worried, I still talk to my peers and motivate them and try to help them understand what the pandemic is and just talk to help people feel calm. I feel ok because staff are doing an excellent job in cleaning and keeping us safe during this pandemic."

One individual receiving CPS services said, "CPS' are especially helpful during COVID. Our CPS never turns anyone down who needs help. He shares himself with us".

CPS supervisors across Pennsylvania also deserve recognition as they are taking added steps in ensuring CPS' have access to continuing educational courses by using in-cell assignments and alternative ways of providing training which is critical in maintaining the official CPS certification and keeping the program alive.

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Inmates Purchase Ice Cream Sales at Coal Township

In April, Coal Township's Activities Department began selling ice cream on the housing units. Ice cream sales are held every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

The unit officers assist in ensuring that only inmates from the same cohort are out of their cells to purchase ice cream. CDC guidelines are followed by wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Flavors include butter pecan, road runner, raspberry, caramocha, brownie batter and more.



Mike Corbaccio, activities manager, gives ice cream to an inmate on housing unit.

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Houtzdale Employees Support Local Nonprofits

SCI Houtzdale staff generously donated a car-full of food items to Community Action in Houtzdale. The staff there were extremely appreciative of the donations as they have seen a drastic increase in the number of families seeking help due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

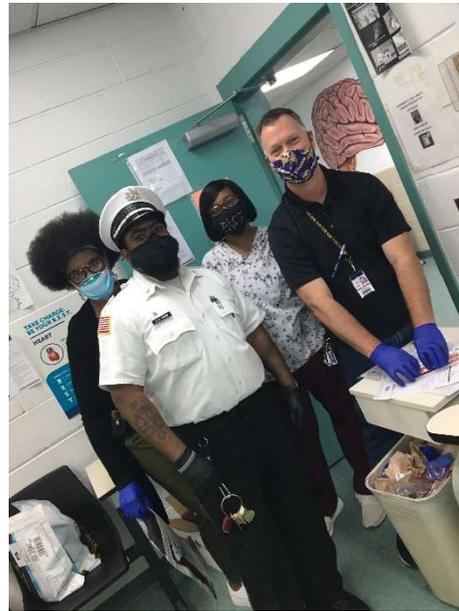
Shortly after, Houtzdale donated the money collected from the Griddle Raffle and the food sold to the Philipsburg and Osceola Mills Food Bank. Each one will receive a donation of \$236.30.

The Employee Association Officers cannot thank the employees enough for helping the community during this uncertain time.

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Scenes from Chester

Take a look at these scenes from around SCI Chester, including employees stepping up to help prep meals and the medical team on a day of random tests for COVID-19.



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Waymart Holds Memorial Day Ceremony

On May 25, SCI Waymart held a special Memorial Day ceremony.

Waymart's Honor Guard opened the service along with guest speaker Rabbi Kolakowski. A special invite was given to Lee Anne Pugliese, the widow of George Pugliese, who was killed in Iraq in 2005. Pugliese was a corrections officer at Waymart.

After the service, a private laying of a wreath was held at the Pugliese Memorial.

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Mahanoy Librarian Named Recipient of the 2020 – 2021 Pat Carterette Professional Development Grant

By Learning Round Table

The Learning Round Table (LearnRT) of the American Library Association is pleased to announce that Jerilynne Stewart, corrections librarian at SCI Mahanoy, has been selected as this year's recipient of the Pat Carterette Professional Development Grant. As part of her award, Stewart will receive a \$1,000 grant to attend a professional development event and will be matched with a LearnRT member-mentor for the year. Cheryl Wright (the manager of Organizational Learning & Development at the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library and LearnRT President) will serve in that role.

Stewart will use the grant to attend the Pennsylvania Library Association Conference in October 2020. She has a documented history of continuous professional development.

In addition to being a 2019 Eisner Innovation Grant winner, Stewart has taken a course on the Prison Library as Agent of Rehabilitative Change and is currently enrolled in a paralegal program to better assist her patrons. The selection committee was also impressed with the ideas that Stewart has on how to share what she learns at the Pennsylvania Library Association Conference with the other correctional librarians in her state, who have limited opportunities to engage in professional development.

This grant is designed to honor the passion that Pat Carterette (a past-president of LearnRT) had for professional development in the field of library and information sciences. Pat's legacy is focused on providing outstanding educational opportunities for her colleagues to grow and develop within their career field. Funding for the grant comes from pre-conference events and sponsorship of the LearnRT Training Showcase.

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Cambridge Springs Inmate Organization Donates to Second Harvest Food Bank

The Women Helping Others (W.H.O.) organization at SCI Cambridge Springs strives to do just as the title indicates: HELPING OTHERS.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inmates took notice of the community hardships, especially concerns with hunger. They wanted to help by making a monetary donation to go toward meals to feed hungry children and their families during this difficult time.

On May 15, W.H.O. made a monetary donation of \$5,000 to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania, which is a member of Feeding America. Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango, and Warren.

Second Harvest plans to use this donation to implement the Feeding America Backpack Program within the Northwestern School District. The Backpack Program helps children receive the nutritious and easy-to-prepare food necessary on the

April 30, 2020

Dear Second Harvest Food Bank,

The Women Helping Others (W.H.O.) organization in Cambridge Springs is excited to reach out to you by donating \$5,000.00 for meals to feed the children and their families who are hungry. Although we are on the inside, Covid-19 has affected us as well. This is the perfect time for everyone to be there for each other. I'm a firm believer in each one reach one. We can accomplish alot together. This is our way of giving back to the community. Many incarcerated men and women have family out there who are suffering from this crisis, so we understand and that's why helping those in need is the best thing to do. We are all in this together and we'll all get through it together. Please stay safe out there.

Sincerely,

Rouise
Jessica

weekends when away from school. This donation will have a positive effect on so many children in the local area.

Zachary Webb, director of development with the Second Harvest Food Bank, sent a special thank you video message to share with the inmate population. Webb was overwhelmed by the generosity of the inmate organization and touched by the handwritten letter from the inmates (see below) that accompanied the donation.

This is yet another example of the good that can come from a difficult situation and how everyone can help in some way!

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Waymart Celebrates Mental Health Awareness Month

SCI Waymart celebrated Mental Health Awareness Month with a special awareness day held for staff.

This month is especially important as we continue to hear about the increase in mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety and even suicide due to fear, isolation and economic difficulties. Waymart recognized the outstanding work of all our employees on the front line supporting our mission and fellow employees. To show appreciation, the Mental Health Awareness Day was held, featuring donuts for all staff, weekly messages and resources provided for staff and their families.

Waymart also featured artwork from the FTC patients. The FTC Therapeutic Activity Department Staff Supervisor Ben Cole and Therapeutic Specialists Kayla White, Claudine Barton and Dave Quick facilitated a therapeutic art where FTC patients spent several weeks making a Mental Health Awareness banner and inspirational collages that were displayed throughout the facility. The patients were inspired that their work was being displayed and took great pride in promoting the importance of mental wellness. (Examples of their artwork are below.)

One of the patients described the art project as "Not only fun, but good therapy. I was able to achieve a project for those that asked because they do so much for us. However, the more I worked on it, the better I felt watching the paper turned into a canvas of art, seeing something I created with my fellow inmates helped me relax, gain confidence and gave me the sense of ability that I can complete a project. We took pride in our work, proving that we can turn a negative situation of a pandemic into a relaxing, fulfilling time. Compliments from Ms. Barton, Ms. Patrone, and Unit Manager Chapel make things worth it in a world that sometimes seems worth it. Thank you to all who help us through difficult times."

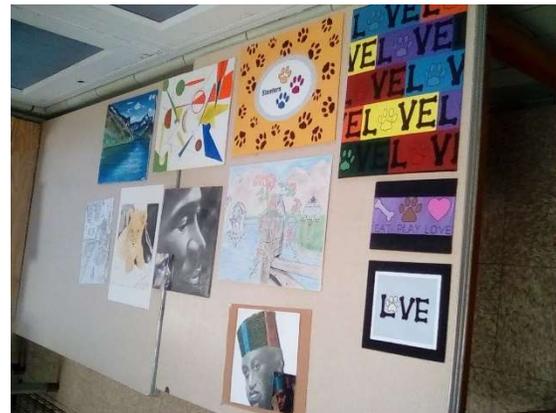


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Laurel Highlands Pup Program Holds Art Competition

SCI Laurel Highlands' puppy program, Gone to the Dogs, recently hosted an art competition with two units. The competition's purpose was to produce artwork to donate to Canine Partners for Life. Three activity employees participated as the judges with winners receiving soda.

CPL was unable to hold one of its usual fundraisers this spring due to COVID-19, so it transitioned to a virtual "pawction." Each piece of artwork by the inmates was available to bid on in the auction to help raised funds for the organization.



Laurel Highlands also said goodbye to Carl, a black Labrador retriever, who went back to CPL to continue in his journey as a full-service dog. He will be going through his second phase of training in hopes of graduating and being paired with a person with a disability and in need of a service dog.



Gunny, this yellow lab, is 5 months old and just passed his 5-month evaluation with flying colors!

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Greene Pups Enjoy Sunny Day

As SCI Greene moved into Level 3 of the DOC demobilization plan, the inmate cohort sizes have increased—and the dogs participating in the Canine Partners for Life Program were able to enjoy some additional playtime.



