Our Mission
The Department of Correction shall strive to be a global leader in progressive correctional practices and partnered re-entry initiatives to support responsive evidence-based practices aligned to law-abiding and accountable behaviors. Safety and security shall be a priority component of this responsibility as it pertains to staff, victims, citizens and offenders.

From the Commissioner

A few months back, I sent out a memo dealing with the subject of “Work Environment” throughout the agency. I want to respond to some of the questions that arose following the release of the earlier memo. The impetus for addressing the topic of work environment was not born from any one specific or particular incident. Rather, it came from my relentless passion to reduce incidents of trauma and support employee wellness throughout the agency.

With that in mind, we have all, no doubt, during some point in our careers experienced incidence – whether directly or anecdotally – of a coworker being mistreated or maligned.

Having already requested that we refrain from taking part in such behavior, I am hoping those who have been negatively affected by such actions do one additional very important and difficult thing – forgive those who have done you wrong. A natural reaction to this request may be to ask, “Why should I, when I am not at fault?” In short, forgiveness is good for you, it leads to healing (see the related article on page 5).

The longer you choose not to forgive someone, the longer you remain in the past wishing somehow to change what has already happened.

Again, with the understanding that this is by no means an easy task, by forgiving someone you are able to let go of resentment and bitterness, and move forward with your life. Once you forgive someone, you are no longer a victim. You have regained power over the situation.

If you are struggling with the thought of forgiveness, may I suggest one thing - look inward. We have all been in need of forgiveness at one point or another in our lives. By realizing that none of us are perfect, we are more readily able to show empathy toward those in need of forgiveness. It is important to also remember, forgiving someone in no way condones their hurtful behavior.

There is an allegory often attributed to the Native American culture known as, “The Tale of Two Dogs,” in which a grandfather is talking with his grandson and he says there are two dogs inside of us which are always at war with each other. One of them is a good dog which represents things like kindness, and bravery. The other is a bad dog, which represents things like greed, hatred, and fear.
Fighting the Good Fight
Correction Officer excels at the “sweet science” of boxing

Correction Officer Kelsey Kaiser is a prime example of the old adage, “you can’t judge a book by its cover.” At a diminutive 5’3”, 112 pounds, with an engaging smile, if you met her in public you would never guess she worked as a Correction Officer, much less that she is a two-time New England Golden Gloves boxing champion.

The 30-year-old, who has worked at the York Correctional Institution, and is currently a lobby officer at the Department’s Central Office, has been a member of the Department of Correction for nearly three years. She has been an amateur boxer for nine.

A self-admitted tomboy growing up, Kaiser always enjoyed sports, but excelled at field hockey. Having played in high school and college, when her field hockey career came to an end she was looking for another avenue to channel her energy. She tried working out at a regular gym, but found that “boring.”

Fortunately for her, a friend’s father was the owner of the Whaling City Boxing Club. Kaiser had been tempted in the past to try boxing for the purposes of learning to better defend herself. Apparently she was prone to getting into fights in her youth. When she eventually did give the boxing club a try, she was in a word – hooked.

“The place is like a family,” said Kaiser. Her coach is 89-year-old Roland “Rollie” Pier, a member of the Connecticut Boxing Hall of Fame. “He is like a grandfather to me.”

Within a year she competed in her first amateur fight. According to Kaiser she experienced the same emotion shared by everyone who steps into the ring – fear. She described it as an intense and almost debilitating fear before and right up to the point when the first round bell rings. Once the fight starts, the fear disappears and she actually claims it’s fun.

One thing that Kaiser does find somewhat frustrating is the lack of other female boxers. As a result, she has fought in only 12 matches, having faced some of her opponents more than once.

Although there is no doubting Kaiser’s toughness – she has had more shiners than she can count, and views them as a badge of honor – she openly acknowledges that female boxers are much more emotional than their counterparts.

“I’ve cried after a bad sparring session,” Kaiser said, but was quick to add. “My coach says that he enjoys training women more than men because they listen better and are more mature.”

One of the aspects that officer Kaiser enjoys about boxing is that it is, “the best workout ever.”

Aside from running six miles almost daily, she also works out three to four times a week at the boxing gym where a typical workout can include jumping rope, shadow boxing, hitting the heavy bag, and sparring with the coach. Each activity is done for two-minute intervals repeated three times. Kaiser, in the spirit of Commissioner Semple’s Wellness Initiative, is willing to put staff at York CI through a boxing workout.

