

## 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.

## From the Commissioner



In my continuing effort to keep you abreast of any new developments regarding the State's current budget crisis, I regrettably admit that there is not much new information to share.

What I can tell you is this, during the past few weeks working alongside the Executive Team, we have fundamentally examined every aspect of this agency and will continue to do so in an effort to find cost saving efficiencies that will in turn,

minimize the number of layoffs.

It should go without saying that if you have any thoughts or suggestions on how the agency can run more efficiently, please do not hesitate to forward them up the chain of command.

Presently, there are proposals before the state's Legislature that may offer solutions to this fiscal shortfall. Regardless, the manner in which we do business will require change and adjustment in order to solve our budgetary obligations. I am acutely aware that lacking any hard facts, the rumor mill begins churning at an alarming rate. The temptation is there to fill the void with hearsay and misinformation. I urge you not to feed into the speculation, as it will only serve to increase already elevated levels of anxiety.

What we do know is that Governor Dannel P. Malloy has mandated that all state agencies reduce their overall annual budget by 5.75%, equating to a \$69 million reduction for the Department of Correction.

There is one thing I can say with certainty regardless of what else happens, this agency will continue to move forward and never lose sight of its primary mission of maintaining safe and secure facilities.

If and when the specter of layoffs becomes a harsh reality, we will treat all of those affected by layoffs with dignity and compassion, providing resources to help manage through their transition.

This is an amazing agency with exceptionally talented people and I am confident we will all do our best to support each other through this difficult period.

In closing, let me reiterate my vow to do everything in my power to minimize the disruption to your lives.

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through  
March 18, 2016

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## A POWER packed Grant

The Post Incident Response Committee was formed late last year as a part of Commissioner Scott Semple's ongoing efforts to not only reduce the incidence of trauma, but also the long lasting effects of trauma on Department of Correction employees. Since its inception, and under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak, the Post Incident Response Committee has been working on ways to develop an innovative post-incident crisis response system offering direct support and assistance to employees.



**Commissioner Scott Semple, along with members of the Post Incident Response Committee accept a big check.**

One of the initiatives that came from the committee was the development of the Post-incident Workplace Employee Reference (POWER) Card. The goal of the POWER Card is to provide employees with information to direct avenues for finding necessary support during times of uncertainty and stress stemming from an incident in the work environment. Specifically, the POWER Card will have contact information for an employee to

have access to various avenues of support services (i.e. Workers Compensation matters, Victim Services, Peer Support, and Trauma-centered programs and services) that our agency has to offer.

A grant application was prepared and submitted by Grants and Contract Specialist Christine Fortunato in hopes of funding this endeavor. The Department of Correction had unsuccessfully previously applied five times for this grant, but with the prototype of the POWER Card and the efforts of the Post Incident Responses Committee, the sixth time was the charm.

The department received a grant for \$20,000 from CPS HR Consulting, a public agency which provides a full range of integrated HR solutions to the government and nonprofit clients, for the use in the continued development of informational resources for DoC staff members who are or have experienced workplace trauma.

## Black History Celebration at Garner CI

Retired Correctional Officer Ernest Blue was the special guest at the Garner Correctional Institution's Black History Month celebration event held on February 19. The event, sponsored by the facility's Diversity Council features retired officer Blue reading selections of his poetry, as well as discussing his work and family experiences as they relate to his culture. Afterwards, staff and guests were treated to a soul food luncheon. Following which, Warden Henry Falcone presented Mr. Blue with a plaque of Appreciation. Earlier in the month, on February 5, Mr. Blue gave a presentation for the inmates in the Applied Theater Class which included a discussion of Black History Month and readings of his poetry.



**L to R: Affirmative Action Officer Christian Moore, Counselor Beyonka Ligon, Social Worker Michelle Demers, Correctional Officer Joe Guest, Warden Henry Falcone, Ernest Blue, Counselor Supervisor Sandra Wynkoop, Imam Kenneth Muhammed, Captain Melinda McDaniel, Counselor Magdalena Szczygiel, and Nurse Chassity Rosado.**

# Unconscious Bias

Bias is a preference in favor of one thing over another. As human beings, bias is in our biology and is natural. Unconscious biases are biases we are unaware of and happen outside of our control. Research has shown that the beliefs and values gained from family, culture and a lifetime of experiences heavily influence how we view and evaluate others and ourselves. Unconsciously we tend to like people who look like us, think like us and come from backgrounds similar to ours.