Andie, Betty, Elroy and Ortlely enjoyed a beautiful sunny day playing with each other outside of the handlers' cells, which based on their spunky behavior seemed to be going well. They were able to stop briefly for these great photos.

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Employees Association Coordinates Food Truck at Greene

On May 27, SCI Greene's Employees Association coordinated a lunch truck for the staff. The "Speal's on Wheels" traveling food truck situated itself in the parking lot area and offered a variety of comfort foods including steak, chicken and shrimp wraps. A basket filled with fries was offered along with the wrap as part of a lunch special for \$10. Staff expressed their appreciation to the Employees Association for their efforts in coordinating the luncheon.



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Staff at Greene Enjoy Hoagies for IPCEW

On May 6, SCI Greene's Employees Association celebrated Institutional Parole and Corrections Employee Week by purchasing hoagies for staff. A variety of hoagies, including Italian, ham and turkey, were available. The hoagies were prepared and purchased from Fat Angelo's, a local pizza shop in Greene County.



From left: EA President Brittany Bowen and EA Vice President Joe Barner

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Greene Participates in Pajama Drive for Foster Children

In support of the 2020 Pajama Drive for Foster Children across Pennsylvania, SCI Greene's Empowerment Committee organized a Pajama Drive to assist the children in Greene County.

A variety of boldly-colored pajamas, in an array of sizes displaying dinosaurs, emoji's, unicorns, trucks, Disney characters and more were collected for the children. Greene's Activities Committee of Enrichment also donated \$500 to help support this worthy cause.

The pajamas were donated to the Children and Youth Services Agency in Greene County. There are approximately 125 children in temporary foster care in Greene County. Staff collected one pair of pajamas for each child along with several more.

Greene is grateful for everyone who helped support the pajama drive and make it a huge success.



From left: Empowerment Committee Members Tammy Koratich, Tracy Shawley, and Joni Carter.

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Inmate Makes Newspaper Artwork at Pine Grove

As everyone taps into their creativity to stay mentally engaged during the pandemic, one inmate at SCI Pine Grove got artsy.

An inmate used newspaper, soap and water molds to build these models, then painted them when they try to complete them.



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Checking in with Dallas CPS Program During COVID-19

Under the supervision of Certified Peer Specialist Supervisor Pam McDonald, SCI Dallas recently recertified 13 CPS'.

Throughout the quarantine all CPS' have been provided with in-cell training packets and, in lieu of meetings, CPS supervisors meet individually with CPS' on their

assigned blocks at least once per week, often more. The CO's on the blocks where CPS' are working report that the CPS' have been effective in reducing tensions on the blocks and in identifying inmates in need of additional attention by psychology staff. Dallas' CPS' have been effective in successful resolution of the difficult situations.

The CPS' appreciate the concern, visits and efforts by supervisors to maintain training opportunities. The supervisors don't want them to lose their therapeutic edge and look forward to another CPS training and additional CPS' in the future. Prior to the quarantine, Dallas' CPS' were very proactive and heavily used on the blocks and in both mandatory and voluntary programming.

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Forest Celebrates Employee Appreciation Week

The SCI Forest Employee Association hosted a four-day appreciation event at SCI Forest on May 11-15.

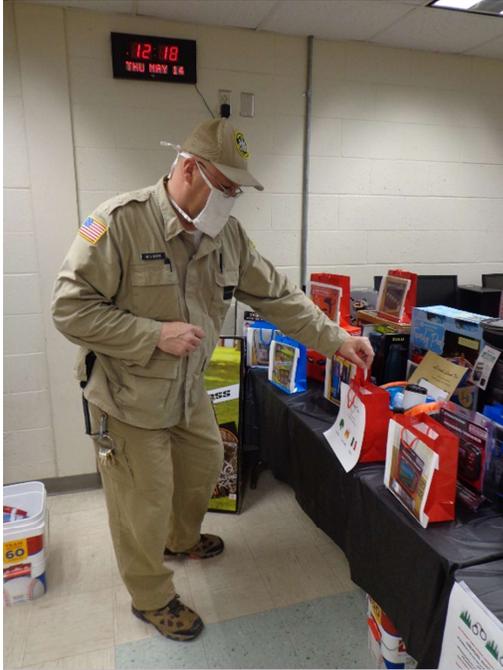
The four-day event was filled with treats, celebration and prizes to show appreciation for the SCI Forest team. Beginning on May 11, 15 employees were drawn at random to win gift cards from Kwikfill gas station. Every team member at SCI Forest was entered.

Day two provided team members the opportunity to enjoy loaded nachos available in the Staff Dining Hall. Team members had their choice of toppings to choose from that included nacho cheese, jalapenos, salsa, sour cream and bacon.

The second day of the celebration kicked off a three-day ticket auction. Team members could purchase tickets over the three-day event for chances to win items such as a weighted blanket, Craftsman drill, Vera Bradley bag, gift certificates, game cam viewer and many more. Prizes in the auction were valued at more than \$800.

The SCI Forest Employee Association hosted a Coffee and Cookies day on day three of the event. Team members were invited to stop by before or after their shift to





enjoy cookies, muffins or danishes. Also available was an array of international coffee creamer flavors to sweeten up their coffee.

Day four was another special treat: The Employee Association had "Breakfast Bags" available for every team member to enjoy during their shift. The breakfast bags contained breakfast muffin sandwiches made by The Kelly Hotel (a locally-owned restaurant), granola bar and juice box. Additionally on day four, 15 gift cards were awarded on to more randomly drawn team members.

Cindy Hays, SCI Forest activities manager (and woodworking artist), created and donated three plaques to be given as appreciation prizes to veterans at SCI Forest. A special drawing that included each SCI Forest team member that is

currently or has previously served in the Armed Forces occurred and three lucky veterans won a beautiful wooden plaque.

Over the course of the four-day celebration, more than 85 team members were lucky enough to win prizes, gift cards or cash. However, all team members on every shift were able to enjoy the delicious food and treats.

Since COVID-19 precautions were put in place in March of this year, the SCI Forest Employee's Association has worked diligently to host events weekly to boost morale. The Employee Association has previously hosted, Made-To-Order Omelet Day, Loaded French Fry Day, Chicken Nugget and Hot Dog Day and a catered Subway meal day.

The EA has also given away biweekly prizes such as a grill, water bottles, tackle box, workout equipment and much more. Team members do not have to purchase any tickets to win these appreciation gifts, each valued employee at "The Forest" is entered to win.



Members of the SCI Forest Employee Association Executive Board elect representation each year that they entrust in organizing and putting together these events. The SCI Forest 2020 Executive Board members are President: Khristen Cochran; Vice President: Sharon Dombroski; Treasurer: Cymina Cambell;

Secretary: Lauren Werts. Board members: Connie Skibinski, Corrine Melego, Jenn Feltenberger, Jon Montour, and Diane Muntz.

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Dallas Celebrates Class of 2020 with a Banner

SCI Dallas Superintendent Kevin Ransom had the idea for a 2020 graduation sign placed on the boulevard at the facility.



The 2020 graduating class missed the most important day of their high school career due to COVID-19. The parents of those students worked tirelessly to provide an at-home education, and the students deserve a big congratulation for achieving the goal of graduation—especially in these unprecedented times. The

same level of dedication, commitment, and caring that our parents show at home also shines through while at work. Thank you and congratulations to all of the parents and graduates of the class of 2020.

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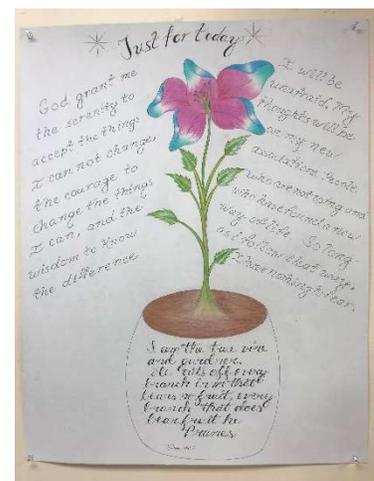
Around the Centers...

Reentrants Participate in Recovery Poster Contest

The men in Renewal’s drug and alcohol inpatient program engaged in a recovery poster contest in order to build trust, cohesion and, of course, to pass some time.

Each team had a captain, and they picked their teams from there. The teams utilized art materials to interpret what recovery and sobriety meant to them. Each poster was unique and had a different approach to representing sobriety in their lives and how recovery would improve their wellbeing.

In each of the posters, their goals and values were represented including: 12-step fellowships, family, employment, spirituality and their desire for a new life. When the posters were completed, they were hung on the first floor our building in order to allow all staff to



Left: First Place Entry

GEO Chester Holds BBQ for Residents

GEO Chester held a resident BBQ on May 12 for residents. Senior Area Manager John Howerton cooked, and staff served the residents. GEO Chester has been providing food and snacks for the reentrants every Wednesday and Friday.



Residents at GEO Chester also were removed from cohort status, thus allowing residents who are essential workers to return to work. Residents returning to work and unable to afford transportation were given SEPTA bus passes.

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Tomorrows Hope Hosts Cards, Games Tournaments for Residents

Due to COVID-19, Tomorrows Hope has been implementing numerous activities for its residents to help pass the time. Recently the facility held a Texas Hold-em tournament.

Several residents participated in the tournament and it ended with two residents who decided to split the winnings. (Winnings were a gift card supplied by Tomorrows Hope.)