Thanks to her workout routine, Kaiser was able to box in a fight the day after completing two days of grueling trying outs for the department’s CERT unit. Unfortunately, the try outs did take their toll and Kaiser lost her fight, but she did become a member of CERT.

Her ultimate goal is to turn professional, and if all goes as planned she will be fighting her first professional fight this coming June.
Industry Award Winner

Correctional Enterprises Manager Timothy Boyton is the recipient of the 2018 National Correctional Industries Association’s (NCIA) Northeast Region Staff Award. Boyton was presented the award during the NCIA’s Annual Awards Banquet held on April 17, 2018 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Staff Award recognizes the superior performance and supervisory excellence of a correctional industries staff member who has made a significant and sustained contribution to a correctional industries program.

In order to be considered for the award, candidates must excel in areas such as: meeting goals and objectives; effective use of resources; constant display of powerful and positive excitement presenting the Correctional Industries mission to stakeholders; and dedication to being an expert in their respective area of Correctional Industry operations.

Industries Manager Boyton, who has been with the Department of Correction since 2005 and currently managed the “Sign Shop” located within the Cheshire Correctional Institution, was nominated for the award by Correctional Enterprises of Connecticut (CEC) Director James Gaglione.

MASCA Award Winners

The Department of Correction hosted the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association’s (MASCA) 80th annual conference held May 20-23, 2018 at the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa in Groton, Connecticut.

More than 250 law enforcement professionals from Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia participated in the conference – the theme of which was, “Partners in Progress, Putting the Pieces of the Puzzle Together.”

Aside from the various workshops and plenary speakers, one of the highlights of the conference was the awards luncheon held on Tuesday. The MASCA awards committee honored no less than two of the Connecticut Department of Correction’s members.

Congratulations to Warden John Tarascio for being chosen as the recipient of the Carl Robinson Award. The award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and made significant contributions to the correctional field.

Congratulations are also in order for Counselor Supervisor Calma Frett who was presented with the MASCA Founder’s Award. This award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional efforts to promote professionalism in probation, parole, juvenile justice and/or corrections. It honors the legacy of commitment of the founding members of MASCA, who first organized a regional professional organization back in 1938.
The Boxing CO

Kaiser does have concerns about the dangers of taking too many blows to the head, as such she only wants to compete in six to eight professional fights, especially considering that professional boxers do not wear the same protective head gear that is mandatory for amateur fighters.

Fighting Parkinson’s

Last year Kaiser, along with her colleagues at the Whaling City Boxing Club decided to do battle with an opponent outside of the ring. In a sport that is linked to causing people to suffer from Parkinson’s disease, they are working to minimize the disease’s degenerative effects.

Various studies dating back to the 1980’s supported the notion that rigorous exercise, emphasizing gross motor movement, balance, core strength, and rhythm, could favorably impact range of motion, flexibility, posture, gait, and activities of daily living. More recent studies suggest that certain kinds of intense exercise may be neuro-protective, i.e., actually slowing the progression of the disease.

To that end (twice a week for one hour) Kaiser puts approximately 20 individuals who are suffering Parkinson’s through a rigorous work out. Although much of the exercises are centered around traditional boxing training techniques, i.e punching and footwork, they work on other skills as well.

They work with participants, ranging in age from their fifties to their seventies, on proper techniques for falling and getting back up, as well as how to navigate through doorways. Common symptoms of Parkinson’s are poor balance and “freezing” when they encounter doorways.

Although Kaiser has witnessed the dramatic reduction in the amount of hand tremors after just one session, she feels there is an even bigger benefit to the program.

“It’s seeing the improvement in their confidence and their mood,” Kaiser said. “That’s the best part.”

Correction Officer Kelsey Kaiser wearing the gloves for real.

Around the Cell Block

FLORIDA - A Florida-based publisher of a magazine written by inmates lost a federal appeal of a freedom of speech case against the Florida Department of Corrections, which has barred the magazine from state correctional facilities

MISSOURI - A federal district court in St. Louis has ruled that the Missouri prison system must provide hormone therapy for a transgender inmate serving a murder sentence. The lawsuit filed in 2016, challenged a Missouri Department of Corrections policy that bars hormone therapy for inmates who were not receiving it before being incarcerated.

GEORGIA – a 22-year-old man is accused of robbing a GameStop in St. Mary’s, Georgia, while wearing a clear plastic bottled water wrapper as a mask. Local police wrote in a Facebook post, “You can help us catch him, once you stop laughing.”