Unconscious bias happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations. For example, in the photo to the right, is the gentleman facing forward or sideways? Your answer to this question will no doubt differ from the person next to you. Some of you favor seeing him as facing forward and others as sideways.

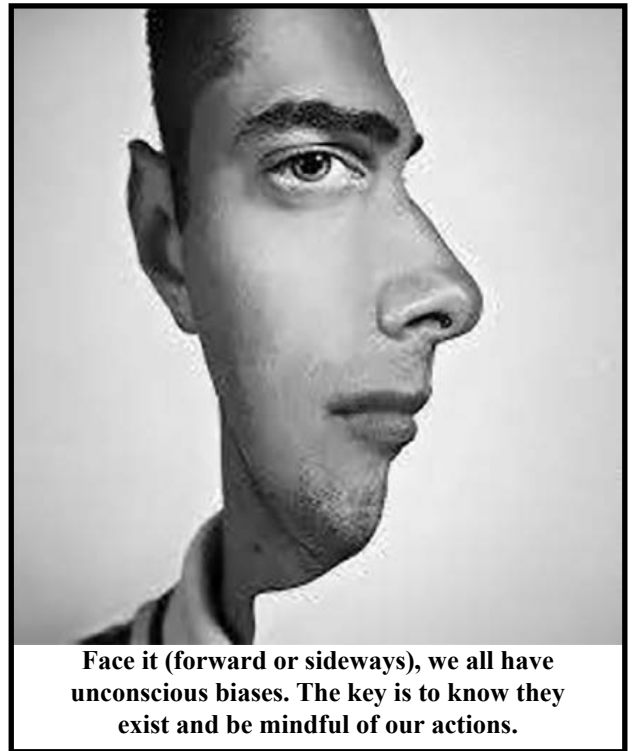
Scientists estimate that we are exposed to as many as 11 million pieces of information at any one time, but our brains can rationally only comprehend 40 so we depend on unconscious bias to survive. This process is automatic and enables us to walk down a busy city street while talking on the phone and drinking a coffee without getting hit by a bus. We develop a lens that lets certain things in and filters out others based on the knowledge, perspectives and preferences we have developed throughout our lives. The result is that we make assumptions and determinations about what is real every moment of every day; we sort out those 11 million pieces of information, we see what we see, and we believe that what we see is real.

Unconscious biases only become problematic when they manifest in ineffective behaviors. Rather than deny our unconscious biases, we can be curious about where they come from and how they get so ingrained in our minds despite our good intentions and be more mindful of our actions.

Strategies for avoiding unconscious bias:

1. **Avoid presuppositions** -- unfounded or misinformed assumptions that unfairly categorize people and circumstances.
2. **Examine your preferences in light of your actions** to ascertain if they are harmful to others. For instance, if your preference for tall people disadvantages short people, then your preference is a bias. Work to overcome it.
3. **Always ask, what if my perspectives or actions pertained to someone I love or to me?** Would they be okay? How would I fix them?
4. **Seek advice from the people who are affected.** Be open to sincere feedback.

**Additional training on the topic of Unconscious Bias will be provided by the Affirmative Action Unit as part of its Cultural Competency program for Department of Correction staff.**



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# Female Reintegration Center Opens

As part of his “Second Chance Society” initiatives to reduce recidivism and lower crime, Governor Dannel P. Malloy visited the York Correctional Institution on February 17, 2016, to officially dedicate the York Reintegration Center.

Similar to the Cybulski Community Reintegration Center for male offenders, which opened in April 2015, and the Veterans Unit for military veterans, which opened in November 2015, the York Correctional Reintegration Center houses female offenders who are nearing the end of their sentences and prepares them to reintegrate into society. The concept is to consolidate reintegration programs into one facility, leading to greater efficiency and improved outcomes.



Located in the former Charlene Perkins Reentry Center, the program named “Keys to Success,” encompasses multiple pathways, which are designed to provide specialized focus in certain areas of interest and are unique to each offender. Some of the pathways include education/vocation, recovery, family connection/relationships, faith and spirituality, and community service.

During a brief ceremony in front of invited guests and members of the media, Governor Malloy, Commissioner Scott Semple, and Warden Stephen Faucher officially dedicated the reintegration unit. Warden Faucher made a point of thanking his staff members, in particular Deputy Warden Pamela Senerth and Counselor Supervisor Christine Bachmann, for all their hard work in getting the unit up and running. The “Keys to Success” reintegration unit has been in operation since February 1, 2016.