It was such a success that staff decided to organize several other tournaments for the Memorial Day weekend. Tournaments consisted of pinochle, chess and horse shoes. All activities were done while maintaining social distancing.

The weekend concluded with a picnic on Memorial Day with the traditional picnic foods: hamburgers, hot dogs, salads and many other food items. Tomorrows Hope and its residents are working together to help everyone get through the pandemic.

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Erie CCC Collects Pajamas for Kids

Reentrants at Erie Community Corrections Center collected and donated more than 60 pairs of pajamas for kids. The pajamas were donated to Family Services of Erie County to be distributed to those in need.

Also at Erie CCC, staff have hosted a weekly pizza party to boost morale and encourage the reentrants in the facility during the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Reentrants Help Deescalate Situation

There was situation at Diagnostic Rehabilitation Gaudenzia where a reentrant became irate and began walking aggressively towards a female staff member, yelling at her in Spanish. When other reentrants witnessed this, two of them stepped in and got between the reentrant and the staff member. They turned him around and moved him the other direction down the hall, talking to him and ultimately deescalating the situation.

Program Manager Harlan was able to reach out to both to thank them for their help this weekend. Both said it was not a problem, and one of them noted that "we're all in this together." Through these difficult and uncertain times, it's important to see that we can all work as a team to keep our facilities safe. Special thanks go out to these two reentrants!

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Week of May 18, 2020...

Dedication to Corrections After Retirement

By Susan McNaughton

Dedication and commitment don't simply end when a person retires, and COVID-19 has shown the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) that both recent and long-time retirees continue to show their dedication by returning to work to help the agency through a pandemic.

Managing COVID-19, especially during the early onset, was challenging for corrections officials. They were all working around-the-clock to deal with an invisible and highly-contagious virus in ways that were not considered normal for the field of corrections.

Those ways included enforcing social distancing in a prison setting for both inmates and employees; implementing and adjusting already-existing pandemic plans to include employee and inmate screening and testing; transforming gymnasiums and warehouses into infirmaries and quarantine housing units; requiring employees and inmates to wear masks; and establishing return-to-work protocol in line with recommendations from the state Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Trying to help facilities manage the virus, which seemed to be ever-changing, DOC leaders decided to reach out to former DOC employees for assistance. They called upon people to serve similar functions as those performed when they were originally employed. Others were called upon because of their organizational skills, ability to successfully lead a project or because they had a medical background in addition to their corrections background.

Assistance was needed, and in order to be aggressive with their management of the virus, officials decided early on to ask interested retirees back as annuitants.

According to Commonwealth of Pennsylvania policy, retired individuals can return as paid annuitants for a period of 90 business days in one calendar year. However, this 90-day limit has been waived due to COVID-19.

One of the first retirees brought back to work was Dr. Nick Scharff. Over email and phone calls, Dr. Scharff, who was the chief of clinical services for eight years before he retired in 2013, now serves DOC leaders as an expert consultant in public health issues. He participates in conference call meetings and provides direction to leaders about a variety of medical-related issues, specifically about testing, the wearing of masks, employee return to work issues, and isolation and quarantine issues. There are so many ways that he assists DOC leaders, that there is no way to list all of them in this article.

When asked what helped him to decide to return, Dr. Scharff said, "How could I not?"



Dr. Nicholas Scharff

When DOC officials decided to turn the soon-to-be-closed prison of SCI Retreat into a new commitment and parole violator return/reception facility, two former superintendents were called upon to manage that facility and its new mission. Vincent Mooney was the former SCI Retreat superintendent, who only recently retired in 2018. Mooney was joined by Robert Smith, also a former superintendent, having retired from SCI Muncy in 2018. Together, these men work to operate a prison with a new, never-before experienced mission: to safely receive new commitments from counties and parole violators while quarantining those individuals as cohorts upon reception.



Vince Mooney

"The decision to go back to Retreat was relatively simple for me for two reasons," Mooney said. "One, I was already asked to help on another matter at SCI Mahanoy in February, so I was very familiar with the steps the department was taking to ensure the safety of both staff and inmates once this crisis began. Second, having only been retired from SCI Retreat for 15 months, I knew the staff there very well, and I knew no matter what was thrown at them they would respond in a remarkable way. What I witnessed upon my return was more than I could have ever imagined!"

Mooney said that with Retreat employees' futures uncertain and the closure imminent, a mission was given -- a mission never-before assigned -- and they hit a home run.

"Superintendent Bernadette Mason, Deputy Charles Stetler, Deputy Laura Banta and Major Jeffrey Eyer assembled the Retreat Team, and they turned a closing facility into a new reception center to meet the goals of the mission set by Secretary Wetzel," Mooney said.

Mooney and Smith met the first week of their return to Retreat, and both agreed there was no need to fix something that is as close to perfect as it gets.

"I was humbled and honored when I was asked to come back on February 10, 2020, and when I was asked to help at Retreat, the thought of once again being part of history was very intriguing," Mooney added. "Don't be fooled, when you retire it is an amazing thing, and maybe the decision would have been more difficult had it been summer rather than winter, but being part of this team again is something I can't describe nor will I attempt to. The beginning of this venture certainly has a closer end date than when I initially started in the Bureau of Correction!"

Robert Smith was brought back as an annuitant in February to manage the SCI Retreat closure process.

"I was working a very limited schedule getting inventories underway and staging areas identified and happened to be at Retreat when the secretary announced the prison's mission change," Smith said. "My assignment was put on hold, but a week later I was contacted and asked if I would be interested in assuming the superintendent's role due to several accelerated staff reassignments. Having had the opportunity to interact with many of the employees and observe the culture developed by Supt. Bernadette Mason, I accepted the change in assignment without hesitation."



Robert Smith

Smith said that as the scope of the pandemic was expanding, he had pretty much decided to help in any capacity if needed by the department.

"The opportunity to again work with great people that excel under pressure and trying circumstances was a huge draw for me," Smith said. "I was, however, humbled with the role that was offered. There was a transition period getting re-acclimated to the pace and the adjustments to the unique mission here, but these were more easily managed working alongside of Supt. Mooney and the Retreat Team.



Michael Overmyer

Also returning to assist SCI Huntingdon during COVID-19 is Michael Overmyer, who retired as superintendent at SCI Forest in March 2019.

"I came back because I really enjoyed the job and the great problem-solver people in the department," Overmyer said. "Fortunately, or unfortunately, I think we all trained our whole careers for a time like this."

Overmyer reported to SCI Huntingdon on May 7, and he says he's still "getting the lay of the land." At the prison – where he says he washes his hands a lot -- he will help the administration team with operations and security issues by providing a fresh set of eyes.

"There's obviously a lot of moving parts, and Huntingdon is definitely a unique facility with a storied history," he said.

Other retirees have returned to assist with reopening/demobilization planning efforts and critical incident duties as required. Former prison health care professionals also returned to provide assistance to employees who are becoming burned out by the never-ending work generated from dealing with COVID-19.

Some could argue that the reason people return to assist is simply because they are getting paid. Yes, it is true that they are getting paid as annuitants, but they didn't *have* to agree to come back to long hours of complicated and complex work or to agree to work in facilities that are experiencing active COVID-19 cases.

No, they came back out of the goodness of their hearts because they care about the field of corrections and because they want to help the DOC during a difficult situation.

It is often said that times of crisis reveal an individual's character. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is blessed to have these individuals – true helpers -- return to serve the agency, its inmates and employees, and the commonwealth.

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

-- Fred Rogers

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Activities Staff Keeps Inmates Active

At SCI Coal Township, activities specialists are conducting outdoor and indoor recreational activities for individual cohorts to encourage activity and social distancing.

Pictured is J Unit, where inmates are shown playing football on PlayStation. Both inmates said they appreciated the opportunity and enjoyed playing the game. Mr. Randell, shown in photos, transports the video game equipment to the housing units and coordinates games within the cohorts on each unit.



An activity at SCI Waymart is a trivia contest for all blocks. The block gets the questions, inmates send their answers in and inmates get a snack pack (pictured right) for a prize if they have the most correct answers.

The current round is focused on sports, but more are on the way featuring pop culture, movies, music, geography and more.

Activities staff have also been doing ice cream pint sales and taking them to the housing units, as well as passing out soft pretzels to each inmate (paid for by IGWF).

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Psychology Employee Defends Dissertation, Earns Doctorate

A Psychological Services Specialist at SCI Pine Grove recently defended her doctoral dissertation at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and has earned the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Counselor Education and Supervision.

Dr. Rebecca A. Andrews of Pine Grove successfully defended her dissertation titled "The Influence of Trauma: Examining the Relationship Between Childhood Traumatic Experiences and Violent Offenses among Incarcerated Males" on March 16.

Congratulations to Dr. Andrews of Pine Grove!

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Greene PCI Shop Hits Milestone in Mask Production

On May 14, the Pennsylvania Correctional Industries (PCI) shop at SCI Greene reported making 100,000 masks.

