

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.

Correctional Employee, Nurses, and Teachers Week, May 5-11

The first week of May has been set aside for the recognition of the majority of those who work among our ranks. Based on a U.S. House of Representatives resolution in 2007, this week has been designated as National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. Additionally, the week encompasses Teacher Appreciation Week and National Nurses Week.

In my opinion, it does not seem fair to squeeze the appropriate recognition for all of these noble professions into one week's time.

I believe it is more important than ever to recognize the contributions of the men and women of the Connecticut Department of Correction who serve with distinction in one of the most challenging of environments.

I am constantly impressed by the can do attitude you - the men and women of the Connecticut Department of Correction – employ on a daily basis.

You perform your duties admirably as not only correction officers, but also as parole officers, counselors, maintenance and food service staff, chaplains, teachers, nurses, support staff and supervisors.

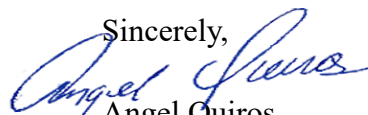
In addition to maintaining safety and security, you are responsible for feeding, educating, training, aiding successful reintegration, and keeping healthy those under our supervision. It is a huge responsibility and extremely challenging. Yet, you manage to accomplish these goals on a daily basis.

Even though we sometimes feel our profession does not always get the recognition it deserves, we have much to be proud of. It is my hope that the observance of this week will enhance the public's awareness and appreciation for all the hard work you do.

Please know that your efforts are appreciated not only during this week, but all year long as well.

I feel extremely blessed to have the privilege of working together with you towards achieving our common goals.

Again, thank you all for your selfless service.

Sincerely,

Angel Quiros

March 5, 2024
through
May 6, 2024

Distributed quarterly
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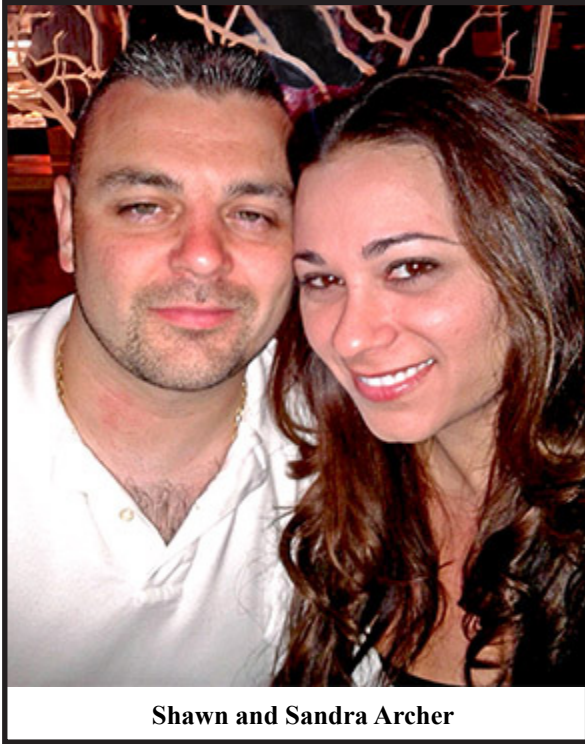
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An Incidence of Critical Need

For the past 12 years Correctional Captain Shawn Archer has helped his coworkers during their time of need through his involvement with the Department's Critical Incident Stress Response Team (CISRT) - since 2017 he has served as the group's Team Coordinator.

After all this time helping others, Captain Archer now finds himself in need of assistance. More specifically, it is his wife Sandra who is in dire need of help. In August of 2023, Sandra Archer was diagnosed with primary



Shawn and Sandra Archer

biliary cholangitis (PBC) a chronic autoimmune disorder that attacks the liver's bile ducts.

The bile ducts become damaged and injured, causing bile to build up in the liver. This further damages the liver and may lead to scarring, known as cirrhosis.

Bile is a liquid produced inside the liver that is used to help digest fats, absorb certain vitamins and remove waste products from the body. It passes out of the liver through small tubes called bile ducts.

Without treatment, the liver can become so badly damaged causing liver failure, which is often fatal.

Although medications can help slow the damage caused by the disease, there is no cure for PBC.

Sandra Archer first noticed something was wrong when her eyes became jaundiced. To make matters worse, the first doctor she went to misdiagnosed her condition, resulting in nearly a year's delay before receiving the appropriate diagnosis and subsequent treatment from another physician.

That doctor told her last summer that she had a 20 percent

chance of survival in the next year.

Due to other symptoms from the disease such as hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), nosebleeds, frequently upset stomach and overall very low energy, she can no longer continue to work as a medical assistant.

"I've always worked my whole life," said Archer. "Now I can't because I'm sick all the time."

