

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 alligned 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.

Manson Scholarship Breakfast

Despite an inconvenient snowfall, the annual John R. Manson Scholarship Breakfast was held as scheduled on January 6, at Central Office's Café 24. During the event Commissioner Scott Semple was pleased to present Gregg Carrara and Andrew Coderre as this year's scholarship recipients.

The scholarship provides an undergraduate student enrolled at the University of Connecticut, who is a dependent of a Department of Correction employee, with financial assistance. Although the award amount varies from year to year, depending in large part on the number of recipients; this year's recipients each received a \$1,000 scholarship.

The John R. Manson Scholarship Fund was established by friends and colleagues of John Manson, the Commissioner of the Department of Correction from 1971-1982, in memory of his many positive contributions to the field of corrections.



**Commissioner Scott Semple
with Mrs. Carolyn Manson**

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From the Commissioner



I recently had the pleasure of attending the graduation of the three-week training session for the first group of staff who will work in the department's newest initiative, the Young Adult Offender program.

Within the next few weeks an additional 75 staff members will also complete the training, making for a grand total of 100 specially trained individuals prepared to work in a unit designed for offenders in the 18-25-year-old age group.

Among the first of its kind in the country, the catalyst for the new program is based on research showing that the brain is not fully developed until the age of 25. This age group is known for its impulsiveness and disproportionate amount of violent crimes.

see [New Initiative Underway/page 4](#)

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Young Offenders Unit Staff Graduates

The first 25 staff members of the Cheshire Correctional Institution who volunteered to work in the department's new unit specifically geared to the needs of the 18-25-year-old inmate population graduated from their intensive three-week training on Friday, January 27, 2017.

In a ceremony held at the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development, Commissioner Scott Semple along with other members of the Executive Team joined an impressive turnout of friends, colleagues and family to support the graduates as they embark on the agency's newest endeavor.



Warden Scott Erfe, Deputy Wardens Kenneth Butricks and Guilana Mudano with the Cheshire CI staff members who will be manning the new 18-25 housing unit.

The reason for housing 18-25-year-olds together is based on research which shows that the brain of someone in this age range has not yet fully developed. This lack of brain development has been linked to lack of impulse control, and lack of planning. Commissioner Semple toured a facility comprised of this age group during his trip to Germany with Governor Dannel P. Malloy back in 2015.

The 25 staff members may have been the first to graduate, but they won't be the last, as three additional groups of 25 employees also participated in a separate, but similar three-week-long course. The training is being funded with the help of a \$346,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Addressing the graduates, Cheshire CI's Warden, Scott Erfe, stressed how invested the department was in the success of the new unit. He also shared the new name of the unit – TRUE, which was developed by the group during one of the training sessions. The unit's name is an acronym which stands for: Truthful, Respectful, Understanding, and Elevating.

He also acknowledged the efforts of Deputy Wardens Kenneth Butricks and Guiliana Mudano for their work as co-chairs of the committee tasked with developing the framework for the Young Adult Offenders Program. Also acknowledged was Curriculum Manager Lynn Laperle for her work in coordinating the course of training.

Because this is a new venture for the agency, some of the details are still being hammered out, but generally speaking the unit will be based on a therapeutic community model, mixing counseling and structure, with programming from morning to night.

Acknowledging that there were still some unknowns regarding the details of the unit, Commissioner Semple reassured those gathered when he said, "I know this unit will succeed because we have the best correctional staff in the country."

Rodrigues and Rikki to the Rescue

Canine Officer Ildio Rodrigues received a phone call from the Cheshire Police Department on November 7, 2016 at approximately 10:00 a.m. requesting canine assistance in locating a troubled teen. Officer Rodrigues and his K9 Partner Rikki were directed to the local high school - where the incident began. Upon arrival Officer Rodrigues was met by Cheshire Police Officer Kristian Johnson. Officer Johnson explained that a student, described as a white male wearing a New England Patriots jersey, had run away from school threatening to harm himself. Staff attempted to stop him but were unable to do so, prompting the request for assistance.