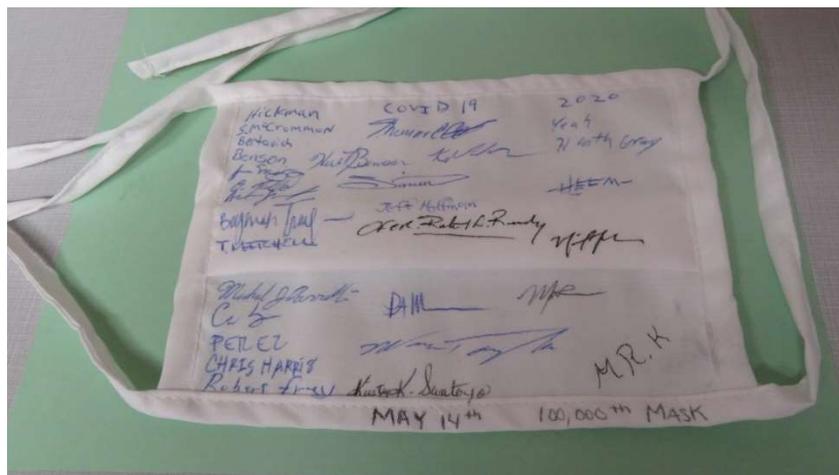
Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March, 22 inmate workers have been producing masks in the shop at the facility. The masks are distributed throughout the Department of Corrections as well as the county jails and other state agencies such as, the Department of Health, PA Supreme Court, PennDOT, Bureau of State Parks and the Associated Service of the Blind.

An inmate reported feeling "patriotic" making the masks. He felt he was saving a life with every mask he made which is something PCI Shop Supervisor Kristy Santoyo will never forget.



From left: PCI Shop Supervisor Kristy Santoyo; SCI Greene Superintendent Michael Zaken; and Deputy Superintendent for Centralized Services Mark Dialesandro

Santoyo, along with Superintendent Michael Zaken and Deputy for Centralized Services Mark Dialesandro, presented the inmate workers with certificates to express their appreciation for their on-going efforts. The 100,000th mask was signed by the PCI shop workers and administrative supervisors and will be hung on display in the CI shop.



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Albion Boosts Morale, Supports Local Businesses

SCI Albion activities staff, along with other Albion employees, continue to work hard at keeping the inmate population busy and at ease during the current quarantine.

With the use of the Inmate General Welfare Funds (IGWF), Albion was able to support local small businesses by providing the following to the inmate population:

On April 23, each inmate was given a pint of Hershey's chocolate ice cream.



From April 28 – May 5, Teresa's Lakeshore Deli in Erie worked with Albion to provide turkey subs to the inmate population. Several times each week, Teresa's provides free meals to first responders, such as local police stations, fire stations, hospitals and various other first responders, which is why Albion staff wanted to show them support. This small business produced approximately 300 – 400 subs per day for this event while still serving their own customers.

Between May 11 – May 14, Jim and Sue's Pizza in Albion worked with their staff to provide personal cheese pizzas for every inmate. In 3 ½ days they produced over 2,150 pizzas!

ANIVO, Albion's inmate organization, also conducted a baked goods sale, which allowed the inmates to order items such as strawberry cheesecake, doughnuts, Pepperidge Farms cakes and other assorted baked goods.

For staff, ACE (Albion Correctional Employees) provided subs from Theresa's Lakeshore Deli and Hershey's ice cream to all staff to show them their appreciation for all they do. They also held daily giveaways in which staff had a chance to win Bose speakers, Amazon Fire Sticks, gift cards and cash.



The Dietary Department also showed their appreciation to staff and supported local small businesses Alfee's Pizza and Sub shop in Erie and Fat Willies Wing House in

Edinboro by providing pizza and chicken wings to staff on all three shifts on May 15th.

What a great feeling it was to help local businesses while boosting morale at the institution!

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Waymart FTC Staff Encourage Fitness Amidst Quarantine

SCI Waymart Forensic Treatment Center activity staff enhanced the Movement Program to encourage exercise during the quarantine. Staff member Kayla White and Supervisor Ben Cole coordinated an exercise program for the FTC patients to increase the benefits of physical movement.



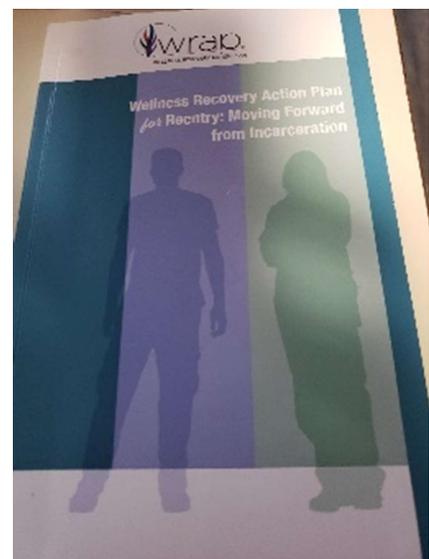
Even during a pandemic, FTC staff find creative ways to recognize the importance of physical health as being vital to improved mental and emotional wellness, especially for those under long-term mental health inpatient care. On unit movement exercise is just one way the activity staff are ensuring patients have access to fitness.

One example of recognizing the individual needs of those under FTC care was evident when Cole brought a treadmill to the FTC unit for a patient struggling with not being able to access the yard track. Waymart's administration greatly appreciates the extra individual efforts of the FTC Activity Staff.

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Patrone Writes Intro to New WRAP Book

DOC Forensic Mental Health Program Administrator Lynn Patrone was published in the latest WRAP Reentry program book. Patrone wrote the foreword in this new international guide for the WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) program.



Below is what Patrone wrote:

After a few weeks into a brand-new position as the Mental Health Advocate for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, I embarked on a visit to every state

correctional institution to learn about the mental health needs of the incarcerated population. Part of my new role includes overseeing the Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) program. I was well versed in the benefits of CPS and was excited to observe how the CPS' supported their peers behind the walls. I spent several weeks visiting the prisons and meeting both staff and incarcerated individuals. When I assumed the position of coordinator for the CPS program, I felt it was my responsibility to advance the skillset of the CPS' and provide opportunities for the CPS' to help others address stressors, challenges of incarceration, suicidal ideation, estrangement from loved ones and hopelessness.

Although I had been exposed to WRAP over a decade ago, it was not until this tour of 25 state prisons that I realized how valuable this tool could be for myself, my colleagues and the community behind those walls and fences. I had no idea how impacted I would be by the stories I heard, the visible trauma effects and the impact of incarceration. However, as I met hundreds of people, I began to realize the impact, not only of being incarcerated, but also of working in a prison every day. The individuals living and working in a correctional setting are at increased risk of stress, encounter daily triggers and shoulder intense challenges daily.

Personally, coming to employment in the Department of Corrections had a significant impact in my own life. When I accepted the position, I was ambivalent and nervous. I recall feeling as though I was entering an abyss where those who were incarcerated believed they didn't have purpose. What I very quickly learned was just the opposite. The CPS' were the evidence of hope, inspiration and purpose. So many CPS' tell me that becoming a CPS had turned their life around in ways they couldn't have imagined and that having the opportunity to participate in WRAP offered them the tool they needed to maintain wellness and continued hope in a setting where many have lost hope. The CPS' were eager to "pay it forward." CPS' would come to the WRAP Facilitator seminars and talk about how Ms. Copeland's story influenced them and how they found hope in her story. Over and over, I have conversations where the CPS' tell me that they want to get out on the street and facilitate WRAP. They speak about the importance of this tool and wished they had it before they became incarcerated as they feel strongly that if they did, they may not have followed the path that led to incarceration. There is abounding hope when the CPS' talk about how they can bring this to their neighborhoods upon reentry and help the young people in the hopes of preventing them from entering the criminal justice system.

The majority of incarcerated individuals will reenter our communities. The PADOC is equipping individuals with a proven tool that can guide an individual's responses to stressors and how to positively chart their course when encountering difficult decisions and hard choices. During the WRAP seminars, we challenge participants to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts, facilitate discussions on ways to respond to situations by the choices they have if they take personal responsibility. I see WRAP for reentry as a vital tool. Reentering the community brings with it tough choices, reintegrating with loved ones, seeking employment, learning how to

navigate our technological world and the many others components of life outside the walls which can be very daunting especially as many will return to environments that factored into their incarceration. A CPS said it best, "Now that I have WRAP, there are so many tools I can use to keep me from doing wrong." WRAP offers reentrants the tools and skills to face and overcome the challenges reentry can often impose. Simply adhering to the 5 Key Concepts of hope, personal responsibility, education, self-advocacy and support is the foundation to begin a new way of life where reentrants can experience the fullness of life with limitless choices, unbounding hope and new opportunities.

WRAP can benefit individuals preparing for the parole process, those who have been granted parole and those who are nearing their maximum sentence. For many, the parole process can be anxiety provoking and worrisome. If an individual is granted parole, there are a myriad of steps to prepare for successful reentry. The Daily Maintenance Plan can be a vital tool in preparing individuals for those critical first days in the community as well as their routine once they get established. By developing a personal wellness toolbox, one is equipped with a safety net when unanticipated stressors occur. Keeping one's WRAP as an adaptive tool can help a person with learning what may be new stressors as well as addressing the stressors that may have previously led to adverse outcomes. Incorporating WRAP as a must have for one's reentry can lead to a quality of life defined by the reentrant and offer him or her the opportunity to take the power back in his or her own life.

Although I knew WRAP could benefit my colleagues, I was not sure they would be open to it. One day, a staff member approached me and asked how staff could participate in WRAP. I recall being completely caught off guard. My co-facilitator and I were very excited that our peers were interested so we offered the WRAP seminar to staff. We anticipated that we might have about five people interested in attending. To our utter amazement, we had a waiting list and conducted five seminars that were full to capacity. We realized that we were not able to continue to meet the request and began to facilitate WRAP facilitator courses. During the WRAP seminars staff were making connections with their peers and recognizing stressors they considered ordinary in this line of work. Many participants came to the realization that they did not do much to take care of themselves because they put the needs of others first. For many, the events of a day in prison were left at work. While many of us discuss our day with our loved ones, this is often not so for people working in corrections. Many prefer to leave the prison environment at prison, which could lead to triggers going unaddressed.