Since her diagnosis nearly a year ago, she has been on the national Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) waiting list for a liver. Nearly 10,000 adults and children in the US are waiting for a new liver. Every ten minutes, someone is added to the transplant waiting list.

Most liver transplant operations use livers from deceased donors. Those on the waiting list may wait months or years to receive a donor liver. The sad reality is that every day 17 people in the United States die waiting for an organ to become available.

Since the number of patients waiting for a donor liver surpasses the number of deceased donors, living liver donation – in which a part of a liver may be donated by a living donor - provides an alternative to waiting for a deceased donor organ to become available.

People who have a living-donor liver transplant tend to have fewer medical problems after the procedure than those who receive a liver from a deceased donor. Additionally, a liver from a living donor also has a longer survival rate. Living donation is possible because the liver is the only organ that can regenerate itself.



Emergency Exercise at MacDougall-Walker CI

A simulated Code Purple (Suicide Attempt) emergency response drill led by Training Liaison, Lieutenant Vinod Kalhotra and First Shift Commander Captain Edwin Valentin was conducted in the School Library of the MacDougall building on March 1, 2024.

The drill aimed to familiarize staff with the correct procedures to follow during such emergencies. Medical personnel also played a crucial role in the exercise, offering guidance on managing neck injuries. The simulation was conducted in the first half of the day and involved three groups of participants taking their turn responding to the drill, allowing for wider hands-on participation and observation.



MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution staff members after their successful completion of an emergency response drill.

External agencies, including Suffield EMS, Suffield Fire, and Life Star, were integral to the drill, briefing staff on their roles in such emergencies and participating actively in the exercise. This collaboration enhanced the realism and educational value of the simulation. Following the drill, all staff members, including treatment personnel, took part in a debriefing process. This was a critical component of the exercise, ensuring that everyone involved could reflect on their actions and learn from the experience. It was decided that the facility's response to the simulated emergencies, with the support of supervisors managing operations, was appropriate and effective. Participants demonstrated a high level of preparedness and collaboration throughout the exercise. A special thank you to Brian Auld, District 1 Commissary Lead Operator, who coordinated the participation of all the external organizations.

Shoreline Plunge

A dozen brave staff members braved the cold Long Island Sound water as part of the Connecticut Special Olympics Shoreline Penguin Plunge. The plunge took place at Eastern Point Beach in Groton, CT on March 3, 2024. The York team managed to raise \$4,216.33. Pictured are: Lt. Sarah Maltz, Deputy Warden Katie Iozzia, Counselor Meghan Niedzwicki, Director Steve Lanphear and his son Zack, Correction Officer Liz Brown, Counselor Marissa Forrest, Correctional Counselor Theresa Kouris, Correction Officer Brian Reyes, and Lt. Thomas Goyette.



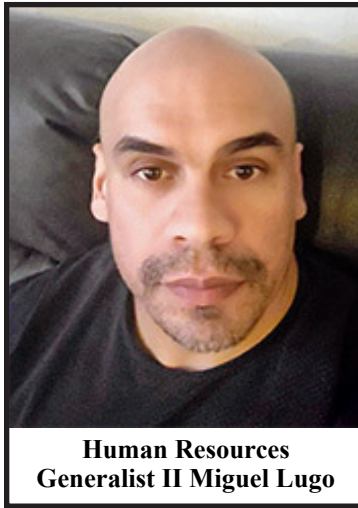
Human Resources Award Winners

Congratulations to the latest Human Resources Super Team Member Achievement Award recipients.

Human Resources Generalist 2 Miguel Lugo was chosen as the Human Resources Super Team Member Achievement Award winner for January – March of 2024.

Mr. Lugo maintains the highest level of professionalism at all times, and represents the Human Resources Department and agency well. He gives feedback and support to the Parole Unit to accomplish the unit’s goals.

Human Resources Generalist Lugo promptly addresses questions, concerns or issues, as well as emails and phone calls.



Human Resources
Generalist II Miguel Lugo

Human Resources Generalist 3 Debra Sass was selected as the Human Resources Super Team Member Achievement Award winner for October – December of 2023.

During periods of staff shortages in her Human Resources unit, not only does she perform her own supervisory duties, she also takes on additional duties to make up for the shortage of staff members. Human Resources Generalist Sass has done this on numerous occasions with professional integrity, all for the betterment of the unit. Regardless of her workload, she manages to be helpful to upper management, and does it all with a smile. She does not seek any personal attention, but instead promotes teamwork and a positive work environment. Ms. Sass has even postponed vacations at critical times, so she could be present for her staff. She is thoughtful, caring and a patient supervisor who puts everyone else first regardless of the situation.

Her patience, dedication, knowledge and selflessness make her not only a good person, but a terrific supervisor.



Around the Cell Block

MASSACHUSETTS – The Bay State is looking for a new commissioner of the Department of Correction, following the retirement of Commissioner Carol Mici. She retired in March after five years at the helm of the state’s prison system.