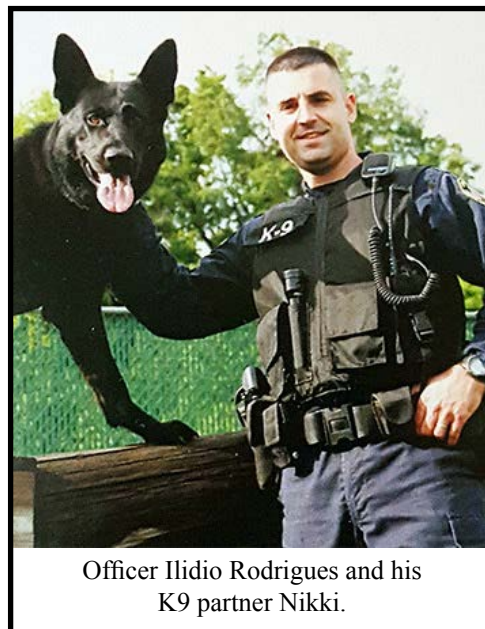
After receiving a briefing on the situation from officer Johnson, officer Rodrigues was brought to the area where the teen was last seen. When the teen ran away from school he dropped his hat in the area of Bartlem Park. This is where Officer Rodrigues started his track. Utilizing the hat as a scent article, K9 Rikki was introduced to it and given the command of "find him" - the command given to initiate tracking. At this time Officer Rodrigues, K9 Rikki, and Cheshire Police Officer Johnson set out to locate the missing teen.

K9 Rikki tracked through several back yards and up Jinny Hill Road to a Dollar Tree department store located on Route 10. K9 Rikki's tracking began to intensify as he continued to track towards a McDonald's restaurant, indicating to Officer Rodrigues that the missing teen was near. K9 Rikki continued to track across the parking lot and up to a side entrance of a restaurant. Officer Rodrigues opened up the door to this establishment and noticed the missing teen sitting inside. Cheshire

police officers immediately took the missing teen into custody and administered a medical evaluation. Once the teenager was taken into custody Officer Rodrigues cleared the scene.

If it were not for the fast acting response of officer Rodrigues, K9 Rikki, and members of the Cheshire Police Department this situation could have resulted in a terrible tragedy.

Officer Rodrigues and K9 Rikki have been members of the Department of Correction's Canine Unit for more than seven years. This is just one of many accomplishments that this canine team has been a part of since joining the Canine unit, and is an example of how valuable our department's resources are to the communities we work in.



Officer Ildio Rodrigues and his K9 partner Nikki.

Susan M. Hunter Scholarship

The Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) has announced that applications for the 2017 annual Susan M. Hunter Scholarship are now available.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be the son or daughter of a corrections employee (current full-time, retired, or deceased) within an ASCA member department of corrections (includes Federal Bureau of Prisons). Correctional employees, along with their siblings, spouses, and grandchildren, are not eligible. Applicants must be high school seniors entering college, undergraduates, or graduate students and must attend a 2 or 4-year accredited college or university. Students must be enrolled full time as defined by their college or university. Incoming first-time freshman and enrolled full-time college graduate or undergrad students must have a minimum college GPA of 3.3. Graduate students' field of study must be Corrections/Criminal Justice.

The 2017 application period runs from February 1, 2017, to March 31, 2017. For more information about how to apply for the scholarship go to: <http://www.asca.net/projects/20>.

New Initiative Underway from page 1

I witnessed, firsthand, a similar facility when I traveled to Germany some 19 months ago with Governor Dannel Malloy to tour that country's prison system.

Initially, I had hoped that the agency would have an entire facility dedicated to housing offenders in this age group, but due to the challenging fiscal restraints of our budget, the plan was pared down to a housing unit within the Cheshire Correctional Institution.

Although the unit officially opened on January 30, a great deal of work and preparation went into bringing this concept to fruition.

There are many who deserve credit for their efforts regarding this endeavor, and as is always the case when you single out someone for praise, you inevitably omit someone else equally deserving. To anyone who had a part in this endeavor, no matter how big or small a part, now or in the future, please accept my sincere gratitude.

However, there are still some who I wish to acknowledge publicly. First off, Cheshire CI's warden, Scott Erfe, who has a long track record of being a dyed in the wool custody driven correctional professional, enthusiastically embraced this nontraditional concept from the beginning. His positive energy transferred over to the staff at the facility, many of who in turn volunteered to be a part of the new unit.

I also wish to thank Deputy Wardens Kenneth Butricks and Giuliana Mudano for their leadership and perseverance in co-chairing the Young Adult Offender Program development committee. Together along with the members of the committee, they navigated uncharted waters to create a framework for the unit. A similar unit is also in the works for the female population at the York Correctional Institution.

Currently those housed in the program include the first group of 14 "mentees" in the 18-25-year-old age group, and 12 "mentors" – older offenders who are serving life sentences. An additional four more groups, consisting of 14 young offenders each, will be phased into the unit throughout the year.

