



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.

Seasons Greetings

It is hard to believe this year is all but over. As the New Year approaches, it is a good time to reflect on the past, and take stock of the future. This December is particularly meaningful to me, as it marks the start of my 34th year of service with the Department of Correction. When I think back on my career, the first thing that comes to mind are all the outstanding individuals I have had the privilege of working with over the years. What is even more astonishing is that for each outstanding correctional professional I have worked alongside, there are many, many more equally outstanding employees who I did not have the pleasure of working with directly. To all of you who are part of this great Agency, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation for all you do. Thank you for your commitment and service towards our common goals.

When I think of the coming year, I cannot help but feel optimistic – thanks in large part to all of you. My chief concern will remain your safety and wellbeing. The new year will no doubt bring new challenges. However, thanks to your professionalism, I have no doubt that whatever problem arises, you will adapt and overcome it.

Please do not forget, during this hectic time of year, to let your family and friends know how much you appreciate their support – without it, our jobs would be much more difficult. I ask that you also remember the men and women of our staff serving in the armed forces; their sacrifices allow us to enjoy the comforts and blessings of freedom.

Finally, this time of year can be difficult for many. If you are struggling, I encourage you to utilize the services of the Agency's Employee Assistance Unit. Additionally, if you know someone who is having difficulty, reach out to them. Do not underestimate the impact a simple act of kindness can have.

With gratitude and humility, I wish you and your families a happy, healthy, and above all else safe holiday season and New Year.

Sincerely,

Angel Quiros
Commissioner

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through
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DoC Goes Solar

The Department of Correction (DoC) is harnessing the power of the sun in order to produce emissions-free energy, and save taxpayer dollars.

Over the past three years, the Department's Facilities Management and Engineering Unit has been working closely with Connecticut Green Bank (CTGB), and SUNPOWER (now TotalEnergies) to pave the way for solar array installations on the grounds of DoC facilities.

These solar installations are aligned with Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 1 which – among other things – calls for the reduction of Green House Gas emissions and other pollution in order to reduce the cost and environmental impact of state government.



CT Green Bank initiated a public Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of ten solar sites back in 2019. SunPower submitted an RFP response in November of 2019. Over the course of several months, SunPower was successfully awarded the Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) of the ten solar site portfolio.

In September 2020, CTGB and SunPower completed contract negotiations, signed the EPC agreements, and commenced work. Then the DoC entered into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with CT Green Bank in March of 2021.

The sites designated for construction of solar arrays included Maloney/Webster, Manson Youth, Osborn and Enfield /Willard. Later in Oct. 2021, interconnection agreements were signed by the DoC allowing for direct connections to the power grid. After months of permitting with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the unfortunate loss of a few sites, that brings us to April of 2022.

On April, 19 2022 DoC along with CT Green Bank was given an Impactful Project Award from Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. This was awarded for paving the road to 25 Mega Watts of Solar at State facilities.

The 25 Mega Watts (MW) of electricity that would be generated by the installations is estimated to equal the power consumed by approximately 3,000 homes annually.

On June 12, 2023 TotalEnergies electrical subcontractor began work on two of the three sites - Osborn and Cheshire. The photovoltaic site at Osborn CI is comprised of approximately 6.8 acres, with 4,238 solar panels, and 2.267 MW DC power, with an average annual savings of \$174,086.00. Maloney & Webster have a very similar makeup as the Osborn site, of approximately 6.2 acres, with 4,524 solar panels, and 2.42 MW DC power. The annual savings from this array are estimated at \$219,263.00

The site at Manson Youth is made up of approximately 6.2 acres, 4,108 solar panels, and 2.19 MW DC power with an average annual savings of \$200,888.00.

DoC Season of Giving

The DoC's generosity is never more evident than at the holidays. Below is just a sampling of some of the acts of kindness by DoC staff members.

Brooklyn CI

The staff at Brooklyn CI filled 30 DCF 'Wish Slips' for the Norwich Office's children this year.

Corrigan CC

Staff at the Corrigan Correctional Center teamed up with the Willimantic Office of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to help provide a merrier Christmas for some of the children in their care. Staff provided gifts for a total of 78 children under DCF's care.



Corrigan's Santa's Helpers (L-R): CC Nicholas Jacaruso, CC Michelle King, CS Larissa Kelly and CC Marshall Jones.



The training academy's Lt. Nicholas Bergin and Acting Lt. Jasmine Jenkins proudly display the donations.

Security Division

For the sixth year in a row the Security Division collaborated with DCF's Hartford office to provide Christmas gifts for 48 children.

Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development

The staff at the training academy partnered with the Meriden DCF office to provide gifts for 50 deserving children.