Total Supervised Population on May 25, 2018

18,107

On May 25, 2017 the population was 19,067
Learning to Forgive

Who hasn’t been hurt by the actions or words of another? Perhaps a parent constantly criticized you growing up, a colleague sabotaged a project or your partner had an affair. Or maybe you’ve had a traumatic experience, such as being physically or emotionally abused by someone close to you. These wounds can leave you with lasting feelings of anger and bitterness — even vengeance. But if you don’t practice forgiveness, you might be the one who pays most dearly. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

What is forgiveness?
Forgiveness means different things to different people. Generally, however, it involves a decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge. The act that hurt or offended you might always be with you, but forgiveness can lessen its grip on you and help free you from the control of the person who harmed you. Forgiveness can even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

Forgiveness does not mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you or making up with the person who caused the harm. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps you go on with life.

Letting go of grudges and bitterness can make way for improved health and peace of mind. Forgiveness can lead to:

- Healthier relationships
- Improved mental health
- Less anxiety, stress and hostility
- Lower blood pressure
- Fewer symptoms of depression
- A stronger immune system
- Improved heart health
- Improved self-esteem

Being hurt by someone, particularly someone you love and trust, can cause anger, sadness and confusion. If you dwell on hurtful events or situations, grudges filled with resentment, vengeance and hostility can take root. If you allow negative feelings to crowd out positive feelings, you might find yourself swallowed up by your own bitterness or sense of injustice.

Some people are naturally more forgiving than others. However even if you are a grudge holder, almost anyone can learn to be more forgiving.

If you are unforgiving, you might:

- Bring anger and bitterness into every relationship and new experience
- Become so wrapped up in the wrong that you can’t enjoy the present
- Become depressed or anxious
- Feel that your life lacks meaning or purpose
- Lose valuable and enriching connectedness with others

Forgiveness is a commitment to a personalized process of change. To move from suffering to forgiveness, you might:

- Recognize the value of forgiveness and how it can improve your life
- Identify what needs healing and who needs to be forgiven and for what
- Consider joining a support group or seeing a counselor
- Acknowledge your emotions about the harm done to you and work to release them

Choose to forgive the person who has offended you
Move away from your role as victim and release the control and power the offending person and situation has had in your life.

see Forgiveness/page 8
Nightingale Award Recipient

Congratulations to Correctional Managed Health Care’s (CMHC) Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Diana Campbell for being a recipient of UCONN Health’s 2018 Nightingale Nurse Award for Excellence in Nursing. Ms. Campbell who is assigned to the Hartford Correctional Center was nominated for the award by Correctional Nursing Supervisor Ken Avery, as well as by Supervising Psychologist Kristine Matthews and Social Worker Marie Carlin.

In his nomination, Nursing Supervisor Avery credited LPN Campbell’s involvement with the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Committee for enabling the Hartford Correctional Center’s medical unit to be the first to go live with the EHR.

“She has consistently gone beyond the call by tutoring staff on the conversion even though she had a large work load each day as part of her daily assignments and work expectations not related to this conversion. With enthusiasm she worked each staff member’s fears and complaints and brought them all to an operational proficiency in using this new upgrade,” wrote Avery.

Beyond her work in helping to implement the EHR, those who nominated her recalled an incident in which Nurse Campbell’s actions very likely helped to save a life. One morning while assigned to the morning medication pass, nurse Campbell noticed the inmate she was trying to give medication to, was not acting quite right. She observed the inmate was having difficulty standing and bringing medication to his mouth. This inmate was transported by wheelchair to medical for assessment. At that time he had difficulty answering or forming simple sentences. His vital signs were within a normal range but two subsequent finger sticks revealed a “high” reading on the glucometer. He was not a known diabetic, though he had other medical complications. He was subsequently sent to the emergency room on orders by the attending doctor.

According to Nursing Supervisor Avery, if not for the timely intervention of Nurse Campbell, this individual faced imminent death.

“This is but one example of many occasions when Diana has caught potentially life threatening problems because she takes the time to listen and to notice signs of serious health concerns,” wrote Social Worker Marie Carlin. In praise of Ms. Campbell, Supervising Psychologist Kristine Matthews wrote that she, “…is able to regularly identify areas of improvement and potential shortcomings, which is greatly appreciated by all staff members. She possesses solid communication skills, empathy, flexibility, attention to detail, interpersonal skills and problem solving skills… is quick to respond and is respectful to staff and offenders.”