Thank you also to the staff members of Cheshire CI, who daily work with these individuals, they will be the lynchpin upon which the success of this program rides. The unit is designed to be a therapeutic community with a heavy emphasis on programming and counseling.

Finally, thanks to Director Lauren Powers and Curriculum Manager Lynn Laperle of the agency's training academy for developing and coordinating the four, three-week long training sessions, in conjunction with the Vera Institute of Justice, which will give the staff members working in the Young Adult Offenders' Unit the tools they need to succeed.

And I have little doubt that this venture will succeed, thanks to the dedication and professionalism of our staff.

Around the Cell Block



MASSACHUSETTS - To improve treatment of substance use disorder in prison and jail populations, UMass Medical School has teamed up with the departments of corrections in Connecticut and Rhode Island, and the sheriffs in Middlesex and Barnstable counties in Massachusetts

FLORIDA - The Florida Department of Corrections will soon train probation officers on how to spot and report human trafficking. The state has already been training correctional officers.

PENNSYLVANIA – Pennsylvania's Governor Tom Wolf's budget includes the consolidation of the Department of Corrections and the Board of Probation and Parole into a new agency, the Department of Criminal Justice.

***Total
Supervised
Population
on
February 16, 2017
19,187
On February 16, 2016
the population was
19,903***

Well Suited

The Hartford Parole District Office recently participated in a “Suited for Success” drive with Project Longevity. Parole employees made donations of gently used professional attire to give to an individual as they attempt to re-enter the workplace and begin a change of life. Donations included suits, shoes, belts, dress shirts and jackets. Project Longevity is a statewide initiative designed to reduce gun violence in three of Connecticut’s major cities. The initiative seeks to convey a moral objective -- gun violence must stop -- while offering support and outreach to individuals who express serious interest in ending gun violence, ending recidivism and leading productive lives.



L to R: Rio Comaduran, Project Longevity; Sgt. Austin, Hartford Police Department; Deputy Director Eric Ellison; Parole Manger Rhianna Gingras; Counselor Supervisor Nicole Thibeault, Shawn St. John, Project Longevity; Parole Officer Thomas Criscitiello

Native American History at Osborn CI

In honor of Native American Heritage History Month this past November, Osborn Corectional Institution’s Counselors Edwin Rexha and Amy Correa invited Crystal Whipple, Wayne Reels, and Annawon Weedon from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council to give presentations to staff and offenders. Each of the speakers shared the history, culture, and language of their Tribe and their dedication to its preservation for future generations. Ms. Whipple, a graduate of the University of New Haven, served as Vice-Chairwoman and Chairwoman for the Tribal Business Advisory Board, an executive management team responsible for the oversight of all non-gaming enterprises and commercial property owned by the Tribe. Mr. Reels, Director of Cultural Resources for the Tribe for more than 25 years, is a traveling Native American Dancer who has organized numerous Native American festivals and powwows throughout North America. Annawon Weedon has a passion for preserving Native American culture and is presently employed as Cultural Instructor for the Mashantucket Pequot tribal Nation Cultural Resources Department. The audience enjoyed traditional drumming, traditional dances, and storytelling of how the earth was formed. Authentic Native American artifacts such as turtle shells, deerskins, and eagle feathers were also on display.



Authentic Native American artifacts

Additionally, speakers shared information about the Dakota Access Pipeline and their support of the Lakota and Dakota Nation as they fight for the removal of the pipeline through their sacred lands.

“This was an excellent opportunity for the Osborn staff to learn about the richness of the Native American culture,” said Warden Edward

Maldonado.

Scholarship Winners

from page 1

Recipient selection is based not only on scholastic achievement, but also on community service, clear establishment of goals, and any efforts made by the student to offset tuition through part-time employment. First to receive the award was Gregg Carrara, the son of Robert Carrara, Associate Fiscal Administrative Officer working in the Fiscal Services Unit. Most DoC staff would recognize Robert Carrara as a longtime member of the agency's Honor Guard and Bagpipe Unit. Unfortunately, due to inclement winter weather, Gregg was unable to travel from the UCONN Storrs campus to accept the award, his father accepted on his behalf.

Currently a Junior at UCONN, Gregg Carrara is studying Biomedical Engineering and is expected to graduate from UCONN in 2018 with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering.