Parole & Community Services

The Parole and Community Services tradition continued in full force this year. The photo showcasing the generosity of the Division, along with many from Central Office, for children embarking on a journey with Connecticut Children's Medical Center Each and every one of these gifts will ignite joy, excitement, and bring smiles to many, many, many children!

Thank you to all the heroes and helpers who contributed. A special thank you to Parole Officers William Ludovico and Alison Parsons, and Parole Supervisor Stephen Faiella for delivering the gifts to the hospital.



Parole and Community Services collection for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

Garner CI Facility Awards

The staff of the Garner Correctional Institution held their Annual Facility Awards Recognition ceremony back on September 25, with family and friends in attendance.

Garner CI 2023 Annual Award Winners

Medical Staff Member of the Year: **Chassity Rosado**

Mental Health Staff of the Year: **Rachel Callan, LPC**

Correctional Officer of the Year: **Ambrose Stevens**

Counselor of the Year: **Shaniequa Brown**

Teacher of the Year: **Steven Boyce**

Supervisor of the Year: **Captain Ramon Gordils**

Employee of the Year: **Eric Green, LPN**

Food Services Emp. of the Year: **Gianfranco DelPrete**

Maintenance Employee of the Year: **Michael Falcone**

Unit of the Year: **Medical**

Special Appreciation: **Tracy Osteyee,
Administrative Assistant to the Warden**

Around the Cell Block

MASSACHUSETTS – As of December 8, Massachusetts became the fifth state in the US to allow inmates to make phone calls for “free,” thanks to a new law. There is no limit to the number of calls each inmate can make.

INDIANA - A new Indiana law that prohibits gender-affirming sexual reassignment surgery for inmates is at the heart of a federal lawsuit filed, which claims the state’s correctional agency denied the procedure to a transgender woman who is currently incarcerated. The law passed in 2023, bans state and federal dollars from being used for gender-affirming sexual reassignment surgery for offenders imprisoned in Indiana.

MICHIGAN - A Michigan woman was arrested at a Walmart store recently after she was allegedly caught shoplifting during a “shop with a cop” event with over 70 police officers present. A trooper followed the woman to the parking lot and spotted her loading the stolen goods in her car, which was parked next to a police cruiser.



The Garner Correctional Institution’s Unit of the Year

*Total CT DOC
Supervised
Population
on
December 22, 2023*

13,370

*On December 22, 2022
the population was
13,041*

Things to Do: Sleep Better

To-do lists are commonly associated with productivity, motivation, and getting organized. However, the benefits of to do lists do not end there. Writing a to do list has yet another positive effect – improving your sleep. As unusual as it may seem at first, putting down on paper what awaits you the next day can be a tool for limiting sleepless nights. This is not a myth or assumption. A study published in The Journal of Experimental Psychology has shown that writing to-do lists helped the participants fall asleep faster. If you are curious about how writing about your upcoming tasks can affect your sleep quality, keep reading. Here are the four key reasons why to do lists can put you to sleep.

Offload Your Mind

How many times have you lied in bed at night troubled by what you have to do tomorrow? Before we set off to the land of dreams, we often do a mental check of our responsibilities for the next day. The reason why this happens is that we try to assure that we do not forget anything. To-do lists can take away this burden of listing through your obligations in your mind. That burden can be transferred onto paper. The fact that you have created a written reminder for tomorrow will free your mind. Thinking about what you have to do tomorrow can put your mind in a running wheel. A certain way to remove this sleeping obstacle is to take a pen and paper and start writing.



Reduce Stress and Anxiety

Writing to-do lists can help you relieve both anxiety and stress. If you cannot shake off the accumulated stress, give a to-do list a chance. Studies have shown that there is a connection between writing and improved mental health. The simple act of writing is a sort of mindfulness exercise. As you write, you must focus on the task at hand, blocking out all the outside distractions and loud thoughts. Being present and putting mental effort into creating a to do list can help with stress and anxiety. Not to mention that the mindfulness aspect of writing teamed up with offloading your mind can be very beneficial.

Create a Nighttime Routine

Routines benefit our mental and physical health. They eliminate uncertainty, save our energy, and implement a sense of structure in our lives. However, you must imbed good habits in a routine for it to be beneficial. One of those good habits can be writing a to-do list. If your current nighttime routine consists of endlessly scrolling through your social media feed, consider making a change. Switch that up for writing a to-do list. With its beneficial qualities, to-do lists can ensure that you do not do anything that lessens your ability to fall asleep at bedtime. Additionally, your mind and body will get used to the habit of going to sleep after writing, and with time, you will be able to fall asleep faster. When the list is finished, your mind will automatically prepare for the next task at hand, which is relaxing and sleeping.