VERMONT - The Vermont Department of Corrections is launching a new internal investigations unit. It’s made up of three staff members, including two investigators. The unit will be tasked with investigating issues surrounding prison deaths, escape attempts, as well as compliance with federal laws, according to DoC officials.

VENEZUELA - A group of bungling prisoners tunneled their way out of prison only to be met by a team of police officers who were training outside. Twenty suspected criminals were seen realising their error in real time as they emerged from a hole in the wall onto the police headquarters training course in Maracaibo, Venezuela.

**Total CT DOC
Supervised
Population
on
May 6, 2024
13,477
On May 6, 2023
the population was
13,135**

A Satisfying Luncheon

Parole and Community Services Manager Giovanna Harris recently attended the first annual Justice Professionals Luncheon and got much more out of the experience than she could have ever anticipated.

The luncheon, organized by Hang Time and CT Hall of Change founder Charlie Grady and cohosted by Albertus Magnus College, was held on the grounds of the college on April 4, 2024.

Participants in the luncheon included various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as members of the judiciary and the legal profession from across the state. The event offered an invaluable opportunity for networking.

Hang Time is an organization which holds weekly two-hour long gatherings (held in Bridgeport, New Haven, and Waterbury) where the formerly incarcerated, and representatives from the criminal justice and social services fields come together for “real talk” which allows individuals to voice their needs and receive the assistance they need.

The CT Hall of Change, an offshoot of Hang Time, annually selects and honors eight (four men/four women) justice involved individuals who have made positive contributions to their communities.

United States District Court Judge V. Oliver and Connecticut State Police Commissioner R. Higgins served as the two guest speakers for the luncheon; each shared their personal experiences overcoming adversity. Every speaker imparted impactful messages and anecdotes from their own lives, which not only energized, but also motivated those in the room.

In addition to connecting with individuals who were knowledgeable and eager to offer counsel and support throughout various stages of an individual’s reintegration process, Parole Manager Harris had an additional unexpected, yet extremely gratifying experience. They even began with a video featuring Mr. Grady, the participants in Hang Time events, and CT Hall of Change inductees. “While I was intrigued by this video, I could not have imagined how quickly my life would come full circle,” said Parole Manager Harris.

It turns out that before joining the Department of Correction’s Parole and Community Services Division, Ms. Harris worked as a federal probation officer. While watching the video, she suddenly recognized an individual who was under her supervision when she worked as a federal probation officer. Each time the probationer appeared on screen, Parole Manager Harris could not help but smile.

“It was touching to learn that he is actively participating in giving back to his community,” Harris said. “Supervising officers rarely have the opportunity to hear about or get a glimpse of the positive work returning citizens are doing after supervision has ended.”

Parole Manager Harris went on to add that when she first met this particular probationer, his potential, value, and abilities were readily apparent. According to Harris, he simply required some time to recognize them in himself.

“I had the opportunity to see [in the video] his transformation firsthand, and it felt amazing,” Harris said. “Was a tear shed, indeed it was.”

Although those working in Corrections do not always get to see firsthand the fruits of their labor, it is rewarding to know that success stories do exist and your efforts have a positive and lasting effect.



Charlie Grady (pink tie) helped organize the first annual Justice Professionals Luncheon.

In Need of a Donor from page 2

The operation involves removing Sandra Archer's liver, and replacing it with a portion of the donor's liver. The donor's organ will completely regenerate over time. It takes approximately six weeks for the transplanted liver section to grow into a normal sized, fully functioning liver in the recipient.

Because of the risk of her body rejecting the liver, Sandra Archer will be on antiviral medicine for the rest of her life.

In an effort to find a suitable "living liver" donor, Sandra Archer's sister was tested to see if she would qualify, but due to her own health issues, she is unable to donate.

Captain Archer also went through the extensive screening process, which includes two days worth of testing (although the initial screening process can be done over the phone in about ten minutes); only to find out that he too was ineligible to donate. "It was devastating," Shawn Archer said when he found out he could not donate part of his liver to help save his wife's life.

As a result, the Archers have turned their attention to increasing public awareness regarding organ donation, not just for Sandra Archer, but also for thousands of individuals in need of a lifesaving organ.

Their efforts have already shown promise.

"Some individuals from the Department of Correction have reached out to me about donating," Captain Archer said. "A few are actually going through the process to see if they are suitable donors."

If you are interested in learning more about a living organ donation for Sandra, please contact the Center for Living Organ Donors Yale New Haven Transplantation Center" at Ynhh.org/donation or call: 866-925-3897 to let them know you want to be considered as a possible donor for Sandra Archer.

Also, the family has planned a benefit dinner and fundraiser:

June 15, 2024, 1:00 PM – 8:00 PM

The Elks Club, 44 Maynard ST, Middletown CT 06457.