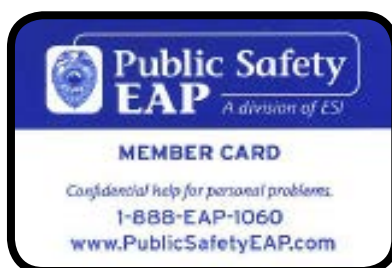
One of Gregg's greatest scholastic achievements includes his freshman project. This project was the conceptualization and design of an automated "Helping Hand" Smart glove. In his essay, Gregg wrote, "The device implemented gyroscopes, heating fabric and a pump powered air pocket to simulate the grasp of one's hand, in order to help mitigate tremors related to Parkinson's Disease.

The other scholarship recipient was Andrew Coderre, the son of Jeffrey Coderre, an Electrician at the Brooklyn Correctional Institution.

Currently, Andrew is a Junior at UCONN, double-majoring in History and Political Science with an anticipated graduation date of May 2018.

His community involvement includes volunteering at the Thompson Historical Society, the Mansfield Town Center and as a Packs Leader volunteer which fosters puppies and dogs.

Please join Commissioner Semple in congratulating both Gregg Carrara and Andrew Coderre on their being named this year's well deserving recipients of the John R. Manson Scholarship.



Muslim Presentation

The Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Center's Diversity Council hosted a very informative and enlightening presentation by Aida Mansoor, President of the Muslim Coalition of CT on January 20, 2017. The presentation provided staff with information on the basic understanding of Muslim & Islamic Culture.



Aida Mansoor, of the Muslim Coalition of CT speaking about the religion of Islam to CRCC staff members.

Ms. Mansoor explained that Islam is the submission to the will of God so that one can live in peace. She went on to describe the six Major Beliefs and the Pillars of Faith of the Islamic Religion. She also explained the meaning behind Ramadan and Eid ul Fitr - the celebration after Ramadan.

Dietary restrictions are common within the Islamic faith. Many of the basic beliefs of Islam are likened to the basic beliefs of many other religions. There is a common belief of angels, prophets, day of judgement, and life after death. There are only about 7 million Muslims in the United States and according to Monsoor, 62% of Americans have never met a Muslim. According to the Hadith (one of various reports describing the words, actions, or habits of the Islamic prophet Mohammed), Mohammed said that it is the duty of every Muslim, male or female, to acquire and seek knowledge. Ms. Mansoor stressed that "When you take education away from someone, then you take control."

She added, that the best thing is to get to know people in order to understand them.

Working at Wellness at Osborn CI

Anyone who has worked in a correctional facility in any capacity knows that the job is filled with stress – a kind of stress that many civilians whose only view of a prison might come from television programs and movies may not understand. In accordance with Commissioner Scott Semple’s Wellness initiative, Osborn Correctional Institution’s warden, Edward Maldonado, decided to make employee “Mind-Body-Spirit” health a high priority. Organized by Captain Jeanette Maldonado and Counselor Supervisor Aesha Mu’min, the facility hosted a Wellness Fair on January 17, 2017 in which staff got the opportunity to talk with numerous outside vendors about fitness goals, previous injuries, stress reduction, and even the importance of shoe inserts to relieve the pressure of standing and walking on a concrete floor every day.



Family and friends gather in the Osborn CI visiting room for the facility’s “open house”

Captain Maldonado and Counselor Supervisor Mu’min also organized a Saturday morning Zumba class at Health Trax in Enfield, which was led by Equal Employment Specialist 2 Judith Garcia. The event was in part to encourage physical fitness and health care in Department of Correction employees and in part to raise money for Special Olympics.

“It was a great opportunity to raise money for a very worthwhile cause and to get fit at the same time,” said Counselor Supervisor

Mu’min. The Zumba class was attended by Department of Correction staff members of all job titles from across the state.

Also in accordance with the Commissioner’s Wellness initiative, Osborn hosted a Financial Wellness Fair to assist staff in retirement planning, saving for children’s college, deferred compensation, and reaching personal financial goals. Additionally, Osborn CI hosted an open house in the fall, with approximately 200 employees and their families touring the facility.

“It’s important for families and friends of staff to see where their loved ones come to work each day,” Warden Maldonado said. “This experience helps them to understand and be more sympathetic to the stresses and pressure of being a correctional employee.”

Warden Maldonado went on to say that the pressures are very real – correctional employees have higher rates of divorce, early death, and suicide than other professions.