Feel More In Control

One of the best things about writing a to-do list, is that it helps you to get organized. The overview of your responsibilities allows you to prioritize and plan how to handle them. When you successfully manage your time, you will feel more accomplished. That feeling of accomplishment and security will help you sleep more soundly.

Tips for Writing To-Do Lists

Use pen and paper - There are many great to do list apps. However, it is better to keep it old school.

Hartford Correctional Center Happenings

The staff of the Hartford Correctional Center (HCC) have been busy; from hosting an open house, to helping those less fortunate in their community, to celebrating the diversity of its staff.

Back on October 25th, the facility hosted, what will become, the Annual Family and Friends Night. Staff members were afforded the opportunity to invite loved ones to join them on a tour of “their” facility. Approximately 150 staff and family members came to the facility and participated in this event.

All were welcomed and assigned to a tour group led by HCC’s administration (Warden Devonia Long, Deputy Warden Damian Doran and Deputy Warden William Foote). The tour took visitors into various areas of the facility, providing them with a glimpse beyond the exterior façade, into where their loved ones work. The tour ended in HCC’s Education Department, where everyone enjoyed pizza and dessert.

Warden Long then led a question and answer session. A Cell Extraction Team and K-9 Unit demonstration provided those in attendance with

a brief look into the Department’s Special Operations Unit. The K-9 presentation facilitated by Correction Officers Kristen Brousseau and James Hensley (along with their K-9 partners) was, as always, a crowd favorite. The HCC Quality of Work Life (QWL) Committee funded this event, and a dedicated group of HCC staff worked tirelessly to prepare and ensure all their family and friends could have an enjoyable experience. HCC Family and Friends Night was an overwhelming success and the staff look forward to next year’s event.

A Busy November

The Facility’s Diversity Council hosted their second cultural tasting event in November 15. The committee members in conjunction with Deputy Warden Foote worked very hard to ensure the success of the event. It goes without saying that their commitment to the Council makes a difference. Several staff members took time out of their busy schedules to cook delicious dishes, to be shared with staff members at the Diversity Council event.

Many interesting cultural food dishes were shared. Those who attended not only had the opportunity to socialize, but also to learn about various food dishes from all over the world.

Hartford Correctional Center Diversity Council remains committed to fostering the values of compassion, inclusion, and respect for the other. Every single effort from each of us constitutes one step further towards embracing diversity. The HCC Diversity Council, Warden Long, Deputy Wardens Foote and Doran are appreciative to all those who participated.

On the subject of food, the staff of the HCC proved themselves to be good neighbors by donating food for ten full Thanksgiving meals to the Community Renewal Team. The organization, which provides a broad range of services to those in need, distributed the food to its clients in time for Thanksgiving.

Warden Long, along with Deputy Wardens Foote and Doran are grateful to and appreciative of all those who participated and helped to make these events a success.



Warden Devonia Long (4th from right) and HCC staff donated ten Thanksgiving dinners to those in need.

Sun Power from page 2

With the closure of Willard on April 1, 2023, construction of the Enfield/Willard site needed to pause. The Agency and CT Green Bank needed to amend the existing contracts. The new contract would allow the energy that was intended to power the now closed Willard building, to instead have the energy sent to the grid and be credited towards another facility.



The solar power array under construction behind Cheshire CI.

As for the photovoltaic sites that are under construction, if all goes well, the goal is to have all of them all up and generating electricity by the summer of 2024.

The current solar energy projects may be a harbinger of additional solar arrays being erected on facility grounds in the future. Representatives from the DoC met with CT Green Bank back in June of this year, to discuss the potential for more solar array opportunities on DoC facility land.

Among the facilities being considered for future projects are the York and Garner Correctional Institutions. Not only will these new solar arrays save the Department money, but they will also reduce the Agency's carbon footprint. It's also another reason to wish for a sunny day.

To Do List from page 5

The reason is that the blue light from the phone suppresses the release of melatonin. This is a hormone that makes you feel sleepy. So, staring at the phone when trying to sleep can have negative consequences. A more suitable option for writing a to do list at nighttime is using pen and paper. Having a journal or notebook that highlights your past daily accomplishment can also be a great self-confidence booster.

Take it one day at a time - try to limit your plans to only those for the following day. If you start making long-term to do list, it can become overwhelming, and counterproductive. The best approach to writing a to do list that aids your sleeping habit is to keep it focused on the next day. There is only so much you can do in a day, so the writing process should not take much of your time. Be specific - Vaguely referring to your responsibilities will not be very helpful. Your mind will still be burdened with the details.