Working in Corrections is not easy...the impact of working in a setting where the incarcerated population experiences loss, may be fighting addiction, live with mental health symptoms, impact of trauma, hopelessness, aging concerns, being on constant high alert, and coping with our own personal challenges can have adverse effects. Corrections brings together many disciplines...security, treatment, education, administration, maintenance, food services, chaplaincy services, parole, vocational training, inmate employment, reentry services, counseling and many

others operating inside a very structured environment where several thousand individuals live and work on any day. Prison is an environment where triggers and stressors are a constant. For many, responding to those stressors is not something that gets much attention. As we began implementing WRAP, we began to witness the development of a Corrections WRAP family who provided support to one another and recognized the importance of their wellness.

Here are some quotes from WRAP participants:

WRAP applies to us all. Everyone has a story and came to this seminar somehow. This seminar is special and will change lives.

WRAP has made me realize I need to start incorporating this in my life for work and home and will benefit all who use it.

This seminar is extremely valuable as a way to focus on recovery. I love the process of WRAP. It is safe and empowering, a foundation for self-care that is intentional.

WRAP is a universal approach that can benefit everyone. It's a great way to look inwardly and recognize how to be the best version of ourselves.

I know I need to take time for me and focus on the things I have put off but I have now taken that first step that I really needed.

Great big leap toward wellness.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Around the Centers...

Wernersville CCC Staff Create Barrier for Med Room

Monitors from Building 18 at Wernersville Community Corrections Center had an idea to make their facility even safer amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: The employees created a barrier to place on the desk of the medication room where they hand out medication to the reentrants. It was placed on the desk in our medication room where the monitors hand the medications to the reentrants.



This way, when a reentrant is sitting at the desk getting their meds there is an extra barrier besides just the masks between the monitor and reentrant.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Gaudenzia Celebrates Mother's Day with Special Meal

DOC contract facility Gaudenzia DRC had a formal lunch set up for the women honoring Mother's Day with a special menu.

The facility decorated the lunch room with flowers, vases, candles and a mini dessert table with treats to make the room feel welcoming and special. Each woman was greeted as she arrived for lunch with a rose and a keepsake memo wishing them a "Happy Mother's Day" from the staff.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Juvenile Lifer Finds Success

Juvenile Lifer Whetstone arrived at Community Corrections Center 2 in March 2019. When he first got out, he struggled finding a job, then dealt with health issues through much of the year.

In Dec. 2019, he was offered a great opportunity at Board Street Ministries as a supervisor in the 315 Café-emergency overnight space for the community to escape from winter weather. Whetstone showed Broad Street Ministry what a great employee he is, so much that they offered him a full-time job as a concierge and a de-escalation specialist starting in March 2020.

Whetstone just submitted a home plan to live with his mentor from Prosecutor Impact.

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CCF Reentrant Hires Others from His Former Facility

Reentrant Lopez was in a CCF from Jan. 19, 2017-Oct. 31, 2017. He never had any infractions in the facility and worked full time. He left the facility on a home plan, and he is now a supervisor at Fonseca Roofing Company, which was his job when he was in the facility. He calls the facility sometimes to hire new workers because he likes to give the reentrants opportunities the way his boss did for him.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

GEO ADAPPT Art Therapy Project

Through art therapy, GEO's reentrants were able to express their recovery side as a way of giving back. One of the things they enjoy the most is being able to participate in art therapy and sharing a positive expression for recovery.

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Week of May 4, 2020...

QBC Dental Hygienist Donates Part of Liver

Taylor Scida, Quehanna Boot Camp's dental hygienist, recently donated part of her liver through UPMC's Living Liver Donor Program. Taylor's uncle was diagnosed with liver disease and was in need of a liver. When other options failed, Taylor stepped up to the plate and began the process to donate a portion of her liver.



Unfortunately, her liver was determined to be too small for her uncle.

However, if Taylor (pictured with her uncle) donated part of her liver to another recipient, her uncle would be able to receive a transplant from another compatible donor.

On April 23, 2020, Taylor's liver donation was transplanted into a 32-year-old Army veteran, who is a daughter, wife, and mother of a 4- and 5-year-old. In response to saving another life, Taylor said, "There are no words for how I feel."

Following the surgery, the liver recipient posted on Facebook, "I'm forever grateful to my living donor who graciously donated a portion of their liver. Life should be treasured and never taken for granted. I love my life and my family. Without the help of this hero of mine, I'd never be able to watch my kids grow and grow old with my husband."

The Quehanna family is extremely proud of Taylor's determination to help others, especially in this difficult time of COVID-19.

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COVID-19 Results in Video Visits Being Implemented

By Susan McNaughton

In October 2018, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections implemented a video visitation program where those people who were already on an inmate's visitors list could arrange to go to their closest state prison to use video visitation equipment to connect with their incarcerated loved one at another state prison across the state. This program supplemented contact visits.



One of three video visitation units located at SCI Camp Hill's Guest House. Each unit is divided by Styrofoam panels that provide privacy and social distancing.



Prior to using the video visit unit, the inmate sanitizes the unit and area.

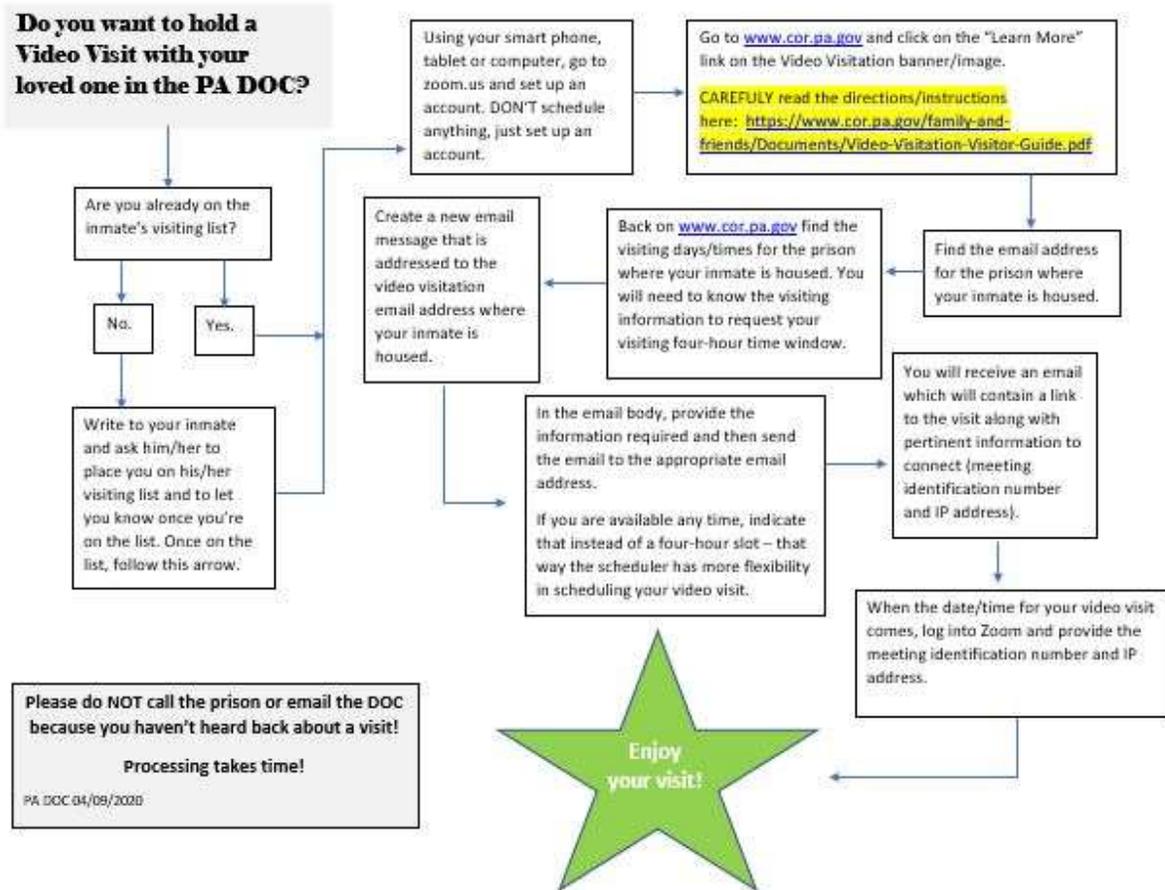
This program was extremely helpful for individuals who lived, for example, in Philadelphia but had a loved one housed at SCI Albion in Erie County, which is the complete opposite end of the state. It saved the visitor travel inconveniences while continuing to allow them to maintain the family bond that is so important to an individual's successful return to society after incarceration.

Then COVID-19 happened, and DOC officials suspended all contact visits indefinitely. Officials knew that they had to offer inmates some way to remain connected with their loved ones. The DOC increased phone calls and emails and even provided inmates with additional postage-paid envelopes. But one of the best things the DOC did was to expand the video visitation program.

Since implementing the program on March 19, nearly 26,000 video visits have been scheduled.