Ms. Campbell was honored at a regional awards event on May 10, 2018, at the Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT.

Congratulations again on being named a recipient of the 2018 Nightingale Award, for your significant impact on patient care and your life-long commitment to the profession.
A Family that Serves Together

Joanne McIntosh, Administrative Assistant at the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution, and her family were honored prior to the start of the April 13, 2018, Hartford Yard Goats game as Asnuntuck and Tunxis Community Colleges’ Military Family of the Game.

This is a true military family, Joanne’s husband, retired Department of Correction Officer, and current Asnuntuck Community College Security Guard, Tim McIntosh, served as a member of the United States Army Military Police from 1979-1982. Their daughter-in-law (second from the right) Valerie McIntosh served in the United States Marine Corps (USMC) from 2011-2016 and is presently USMC reserve. Valerie is holding her daughter 18-month old Elena McIntosh, born at Camp Pendleton Marine Base. Valerie’s husband and Tim and Joanne’s son Ryan (far right), served in the USMC from 2011-2016 and is presently with the Connecticut Army National Guard.

Additionally, Joanne, is photographed with Tacoma, who is in training to become a service dog for disabled veterans. Joanne is a weekend trainer for this dog.

The Hartford Yard Goats, Asnuntuck Community College, and Tunxis Community College are recognizing local families that have a member that has served, is currently serving, or intends to serve in the United States Armed Forces, through their Military Family of the Game program.

Those selected are honored as they stand on the field, alongside the National Anthem performer before a Yard Goats home game at Dunkin’ Donuts Park. The team recognizes those selected on the field and on the outfield video board during Yard Goats pre-game ceremonies at home games. As a way of thanking them for their service, the service person/veteran is also provided with four tickets, behind home plate to enjoy the game.

Community members from around the state are encouraged to nominate families for this recognition. You may visit www.yardgoatsbaseball.com, click on the Events & Programs tab, then click Military Family of the Game if you would like to nominate a member of your family or community for this honor.

Dr. Maurer Recognized for Opioid Treatment

The American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence, Inc. (AATOD) recognized Dr. Kathleen Maurer for her outstanding contributions to opioid treatment by awarding her the Nyswander/Dole Award.

Dr. Maurer was honored during the AATOD’s Awards Banquet held in New York City on March 12, 2018. In addition to working for the Department of Correction, Dr. Maurer is also a member of the American Correctional Association’s (ACA) Board of Governors. ACA Executive Director Jim Gondles and Dr. Elizabeth Gondles, who oversees ACA’s Office of Correctional Healthcare, were on hand to witness Dr. Maurer’s achievement.

The AATOD has been the number one advocate, resource, and trainer for the field of medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction since its inception in 1984.
Forgiveness

As you let go of grudges, you’ll no longer define your life by how you’ve been hurt. You might even find compassion and understanding.

Even though it is good for you, forgiveness is not always easy, especially if the person who has hurt you does not admit to any wrongdoing.

If you are stuck holding a grudge: practice empathy. Try seeing the situation from the other person’s point of view.

Ask yourself why he or she would behave in such a way. Perhaps you would have reacted similarly if you faced the same situation.

Reflect on times you’ve hurt others and on those who’ve forgiven you.

Write in a journal, use guided meditation — or talk with a spiritual leader, a mental health provider, or an impartial loved one or friend.

Be aware that forgiveness is a process, and even small hurts may need to be revisited and forgiven over and over again.

Forgiveness does not always guarantee reconciliation.

Getting another person to change his or her actions, behavior or words is not the point of forgiveness. Think of forgiveness more about how it can change your life — by bringing you peace, happiness, and emotional and spiritual healing. Forgiveness can take away the power the other person continues to wield in your life.

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### Years of Service Jan. - March 2018

#### 30 Years of State Service

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The Heart of the Matter

The grandson stops and thinks about it for a second then he looks up at his grandfather and says, “Grandfather, which one wins?”

The grandfather quietly replies, “The one you feed.”

During the course of any given day we are faced with making thousands of decisions. It is inevitable that all of us will make mistakes throughout our lives, and careers. However, I urge you not to judge the totality of someone’s value as a coworker – or as a person for that matter - on the weight of a single mistake they may have made.

In my ceaseless desire to improve this agency, I ask that all of us (myself included), when dealing with our peers and co-workers to, “feed the good dog.” Or to borrow a phrase from Abraham Lincoln, we should all do our best to rely on “the better angels of our nature.”