Participants in the Osborn CI sponsored Zumba class



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Fiscal Services Winter Wonderland

Fiscal Services held its second annual Winter Wonderland holiday decorating contest in which the Central Office staff of Fiscal Services were encouraged to decorate their areas for the holiday season. Fiscal Services staff created a Winter Wonderland that took us from Santa's Workshop at the North Pole to the Grinch's lair high above Whoville and to the magical shores of the Island of Misfit Toys. Central Office staff were invited to take a stroll down Silver Lane and Holy Moly Lane on their way to the Snowville Post Office. Health Services joined in on the fun and transformed the second floor west wing into a tour of Christmas Around the World. Fiscal Services Director Michelle Schott thanked all the participants, complimenting them on the beautiful job they did decorating. "The smiles and good cheer it brought to staff, in Fiscal Services, Health Services and beyond, was wonderful to watch. I am thankful for all that our people do and to see them come together in such a joyous and special way in these stressful times brings extra meaning to the holiday season."



Some images from this past year's Fiscal Services Winter Wonderland

Central Office staff were invited to vote for their favorite displays. This year's winners were:

Best Team Design: Team Winter Wonderland Flakes (WWF) – Inmate Accounts

Most Whimsical: Team Silver Lane – Budget Unit

Best Overall Presentation: Team the North Pole Lane – Accts Pay/SPARC/Asset Mgmt/Purchasing

Most Traditional: Team Holy Moly Lane - Accounting

Best Theme: Team Christmas Around the World – Health Services

Best Individual Design: Santa's Musical Workshop and Band – Bob Carrara

Winners were given certificates for them to proudly display. This year's Winter Wonderland was very successful and the plan is to carry this tradition on through the coming years.

Years Of Service

Employees with 20 Years of Service as of November 2016

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Facility</u> | <u>HireDate</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Boucher, Michael | Correction Officer | Osborn CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Boudreau, John | Correction Officer | Hartford CC | 11/22/1996 |
| Bradley, Lawrence | Corr Lieutenant | Northern CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Bradway, Brian | Deputy Warden | WCCI | 11/22/1996 |
| Burns, Michael | Correction Officer | Osborn CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Chevrier, Tammy | Corr Counselor | Osborn CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Cruz, Angel | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/8/1996 |
| Daniels, Melvin | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Faraci, Richard | Correction Officer | Cntrl Office | 11/22/1996 |
| Forte, Wayne | Correction Officer | Hartford CC | 11/22/1996 |
| Gallo, Steven | Corr Captain | MYI | 11/22/1996 |
| Hakian, Cedric | Correction Officer | Osborn CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Harlow, Jon | Correctional Captain | Cheshire CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Kacprzyski, Anthony | Correction Officer | Garner CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Lajoie, Philip | Correction Officer | MWCI | 11/22/1996 |
| Marrero, Ricardo | Correction Officer | Cheshire CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Melendez, Luis | Correction Officer | MWCI | 11/22/1996 |
| Moskites, Thomas | Correction Officer | MYI | 11/22/1996 |
| Nicolescu, Sorin | Correction Officer | WCCI | 11/22/1996 |
| Ojeda, Aymet | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Olivera, Luis | Correction Officer | MWCI | 11/22/1996 |
| Ortiz, William | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Rivera, Orlando | Correction Officer | Cheshire CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Rogers, Thomas | Correction Officer | NHCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Salerno, Kevin | Correction Officer | Cheshire CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Salmon, Patricia | Correction Officer | Hartford CC | 11/22/1996 |
| Scott, Nicole | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Smith, Jeffery | Corr Lieutenant | MYI | 11/22/1996 |
| Steskla, Brian | Corr Lieutenant | Cheshire CI | 11/22/1996 |
| Stroud, Comanuel | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |
| Tracey, William | Correction Officer | Brooklyn CI | 11/2/1996 |
| Whiteley, Scott | Correction Officer | BCC | 11/22/1996 |

Employees with 25 Years of Service as of November 2016

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Blackman, Jacqueline | Counselor | BCC | 11/15/1991 |
| Lane, Kristine | Idea & Rcrd Spec1 | Osborn CI | 11/15/1991 |

Employees with 30 Years of Service as of November 2016

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|------|------------|
| Champion, Lucille | Clerk Typist | NHCC | 11/14/1986 |
|-------------------|--------------|------|------------|

Going the Distance

With the Commissioner's strategic plan for wellness throughout the agency, Correction Officer Jennifer O'Donnell ran in the Chicago Marathon this past October.



**Correction Officer
Jennifer O'Donnell**

Officer O'Donnell, an eleven year veteran with the department, decided to run in the marathon to cross an item off of her bucket list.

More than 37,000 runners took part in the marathon, coming from all over America and 100 other countries. The race generated millions of dollars for a variety of charities.

Warden Henry Falcone and the staff of the Garner Correctional Institution are proud of her accomplishment.