For tickets, you may contact:

Lieutenant Jeff Signori (EAU) state cell 860-709-3197

Captain Julie-Ann Stewart (MYI) 203-243-5903

Captain John Fleming (MCWI) 860-627-2166

Counselor Supervisor Karin Anderson (NHCC) 203-974-2025



**EAU toll-free phone number:
844 - 997- 4EAU (4328)**

When You Feel Verbally Attacked

by Caterina Spinaris, PhD, LPC

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When you experience what to you is a verbal attack on your person, instead of verbally attacking that person back, consider the following alternative options, with your goal being the de-escalation of the situation. Such an approach will help protect your well-being and your resilience by preventing or lessening the inevitable wear-and-tear physically and emotionally that result from angry outbursts and a hostile stance. This is an example of using what are often called “soft skills”—but that are in reality skills of steel, because they can help us regain control of situations and prevail, while also preserving our health and perhaps our relationships.

1. Step back mentally and try to assess if you were truly attacked, or if you are being overly sensitive and taking the other person’s behavior personally more than warranted.
2. Display a calm and respectful attitude throughout your exchange.
3. Listen carefully. Repeat back what you heard the other party say to make sure you heard them right and so they will know that you heard them right.
4. Ask for clarification, for facts and specifics regarding what the other person objects to about your behavior or opinions.
5. Clarify your position as needed.
6. If you realize that you were in error, make amends through apologizing or through some other way of making things right to the degree that you are able.
7. Agree with whatever part of the other person’s statement you can truly agree with.
8. Acknowledge that the other person has the right to their opinion as much as you do.
9. Acknowledge that others may in fact agree with the other person and disagree with you.
10. Acknowledge that even though you hold a different opinion, there is a possibility the other person may be right, and perhaps further developments will show the degree to which you may both be correct in some ways.
11. Make conciliatory, non-combative, non-aggressive statements regarding the other person’s perspective, and avoid provocative statements, such as put downs or ridicule.
12. If possible, ask for a later time to talk, so you can think things through more clearly, and so the other person can calm down also.
13. Use light humor, but cautiously, and only when you have tested the waters and concluded it may be safe to do so. Be ready to abandon that approach if the person’s reaction indicates that they may be mistaking your attempt at levity as you mocking or ridiculing them.
14. Negotiate as much as possible toward resolution by aiming to help the other person feel understood and validated while you also advocate for your perspective to the degree that it matters to you.
15. Make non-threatening neutral and respectful statements if there seems to be no resolution at this point. “I guess we’ll have to agree to disagree on this one. Please know that I respect your right to your point of view.”

All Things Pickleball

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country. More than 4.2 million individuals in the United States play pickleball, according to data from USA Pickleball. From 2019 to 2020 alone, the Sports & Industry Association estimated that pickleball participation grew at a rate of 21.3%. Courts are popping up everywhere — at local schools and parks, five-star hotels and retirement complexes.

Created in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, Washington, pickleball is the brainchild of three men who were looking for an activity to entertain their families. The men combined elements of several existing sports into one unique game. With a few table tennis paddles, a Wiffle ball and a badminton net, pickleball — which got its name either from the Pritchard family dog, Pickles, or the “pickle boats” used in crew, depending on whom you ask — began to take shape.

The sport is a mix of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. Because the court is smaller than a tennis court, pickleball is easier on the knees and hips than tennis and other court sports like basketball — some of the reasons the sport is so popular with older individuals.

Although the game experienced steady growth for first few decades after its creation, pickleball didn't truly take off until the pandemic in early 2020. People were stuck at home with their families, looking for a way to be active from the comfort of their homes.

Pickleball, with its simple rules, inexpensive setup, portable net and small court size, fit the bill.

Pickleball doesn't require much equipment. Basically, all that's needed is a court, net, paddle, and ball. A standard pickleball court happens to be around the same size as a doubles badminton court and the court measures 44 feet long (inclusive of lines) and 20 feet wide (inclusive of lines). The net height of a pickleball court is 36 inches high at the sidelines and 34 inches high in the middle. Yes, this court happens to be very similar to a tennis court. The court is striped with right and left service courts and a 7-foot non-volley zone in front of the net, which is often referred to as the kitchen.

Here are the eight basics of playing pickleball:

1. You can play pickleball singles or doubles
2. Only the server scores a point
3. The first server is chosen at random, usually by coin toss
4. The ball needs to bounce once per side after the serve
5. Only underhanded serves are allowed for volley serves
6. You have to serve behind the baseline
7. The ball has to stay in bounds
8. The game ends at 11 or more points (you must win by two points)

The sport is sneakily addictive - easy to learn, hard to master. Some think what makes Pickleball so special is that it brings people together. Give it a try and find out for yourself why pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the United States.