How does the system work?

The DOC posted to its website directions for scheduling video visits. (Go to www.cor.pa.gov and look for the video visits link.)



First, the visitor needs to work with the inmate to make sure they are on the inmate's visiting list. If they are not on the list – which is controlled by the inmate – they won't even be considered for a video visit even if they follow all of the rules. DOC employees are prohibited by policy from sharing an inmate's visitor list information. The inmate needs to inform his/her visitor once he/she knows that the individual has been added to his/her visiting list.

The visitor and the inmate also need to communicate with each other ahead of time to determine the best date and time to visit.

Once the details are worked out between the visitor and the inmate, the visitor needs to download Zoom to their computer or mobile device, whatever works best for them.

Then the visitor must send this information to the appropriate state prison's zoom scheduling email address ([which is available on the DOC's website](#)):

- Visitor Name(s) (name of every person – up to three per video visit)
- Address(es) (full mailing address for every person – up to three per video visit)
- Date(s) of Birth
- Phone Number(s)
- Scheduler's E-mail address
- Inmate Name
- Inmate DOC Number
- Requested Visit Date
- Requested time slot (provide a 4-hour time slot within the facilities visiting hours)

If the visitor sends this information exactly as listed here, there is a pretty good chance the process will be successful and the visits will happen as requested.

Some things every requestor should know:

A very limited number of employees are tasked with scheduling visits at each prison, and they receive several hundred emails a day requesting video visits.

If an email request does not have the required information in it, the email is rejected and the visit is not scheduled. Staff can only schedule so many visits in advance.

If a visitor sends a request today for a visit tomorrow, that's not going to happen and their request will be rejected. Scheduler's say that visitors need to work within the DOC's guidelines, because they only have so many time slots to fill, and they have more inmates than time slots.

Each state prison is different with respect to the number of video visit units they have, and there also are units in restricted housing units.

Scheduler's will notify individuals of their scheduled video visit – again, so long as all directions are followed exactly like requested.

Scheduler's ask that visitors do not continuously email them if they haven't heard anything about a requested video visit. If a video visit is scheduled, the prison scheduler will send an email to the requestor 48 hours prior to the

visit. That email will include the Zoom information needed. If a visitor doesn't receive an email, that means the visit was not scheduled.

Officials also ask that visitors not send multiple emails for every time slot available in a given week. By doing this, visitors are bogging down the system and taking time away from requestors who successfully follow the rules.

Schedulers use their email system and a spreadsheet to schedule and track visits. It's not a difficult system, but it is time consuming, so they appreciate everyone's cooperation and patience.

Each visit lasts about 45 minutes. It is very important to plan ahead for the confirmed visit. Many visitors do not download the Zoom app until the day of the visit... and sometimes only minutes before the visit. This can result in a shortened visit with the inmate.

One facility reported that they had a situation where a woman only downloaded the Zoom app on the day of the visit. She had difficulties on her end that resulted in her only getting connected with the inmate with only five minutes remaining on her scheduled visit. So, it's important to have things running smoothly on the visitor's end to ensure a positive visiting experience.

There also are times when visits will be disconnected by the prison, and those situations involve inappropriate actions such as sexual or disorderly conduct. Video visits are monitored just like contact visits are monitored.

If an action or behavior is not allowed in the visiting room, it's also not allowed during a video visit. Prison staff have reported visitors taking off their clothes and flashing body parts during visits. Obviously, those visits got disconnected, and such actions can result in visitation privileges being revoked for the visitor.

The main things stressed by schedules are: Please be patient; follow the rules exactly; don't send continuous, multiple requests; and understand that employees are working all day, every day to schedule visits.

Inmates have expressed their pleasure with the video visiting program. One inmate wrote to DOC officials saying that he was pleased to be able to see relatives who lived in another state that he hasn't seen in decades. Another inmate said that their visitor connected to Zoom through their cell phone and then was able to walk around the city to show the changes that happened since the inmate was in prison.

Recently Pennsylvania DOC's video visitation program was highlighted in SLATE: <https://slate.com/technology/2020/04/zoom-video-communication->

[prison-pandemic.html?via=rss&fbclid=IwAR12jnzOzEiYQutwC5Bnh2xghV-KrDEkGDMIoTYfGuDT2cZTRG8fBikqFNO](https://www.wisconsin.gov/pressroom/2020/04/prison-pandemic.html?via=rss&fbclid=IwAR12jnzOzEiYQutwC5Bnh2xghV-KrDEkGDMIoTYfGuDT2cZTRG8fBikqFNO)

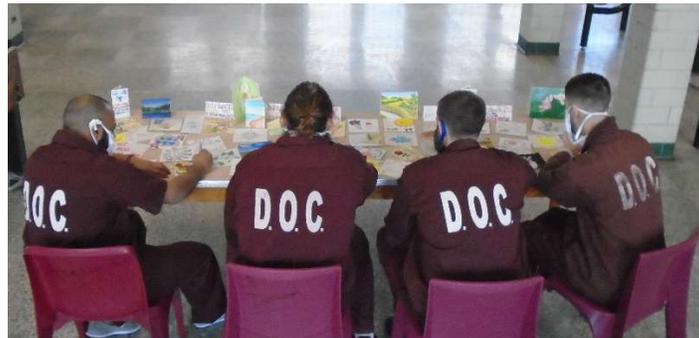
While it's not clear at this point when contact visits will be reinstated, DOC officials believe that once COVID-19 settles down, the successful video visitation program will continue to be available to all state prison inmates.

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Laurel Highlands Inmates Make Cards for Local Nursing Homes

With the pandemic outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, nursing homes have had to suspend families from visiting their loved ones, leaving this vulnerable population even more socially isolated.

A number of inmates at SCI Laurel Highlands wanted to do something for them during this difficult time, in order to give back to the community in some way. Many inmates are highly skilled artists, but regardless of artistic ability, several inmates volunteered to take the time to make cards to be mailed to local nursing homes. The cards featured beautiful hand-drawn pictures and inspirational messages of hope and caring. It is the anticipation of these inmates that the cards will help brighten the residents' day, knowing that someone they will probably never even meet is thinking of them during their isolation.



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Storeroom Earns Quarterly Award at Camp Hill

Congratulations to the Storeroom Staff at SCI Camp Hill for receiving the 1st Quarter Fire Safety and Sanitation Award!



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Coal Township Staff Enjoy Food Trucks

A variety of food trucks visited SCI Coal Township in April, including Son of a Butcher Barbecue and Steaks (pictured). Staff were excited for the delicious food and the chance to support a local business.



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Two Dogs Join Coal Township Program

SCI Coal Township's FIDOS Program received two new dogs in the program today on April 21. Meet Bella and Honey!

FIDOS stands for Fostering Independence and Dog Obedience and Survival, and the program works with Mommy and Me Rescue to train hard-to-place dogs in basic obedience and behavior skills.

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Forest EA Provides Ice Cream to Staff

A special "thank you" to the SCI Forest Employees Association for providing ice cream for staff on April 14. The EA has generously been providing fun snacks and prizes to staff during the coronavirus pandemic, and it is much appreciated!



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Mercer Management, EA Bring in Food Trucks for Staff

SCI Mercer management rewarded employees for their continued efforts during the COVID-19 Pandemic by bringing in a pair of food trucks.

The Employee Association offered their support by bringing in 90 dozen cookies for staff the following week, as well as another food truck. EA is covering \$7 of the meal, while staff pays the remainder \$5.



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Local Company Donates Face Shields to Laurel Highlands

On April 22, SCI Laurel Highlands received face shields that were graciously produced and donated by Somerset Trust Company's IT Department. The face shields will be used daily throughout the institution during the mitigation of the

COVID-19 virus. Somerset Trust is a well-known financial institution that is known for their generosity in giving back to the communities that they serve.



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Beyond the Fence Donates \$4,000 to ICCAP

On April 29, SCI Pine Grove's Beyond the Fence Inmate Organization decided during the COVID-19 pandemic that the money they raised through fundraisers, photos and ice cream sales would help serve the local community in these trying times.

Beyond the Fence is donating \$4,000 to Indiana County Community Action Program, which provides programs aimed at helping low-income families and individuals attain self-sufficiency. The inmate organization strives to assist the local community in which they reside.

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Phoenix Staff Enjoy McDonald's Friday

The Limerick McDonald's was able to partner with SCI Phoenix Empowerment Committee members Gina Orlando, Kristina Owens, and Lisa Durand to purchase and supply each shift for McDonald's Friday!

It started on the 10-6 shift at 10 p.m. on April 16, and ended with the 2-10 shift lunch on April 17 with the sale of McDonald's food for \$1 each. The sandwiches included hamburgers, cheeseburgers, McChickens and Chicken McNuggets. Thank-you's were received from various staff members.



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Waymart FTC Patients Experience Benefits of Exercise

Under Deputy Bassett's leadership, SCI Waymart uses innovative programs from the Forensic Treatment Center Activities Department to inspire FTC patients to be active.

Claudine Barton, FTC's activities/vocational specialist, developed a basic physical wellness program to inspire exercise with the FTC patients during the time of limited movement. The program consists of music and basic movement stations in the dayroom where the patients rotate among the stations to participate in moderate physical activity. The program has been very inspirational and participation has been over 80 percent.

Patients are realizing the physical and mental wellness benefits while also promoting life skills and healthy choices. Security staff have also been instrumental in ensuring safety and coordination to make this program a success.