# Around the Cell Block



**NEVADA** – Former Connecticut Department of Correction Commissioner James Dzurenda has been selected as the new Director of the Nevada Department of Corrections. Director Dzurenda, who assumes the position on April 4, replaces Interim Director E.K. McDaniel.

**COLORADO** - Disgraced former Subway pitchman Jared Fogle was attacked and left beaten and bloodied in a prison fight recently. Fogle is serving 15 years and 8 months in federal prison for possession and distribution of child pornography and traveling across state lines for commercial sex with a minor.

**MAINE** - Reversing a policy that was challenged on constitutional grounds, the Maine Department of Corrections will no longer ban inmates from submitting their writing to the news media for publication under a byline.

**Total  
Supervised  
Population  
on  
Marc 18, 2016  
19,847  
On March 18, 2015  
the population was  
19,994**



## Did You Know?

*“Did You Know” is an informational column aimed at increasing your knowledge of issues in our everyday lives. This article was compiled by Public Information Officer Andrius Banevicius. Any questions related to this article may be answered by contacting him at 860-692-7780. If you have any questions, or have an idea for a future column, please leave a message at 860-692-7780.*

## Is Sitting the New Smoking?

Over the past few years research findings have led experts to declare that, “sitting is the new smoking.” The research has shown that being idle for long stretches, day in and day out, may be the root of our nation’s poor state of health, contributing to not only back pain and obesity but type 2 diabetes, heart disease and even certain types of colon and other cancers.

One study revealed that men who sit six hours or more a day have an overall death rate that’s 20 percent higher than men who sit for three hours or less. For women, it’s 40 percent.

Part of the problem is when you sit slumped in your chair, your calorie-burning slows to a third of the rate compared to walking and as a result, your risk of becoming obese and developing diabetes grows.

The cure seems obvious - simply sit less. By standing instead of sitting at work, you burn more calories and counteract the effects of staying stationary for long periods of time. The link between sitting and obesity was established recently by the American Cancer Society. It found that people who stand for at least a quarter of the day reduce their chances of becoming obese. The benefits are more pronounced for women than men.

If you are going to start doing so, most experts recommend splitting your time between standing and sitting, because standing all day can lead to back, knee or foot problems. The easiest ways of accomplishing this are either using a desk that can be raised upward or a tall chair that you can pull up to your desk when you do need to sit. It is also important to ease into it, they say, by standing for just a few hours a day at first while your body becomes used to the strain, and move around a bit, by shifting your position or pacing as you work.

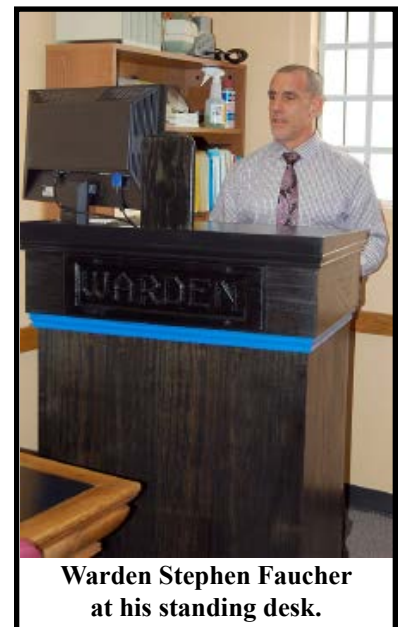
A few individuals within our agency, including Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak, Warden Stephen Faucher, and Deputy Warden Nick Rodriguez have embraced the stand at work philosophy wholeheartedly.

As well as the physical benefits, there are less-tangible rewards. Many people notice their mood improves, they can think more clearly and enjoy a general sense of well-being.

“I definitely feel more energized at the end of the day,” said Warden Faucher, who frequently works at his custom-made standing desk.

Sitting down to work has only become the norm for the past few generations of modern workers. Michelangelo, Thomas Jefferson, and Ernest Hemingway all stood up when they worked. There’s even evidence that large, communal tables built for standing around were common in workplaces from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries.

The bottom line is doing anything too much is unhealthy, any position we hold our body in to do sedentary work is going to come with its own set of risks. Whether you sit or stand for prolonged periods of time, the key to a healthier life is to incorporate more movement into your workday.