The only way to make to-do lists effective is to address specifics. Instead of writing, "do chores" break it down to objectives such as make the bed, vacuum living room, etc. The more specific the objectives are, the more in control you will feel. Every time you cross an item from the list, you will have a feeling of accomplishment. Keep it real - You want to be realistic when writing a to-do list. Otherwise, you can only start stressing even more about how you will manage to complete all of the tasks. Objectively assess what you can finish in a day. If you cannot possibly complete all the tasks, accept that you need to adapt to the situation. The fact that you are at peace with what you can and cannot do, will also teach you to have patience and stress less. Something as easy as writing a to-do list can truly improve your sleep quality. With so many positive aspects associated with making a to do list at bedtime should be at the top of your list of things to do.

USD #1 Teacher of the Year



Congratulations to Correctional Vocational Instructor, Stephanie Speziali for being selected as the Unified School District #1 2024 Teacher of the Year.

During a ceremony held at the Bushnell Performing Arts Center in Hartford on November 15, Vocational Instructor Speziali was honored along with more than 100 of her peers, as part of the Connecticut's Teacher of the Year Awards Ceremony.

Ms. Speziali is the Culinary Arts instructor for York Correctional Institution's school, and was nominated for USD #1's Teacher Of the Year by her Principal, Matthew Reinke. After going through the selection process, along with six other USD#1 teachers who were also nominated, Ms. Speziali was chosen by the Teacher Of the Year (TOY) committee to represent USD #1.

Connecticut's Teacher of the Year ceremony included a welcome by Governor Ned Lamont; the presentation of awards by the state's Commissioner of Education, Charlene Russell-Tucker; as well as recognition of the State's 2024 Teacher of the Year. Please join USD #1 Superintendent Veron Beaulieu in congratulating Vocational Instructor Speziali on being chosen USD #1's Teacher Of the Year.

Appreciation from Our Partners

Cheshire Correctional Institution's Correctional Counselor Tamarah Arbelo and Counselor Supervisor Mercilla Roach were recently honored during the 148th Annual Meeting of Community Partners in Action (CPA). The organization which has long been an active collaborator with the Department of Correction held its annual meeting at Elizabeth Park's Pond House in Hartford on Tuesday December 12.

The event, which featured speeches from Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin and Senator Gary Winfield also saw Counselor Arbelo and Counselor Supervisor Roach receive awards of appreciation from the CPA's Prison Arts Program for their ongoing work bringing the arts and art opportunities to Cheshire facility. Prison Arts Program Manager Jeffery Greene presented the awards, stating, "I want to acknowledge, in front of all these witnesses, how much I respect and appreciate all of your hard work and determination, in such a difficult environment, to bring hopefulness to the lives of those incarcerated in Connecticut's prisons."

Their award serves as a reminder that the hard work of all those working behind prison walls does not go unnoticed.



Counselor Supervisor Mercilla Roach and Counselor Tamarah Arbelo

Food Service Review at MYI



L-R: Correctional Food Service Supervisor Urchie Brisport, Food Services Director Scott Hastie, Correctional Food Service Supervisor David Potz, Correctional Food Service Supervisor Ryne Dorsey, Deputy Warden Tammy Perreault, and Deputy Warden Rafal Matuszczak

The Food Services staff at the Manson Youth Institution took part in an administrative review by the State of Connecticut Department of Education Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs of their adherence to the guidelines for the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. Manson Youth Institution’s onsite Administrative Review took place on November 28 and 29.

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. Manson Youth and York Correctional Institutions both participate in the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) for breakfast and lunch meals, including the afternoon snack for all those 21 years old and younger.

In order to participate in this program, the food service staff must adhere to strict guidelines provided by the Federal Government. For doing so, the State of Connecticut receives monetary reimbursement for breakfast and lunch meals served. The Department is also eligible to access United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodity offers and opportunities for equipment funding

grants. The reimbursement rate is determined by the USDA annually, and both the York and MYI facilities have received more than \$650,000 combined, each of the past two Fiscal Years. This rate of reimbursement works out to nearly \$53,000 per month based on the participating population size. The Manson facility has also qualified for equipment grants six of the past seven years, resulting in nearly \$150,000 worth of new food-service equipment.

Breast Health Donation

In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month this past October, staff at the Osborn Correctional Institution participated in raising funds for the cause. Facility staff members were given the opportunity to purchase pink badges, and customized shirts to show their support.

All monies raised were donated to the Connecticut Breast Health Initiative Inc.(BHI) of New Britain.

Deputy Warden Brian D. Moore, and Captain Shannon Brown traveled to BHI’s office in New Britain to present the organization with a check for \$1,545. The funds will go to support important breast cancer education and research in Connecticut.



L-R: Captain Shannon Brown, Breast Health Initiative President Joyce Bray, Deputy Warden Brian D. Moore, and Breast Health Initiative Executive Coordinator Maura Raeburn.