Waymart offers a shoutout to the FTC Activity Department Supervisor Ben Cole and Vocational Specialist Claudine Barton.

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Patrone Participates in National Online Conference For CPS Program

A Gift of Voice, in partnership with Safer Foundation, hosted an innovative method of delivering a national conference online.

A Gift of Voice is an organization devoted to training, empowerment and advocacy for the health and wellness of individuals across the globe. SCI Waymart's Forensic Mental Health Administrator Lynn Patrone joined three other panelists from across the country in the "Take Courage" Conference: How to Deliver Peer Support on the Inside and on the Outside.

The PADOCC was invited to share how to successfully implement a Certified Peer Support (CPS) program in a correctional setting.

Recognition of the PA DOC CPS program is a testament to how our agency promotes innovative means to ensure those living with

mental illness behind the walls not only receive mental health professional care but also receive peer support services which are credentialed by the Department of Human Services and the Pennsylvania Certification Board to supplement and enhance mental wellness.

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Psychology and COVID-19: How the DOC Is Focused on Helping All People

From the very start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health of staff and of those individuals confined has been at the forefront of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections' focus.

The DOC's Psychology Office has implemented numerous enhancements for staff and inmates to help all people manage the added stress and anxiety brought on by the pandemic. During the entire quarantine, the Psychology Office has continued providing clinical services to inmate-patients, no matter what challenges have been presented. This level of clinical service has been feasible in part due to the Psychology Office developing the Psychological Services Emergency Preparedness Plan.

This plan was developed as a tool to help guide local Psychology departments' prioritization of essential clinical functions, should the need arise to do so. It is a guide to assist Licensed Psychologist Managers and local administrations to ensure the essential functions of the state prisons can be prioritized along with essential



clinical psychological functions during an unplanned crisis, where available staff resources may be limited.

With the help of Correctional Officers, front-line Psychology staff in all institutions have continued to provide out-of-cell meetings with patients, in both general population and in restrictive housing settings, as well as modified existing sex offender programming to allow continued progress towards becoming eligible for parole. The Psychology Office also increased the frequency of rounds conducted by psychology staff across the DOC—*on all housing units*—to ensure patient access to mental health care.

To help with all the negative emotions inmates may feel during isolation and quarantine, the Psychology Office provided in-cell activities—including coloring sheets, sudoku puzzles and identified relaxing music that is available on inmates' tablets. Most resources were collected and shared by front line Psychology staff from around the Department of Corrections.

The Psychology Office also developed two separate informational presentations, one for staff and one for those confined, to assist all people who may be experiencing increased stress and or anxiety specifically associated with the pandemic.

Psychology departments throughout the DOC also have begun assisting psychiatry staff by facilitating and identifying needed telemed encounters delivered by psychiatry staff, to ensure psychiatric services would still continue for our inmate-patient population.

But all the increased attention by Psychology isn't just for inmate-patients.

One of the very unique practices the Psychology Office implemented was leading the weekly deployment of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) services, specifically focused for health care staff and corrections officers, as these individuals are on the front lines daily during this pandemic. They are working with the inmate population, which can be extremely stressful for these important essential correctional professionals. In that regard, the belief is our staff need to be sufficiently supported from a mental health standpoint, so they are best positioned to provide the best care for the inmate/patient population. Indeed, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation is very supportive of deploying CISM services associated with this "generational disaster".

Additionally, throughout the pandemic, the Psychology Office has been able to continue to conduct remote clinical audits via access to the electronic medical record. Although several psychology staff members throughout the DOC are working from home, these individuals are able to still focus on specific clinical tasks, including identifying chronic and acute risk factors (as well as protective factors) for suicide for all DOC inmates. These risk and protective factors are uploaded into the electronic health record, so other medical professionals are aware of these risk factors when interacting with these patients. This has been an extremely valuable task and will hopefully contribute to reducing suicides and enhancing safety in our system.

Weekly meetings also help the team stay fresh and current with the latest ideas and methods.

Every Monday, the Psychology Office hosts a statewide call with Centurion, our psychiatric services vendor, for collaboration and problem-solving purposes in the various regions of the state. Every Wednesday, the Psychology office hosts an internal call specifically about psychological services around the DOC with our Central Office team. Every Friday, the office's regional LPMs host calls with their respective regions' Licensed Psychologist Managers and/or Mental Health Coordinators to ensure open communications with all psychology departments within the DOC, to problem solve, assist with complicated situations, triaging essential clinical functions, developing new protocols for telepsychology and telepsychiatry, sharing best practices, etc. These enhanced communications have allowed the DOC's four Regional Licensed Psychologist Managers the ability to better understand, support, and to provide reliable clinical consultation and supervision to the more than 300 brave front line institutional Psychology staff members in the DOC.

Finally, once every two weeks, Psychology Director Dr. Lucas Malishchak participates in a video conference call with the other mental health directors from around the United States, hosted by the National Institute of Corrections, for the purpose of sharing best practices and ~~from~~ learning what is and what is not working around the country with regard to correctional mental health service delivery during the pandemic.

"This has proven to be a very helpful and practical forum to collaborate with my peers to ensure that high quality and ethical psychological services in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections continue to be delivered in the safest manner possible throughout this crisis," Dr. Malishchak said.

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Waymart Holds Mask Contest

With masks being mandatory—and many people wearing stylish and creative facial coverings—SCI Waymart held a contest throughout April for the best masks.

A panel of judges selected their favorites from 37 entries and awarded prizes including car washes, haircuts and shoeshines. Congrats to the winners!

First Place: Linda Evans



Second Place: Joe Karlavige



Third Place: Shannon Johnson



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Coal Township Donates Hygiene Items to Local Schools

On May 1, SCI Coal Township staff delivered a variety of hygiene items to local school districts (North Schuylkill, Shamokin, Mount Carmel) donated by staff and inmates. Corrections Counselor Kelly Kmetz (right) and Unit Manager Jill Fisher (left) are shown below separating and packaging the items.



The items were purchased through sales held by Coal Township’s Triumph inmate organization and a donut sale held by the staff.

North Schuylkill School District, with much gratitude, noted they will distribute the hygiene items to children in their school district the same way as they offer the free lunch program. The school districts were thrilled to receive the donated items.

There are so many children in need, especially during this time, and in many cases parents are not working and have difficulty purchasing these items.

Triumph proposed the project and staff supported it with a donut sale of their own. The money was raised prior to COVID-19, but it was always intended for the schools.

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Pine Grove Staff Donate Food to ICCAP

SCI Pine Grove is holding an “ongoing” food drive to support the Indiana County Community Action Program (ICCAP). All donations were collected by staff and continue to be collected during the pandemic.



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Waymart Recognizes Captain for Detached Duty

SCI Waymart recognized and commended Captain John Oliver on his Detached Duty assignment from April 5-May 1. His service and dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic was outstanding. During his assignment, he served as a liaison between Waymart's Command Post and the Central Office Command Post. There was a clear line of communication with multiple agencies, controlling movement throughout the institution, and keeping much needed supplies maintained. Oliver's assistance and experience in Waymart's Command Post ensured the safety, security and health of all staff and inmates at Waymart.



Congratulations, Cpt. Oliver, and good luck with your future!

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Week of April 13, 2020...

Waymart Supports Local Seniors

The SCI Waymart Community Support Committee donated \$500 to the Wayne County Area on Aging to support 40 Wayne County seniors with prepared meals for one week through drive-up and delivery to help during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Pictured: Christine Altemier, superintendent's assistant; Heidi Fuhrer, psychologist and chairman of the Community Support Committee; Nadine Miszler, superintendent's secretary; and Alice Emmett, records supervisor.

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Gilmore Retires As Superintendent of Greene

On Feb. 12, Regional Deputy Secretary Trevor Wingard and his inspection team, along with superintendents from various facilities, celebrated the retirement of SCI Greene's Superintendent Robert D. Gilmore. On March 20, the employees at Greene also celebrated Gilmore's retirement—skillfully, due to the COVID mandates that prohibited large group gatherings.



Supt. Gilmore dutifully served the PA Department of Corrections for nearly 30 years in a number of capacities and did so with the utmost dedication and perseverance. He was presented with a variety of gifts to commemorate many years of accomplishments. March 20, 2020, marked the end of his historic career and the beginning of new endeavors.

The Greene staff commends Gilmore for his devoted leadership and support during the last eight years as the superintendent at SCI Greene and thanks him for the camaraderie he shared with his colleagues throughout his career.

Congratulations, Superintendent Gilmore!



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Community Reentry Parole Agents (CRPAs) Use New Technology

Missy Repsher, Director, Reentry Operations

The CRPA, formerly known as ASCRA, is utilizing new technology to address reentrants' criminogenic needs in the community. The CRPAs are using Tools on Devices (TOD) to deliver Carey Guide Interventions. The TOD system, allows reentrants to complete Carey Guide Tools on smartphones, tablets and/or personal computers. The guides are assigned to the reentrant based on their individual needs, and the tools are short, to-the-point with fillable assignments. After the CRPA registers the reentrant in TOD, the reentrant is notified by either a text or email letting them know they have an assignment with an expected completion date. The CRPA is notified when the assignment is completed and ready for review. The TOD application has reduced barriers for those reentrants who may experience employment, child care, transportation and/or other issues restricting them from attending a group session. The TOD system has proven to be very valuable especially during the COVID-19 crisis allowing the agents to continue working with the reentrants upon release.