**Warden Stephen Faucher  
at his standing desk.**

## Cheshire CI Facility Awards

Warden Scott Erfe of the Cheshire Correctional Center is pleased to announce the facility's 2014-2015 annual award recipients. A total of 41 nominations were submitted by more than 60 staff members, with several individuals receiving more than one nomination.

An awards ceremony was held at the facility on January 29, 2016 to honor the recipients. After the ceremony, those who were interested including friends and family were taken on a tour of the facility. The names of the winners of Cheshire CI's individual awards were also submitted for consideration for the Department's agency wide awards ceremony.

### Cheshire CI Annual Award Recipients

PRESERVATION OF LIFE: **Correction Officers Joesph Grecki and Christian Vargas**  
CIRCLE OF MERIT – **Maintenance Electrician Joe Zimitti**  
DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE – **Correctional Officer Paul Campbell**  
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE – **Deputy Warden Bryan Viger**  
HEALTH SERVICES EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR – **Mike Desena**  
INNORVATOR'S AWARD – **Religious Facilitator Sami Shamma**  
EXCELLENCE IN TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT – **Lt. (Capt) Thomas Kenny**  
MEDAL OF VALOR – **Correctional Officers Andy Leclerc and Hiram Badillo**  
SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR – **Counselor Supervisor Eulalia Garcia**  
EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR – **Correctional Officer Bryan Mulligan**  
MANAGER OF THE YEAR – **Trish Moroz**  
CORRECTIONAL OFFICER OF THE YEAR – **Correctional Officer Mike Hanis**  
UNIT OF THE YEAR – **North Block 2**

## Taking the Plunge



**Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak (c)  
with fellow Team DOC plungers.**

With Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak once again participating, Department of Correction staff members took the plunge on February 20, 2016 at Crystal Lake in Middletown, CT in support of Special Olympics Connecticut.

With the largest contingent of "plungers" to date, Team DOC raised more than \$1,100 for this worthwhile cause.

The Penguin Plunge is the largest grassroots fundraiser to benefit Special Olympics Connecticut. Participants ("Penguins" / "Plungers") raise funds to run into the chilly waters of Connecticut. The Plunges take place in five locations throughout Connecticut at lakes and beaches across the state. The events take place throughout the winter season, from January through mid-March.

Funds raised go to support over 13,000 athletes who participate in Special Olympics Connecticut's year-round training and competition in 27 sports.

# Class 267 Graduates

The Graduation Ceremony of Class 267 held February 4, 2016, at Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development in Cheshire was highlighted by not just one or two, but a total of three guest speakers.

A total of 87 correctional trainees graduated after successfully completing the pre-service training program. The composition of the class included 64 Correction Officers, 1 Commissary Officer, 12 Correctional Counselor Trainees, 3 Food Services Supervisors, 2 Electricians, 1 Steam fitter, 1 General Maintenance Officer, 1 Nurse, 1 Chaplain, and 1 Teacher.

Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman was also on hand to offer congratulatory remarks to the graduating class. Wyman also thanked the graduates who also served in the military.

Traditionally, after Lt. Wyman makes her remarks, it is Commissioner Scott Semple’s turn to impart some words of wisdom to the graduates. This time around, Commissioner Semple thought a message from seasoned department veterans would resonate more with the members of Class 267. In an effort to get a broader perspective on what it is like to work for the department, three individuals were selected to speak. Correction Officer Marion Baker, Correction Officer Vernon Dufour (both of the Hartford Correctional Center) and Counselor Supervisor Eulalia Garcia (of the Cheshire Correctional Institution) all shared some valuable advice they had acquired over the years. From the importance of teamwork to remaining positive, the graduates received a good many

insights from the three speakers.

However, with the Super Bowl just three days away, the tip that resonated the most came from officer Baker who encouraged the graduates to be dependable and “don’t call out sick just to watch the big game.”

Following the guest speakers, the next order of business was the presentation of awards. Correction Officer Crystal Mitchell was selected as Pre-Service Class 267’s recipient of the Victor E. Harris, Jr. Award award due to her dedication and loyal commitment to the trainees. The award is named for a deceased officer whose enthusiastic dedication and commitment to correctional education and training still lives on in the memory of DoC staff. In addition to the Victor E. Harris Jr. Award, the PRIDE Award recipients were also acknowledged.

## Years Of Service

### Employees with 20 Years of Service as of October 2015

| <u>Name</u>        | <u>Title</u>       | <u>Facility</u> | <u>Hire Date</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Becker, Allen      | Food Svcs Supv 2   | NHCC            | 10/27/1995       |
| Faryniarz, Darlene | Office Assistant   | MCTSD           | 9/7/1990         |
| Jones, Regina      | Correction Officer | Cen Off         | 3/31/1995        |
| Scovish, John      | Food Svcs Supv 2   | York CI         | 10/27/1995       |

### Employees with 25 Years of Service as of October 2015

|                 |                    |         |            |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| Bates, Stephen  | Deputy Warden      | York CI | 10/5/1990  |
| Brady, John     | FoodSvcsSupv2      | CRCI    | 10/5/1990  |
| Davis, Tressa   | Rcrd Spec 1        | Cen Off | 10/19/1990 |
| Nuzzo, Dominick | Correction Officer | MWCI    | 10/5/1990  |
| Preble, James   | Correction Officer | CRCI    | 10/5/1990  |

### Employees with 30 Years of Service as of October 2015

|                   |                   |             |            |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| Bogue, Jacqueline | Subst Abuse Cnslr | Cen Off     | 10/26/1984 |
| Cummings, Darlene | Admin Asst        | Cen Off     | 10/18/1985 |
| Holland, John     | Food Svcs Supv 2  | Northern CI | 10/11/1985 |
| Ray, Miriam       | Vocl Inst         | Cen Off     | 10/25/1985 |

# Advice to New Graduates

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The PRIDE Award is presented to a trainee from each pre-service group who best represents the Department of Correction motto of PRIDE by demonstrating the values of: Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, and Excellence. Trainees receiving the PRIDE Award were nominated by their peers with the blessing of their Class Manager.

The recipients of the PRIDE award for Class 267 were: Correction Officer Priscilla Corales, Correctional Electrician Brandon Dechesneau, Correction Officer Conley Monk, and Correction Officer Robert Rainville.

Shortly afterwards,



Commissioner Scott Semple with Counselor Supervisor Eulalia Garcia, and Correction Officers Marion Baker and Vernon Dufour.

## Years of Service

### Employees with 20 Years of Service as of November 2015

| <u>Name</u>         | <u>Title</u>       | <u>Facility</u> | <u>Hire Date</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Hester, Diana       | Counselor          | Hartford CC     | 11/24/1995       |
| Ifkovic-Mau, Alicia | Counselr Supv      | Cen Off         | 11/27/1995       |
| Kotecki, Richard    | Correction Officer | York CI         | 3/31/1995        |
| O'Reilly, Kevin     | Parole Officer 2   | Cen Off         | 11/10/1995       |
| Peterson, Elizabeth | Pupil Svcs Spec    | Hartford CC     | 11/22/1995       |

### Employees with 25 Years of Service as of November 2015

|                  |                    |         |            |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| Arszyla, Thomas  | Correction Officer | BCC     | 11/16/1990 |
| Delgado, Jose    | Correction Officer | CRCI    | 11/16/1990 |
| Hannon, Michelle | Counselor          | CRCI    | 11/2/1990  |
| Lewis, Karl      | Warden 3           | Cen Off | 11/9/1990  |
| Russell, Caryn   | School Principal 2 | Cen Off | 11/16/1990 |
| Smith, Dana      | Correction Officer | BCC     | 11/16/1990 |
| Worski, Charlene | Secretary 2        | CRCI    | 11/2/1990  |

### Employees with 30 Years of Service as of November 2015

|                 |                    |         |            |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| Black, Alan     | Correction Officer | NHCC    | 11/22/1985 |
| Dempsey, Lori   | Human Res Spec     | Cen Off | 11/18/1985 |
| Feliciano, Jose | Warden 2           | NHCC    | 11/1/1985  |

## Caring & Sharing

Commissioner Scott Semple and the Executive Team would like to thank everyone for their generous support of the Governor's Care and Share Campaign.

In just two short weeks the Department's combined efforts amounted to an impressive \$7,656.12 collected for Foodshare.

The generosity of the staff of the Department of Correction will help shelters to stock their shelves and provide thousands of meals to those in need.

Special thanks to all the staff members for arriving early and braving the frigid temperatures in a moment's notice to assist in collecting donations for this worthy cause.