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Updates from Chester

SCI Chester has had a busy week amidst COVID-19. One of Chester's beloved unit managers, Rachel Williams, retired with more than 23 years of dedicated service. Additionally, Jeraldo Aponte returned home to Chester as the deputy superintendent for facilities management, and Kenneth Eason was promoted into the role of acting superintendent.



On top of that, CERA (Chester Employees Recreation Association) has been busy providing alternative food options for staff which include build-your-own-burger, Taco Tuesday and Wrap Friday!

Chester has also begun Meals on Wheels, which are mobile serving stations that allow groups of staff to take portable warmers to each unit and provide the inmates a controlled feed on the unit. This allows the men to get hot meals, 2-3 times per day. It also eliminates the amount of time it takes to feed the blocks, with the entire facility being fed in less than an hour while still maintaining social distancing.

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Laurel Highlands Group Donates to Somerset Ambulance

The Phoenix Group, an inmate organization at SCI Laurel Highlands, wanted to do something to give back to the community, so they donated Sheetz gift cards to every staff member at the Somerset Area Ambulance Association—totaling \$455. Somerset Ambulance provides emergency and non-emergency transport for patients going to hospitals, medical centers and other health care facilities in Somerset County, PA.



Representing SCI Laurel Highlands and The Phoenix Group were Activities Manager Josh Fraley, Lieutenant Beers, Captain Seanor, and Lieutenant Raygor. The staff at Somerset Ambulance were very appreciative.

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Mercer Sets Up Signs to Encourage Staff

SCI Mercer Supt. Melinda Adams shows support and appreciation to her staff and community during this COVID-19 crisis with signs lining the drive in to the facility. The signs thank corrections staff, Superior Ambulance, law enforcement and delivery drivers. They all lead to a large banner saying, "Thank you SCI Mercer Team."



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Greene Holds Social-Distanced Memorial for Late Colleague

On April 7, staff at SCI Greene practiced social distancing in the facility chapel while holding a memorial tribute in honor of Corrections Maintenance Manager (FMM) 3 Frank Largent, who passed away unexpectedly on March 29. No public service was held due to the COVID-19 mandates; therefore, staff arranged a memorial as it holds an important place in the grieving process.

Employees from various departments shared many heartfelt stories and memories they had of Frank (pictured in white shirt). One coworker described him as being a thoughtful person as well as a good listener. Another was his childhood neighbor who spoke about how they participated in sports growing up. Others reminded us of the humor he displayed and the loyalty he had for the employees he supervised. Frank was a character, yet a very humble man. A few quiet laughs were heard as one reminded us of how distraught he would be knowing that we were gathered to remember him. Frank loved to golf and enjoyed participating in the Annual Golf Tournaments.

He began his career at Greene in 2005, and in June 2007 he served as an FMM 1. In Sept. 2016 he was promoted to FMM 3 and respectfully served as a dedicated manager in that position until his death. Please keep Frank's family and his coworkers in your thoughts and prayers.

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Greene Foreman Creates Masks for Staff

History shows that in times of crisis people share many acts of kindness. During these unprecedented times, we don't have to look any further than our own backyard to witness some of these selfless acts. Many employees at SCI Greene have been recipients of such kindness.

When the DOC mandated staff to wear protective face masks, they were found to be a bit ordinary.



Corrections Employment Vocational Coordinator Michele Baker quickly stepped up to assist. She purchased some basic materials and delivered the items to the home of Corrections Garment Factory Foreman Trish Ray who, without hesitation, quickly began darning an abundance of comfortable masks for the employees. The brightly-colored masks adorn the faces of many employees daily and helps bring a sense of calm during this time. The masks were provided free of charge, and any donations offered were used to offset the cost of the materials. To date, Ray has made more than 200 masks for SCI Green employees. She also has made several masks for her community.

We all should all be grateful for each other and remember to thank the people who perform such random acts of kindness for others.

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Mahanoy Manager Displays Message of Support

Inspiration can be found in places you normally wouldn't think of, such as SCI Mahanoy Business Office Manager Teri Kuzo's window. Her window faces the staff parking lot, and when employees walk into work in the morning they see someone saying "thank you," someone giving them inspiration, someone who



recognizes that the job they are doing is important, and it means a lot!

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Fayette Establishes Disinfectant Station

A disinfectant station is located outside of the SCI Fayette staff entrance area. Until further notice, smoking is prohibited under this shelter. A spray bottle of disinfectant and plastic bag will be located at this station. Staff may spray mask with the disinfectant and place it in a bag for transport home. There are two wash stations with a plastic table to minimize contamination of surface. The bags are provided utilizing plastic bags purchased from food warehouse as used in grocery stores. Staff are reminded to properly launder the mask after spraying it with disinfectant and before using the mask again.



SCI Pine Grove (seen below) and other facilities have also established a similar station in front of the facility.

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Waymart Activities Department Keeps Inmates Busy

The new quarantine standards have limited activities for inmates to participate in, but SCI Waymart's activities department has found ways for them to stay active yet safe.

The department purchased PlayStation 4's for all blocks with a designated TV for inmates to sign up to play. DVD Players were also purchased for all blocks, including workout DVDs with full body workouts no equipment.

All blocks will be getting corn hole boards, and they have also held art contest and poetry contest. Inmates have also been busy playing cards and working on puzzles.

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In the News...

Stitching safety, One Mask at a Time

By Thera Martin, Philadelphia Sun

<https://www.philasun.com/local/stitching-safety-one-mask-at-a-time/>

In times of crisis, people tend to perform acts of kindness.

Such is the case of Pennsylvania State Parole Agent Donielle Martin.

As a state parole agent, Martin, one of the frontline employees still out there working in spite of the scourge of the coronavirus, got the idea of using her talents as a seamstress to provide a service that her fellow frontline workers, healthcare workers, really need.

She began making the face masks they need to allow them to take care of patients while keeping the virus at bay.



"I own several sewing machines because I teach sewing classes to children several times a year", Martin said." "I also have a lot of scrap material that's clean, has never been used, and is just sitting in plastic bins in my sewing room. While at work earlier that day, all my colleagues and I had been given protective face masks to wear as we're out doing home visits with parolees. When I got home that night, I took my face mask apart that had been given to me to see exactly how it had been constructed. It was easy, I said to myself, and the seed of action was planted."

Martin said she then went online to pull up an actual pattern for how to make a facemask, and her volunteer nighttime effort began. She recruited her 15-year-old son Noah, a friend Jasmyne Boggs, and her 16-year-old goddaughter Jabriya Shepherd to help out.

Boggs and the teens had previously taken Martin's sewing classes at the Allegheny West Foundation, so they already knew the basics of what they needed to do. Martin showed them the rest of the steps for how to create the facemasks.

"Watching news coverage about COVID-19 daily and seeing the doctors and nurses and other medical staff at hospitals across our country nearly in tears, begging for something as simple as face masks, just broke my heart. I knew I had to do something with the talent God gave me for sewing and use it to help some medical workers at a Philadelphia hospital." Martin said.

"In the back of my head for a minute or two I had a little bit of doubt, thinking, how useful can the masks I'm creating be, when they're not the official N95 masks," Martin had questioned herself. "But that doubt was denied because I know that some kind of mask is better than no mask at all. To expect health care workers to just tie a bandana over their face is insane."

Martin, Noah and Jabrya set a goal of making 200 masks. The plan was to drop the masks off at a hospital where she thought they could do the most good, so she chose the Einstein Medical Center, located at Broad and Olney. Things were going fine for the first few days, then suddenly Martin realized she had run out of the very critical elastic bands needed to complete the making of the face masks. But she didn't allow that to deter her.

There's a business on Germantown Avenue called Gaffney's Fabrics. Gaffney's has loads of everything one needs to make clothing, and all sorts of other items, including elastic bands. Because Martin is a regular customer, not only did she have the main phone number to the store, she had the owner's cell phone number as well — and she used it.

Kate Gaffney responded to Martin's call for help and within the hour, she was able to drive over to Gaffney's and get curbside service. Gaffney opened her store to supply Martin with the elastic she needed to complete her mission of helping Einstein's medical workers.

"I love Doni. She's one of my best customers and she's such a sweetheart," Gaffney said. "When she called me I didn't hesitate to jump into action. The thing is, not only has Donielle called my store about purchasing elastic. I've been bombarded with calls asking for elastic because a lot of people are making face masks right now.

Normally people might not think of a business such as a fabric store as an essential business, but as it turns out, we are. To be very clear, I believe in following all rules and regulations related to businesses being closed during this coronavirus pandemic.

However, I was getting so many requests for the purchase of elastic that I reached out to my councilperson's office, which would be Cindy Bass. Councilwoman Bass had a conversation with officials from the 14th Police District and it was deemed that as long as I did curbside service for elastic bands and other supplies so people could make face masks, it would be ok, due to the dire need."

"I'm shipping stuff all across the country right now, because people are running out of elastic, those that are making face masks. I'm sitting here in a store that's filled with fabric and these people need the supplies. It was making me crazy that I couldn't service my customers in a time of need, until after I spoke with Councilwoman [Cindy] Bass", said Gaffney. "I'm getting 60 or more text messages a day from people, asking for elastic in particular, so that people can make masks. Our business has been around for 50 years, this year and I'm so proud that Gaffney's Fabrics is able to be an essential business in this time of such great urgency."

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