



Our Mission

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

From the Commissioner



It has been a little more than one month since I boarded a plane in Utah and landed in Connecticut to begin my work as the next Commissioner of this tremendous agency. When I look back on the dizzying pace, along with trying to process an incredible amount of new information, I keep coming back to the same two words – thank you.

I know that I have yet to meet many of you (trust me I intend to), but to those I have met a sincere thanks for being so welcoming and supportive of me.

As I visit the facilities, one thing is abundantly clear, this agency is made up of high-caliber individuals who take great pride in their work.

I had long since heard of the outstanding reputation of the staff of the Connecticut Department of Correction, it is well-known throughout the nation. However, as I continue to meet and work with you, I have to say I was a little surprised to find that you are even more impressive in person.

As I continue to get to know the ins and outs of this department I want to reassure you that I have no intention of making dramatic changes simply for the sake of making my mark.

There is one person who has a whole lot of changing to do – to adapt to the way things are done here – and that is me.

One thing I will not change however is my leadership style, it is at the core of who I am. My style is essentially twofold, I believe in servant and transformational styles of leadership.

Briefly put, servant leadership is not about being servile, it is about wanting to help others. It is about identifying and meeting the needs of colleagues, individuals and communities, and understanding that the needs of those we serve are of the highest priority. Transformational leadership – in a nutshell - causes positive change in individuals and organizations, with the ultimate goal of turning those individuals into future leaders.

After all, I am just a correction officer who now gets to lead one of the greatest correctional agencies anywhere all because someone mentored me.

I look forward to meeting those I have yet to meet, and to working with all of you. The bar has been set high, with your help I know we can raise it even higher. Again, thank you for your support.

December 8, 2018
through
February 14, 2019

Distributed bimonthly
to 5,500 staff
and via the Internet
throughout Connecticut
and the nation
by the
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A Great Recruiting Fair

Spearheaded by the agency’s Affirmative Action and Human Resources units, the Department of Correction held a Correction Officer Career Event held at the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development on December 15, 2018. The department hosted more than 1,000 prospective employees from all across Connecticut. The diverse pool of attendees were excited to learn about the new recruitment and hiring



Several of the DoC staff members who were on hand to answer questions.

process for the Correction Officer position.

Approximately 75 employees from the Department of Correction participated in the event, which included facility custody staff from various facilities, staff members from MCTSD, as well as members of the K-9, SOG, CERT, SITCONN and the Honor Guard units. Plant Facility Engineer II Joe Sucheki was also in attendance representing a

display for our Maintenance positions. Attendees were able to talk to the staff one-on-one regarding a career as a Correction Officer, the new physical ability test, and components of the 12 week training academy. Human Resources staff members provided information on how to apply for the Correction Officer position using the “JobAps” online portal via Department of Administrative Services. Information regarding employee benefits was also provided.

Concerted efforts were made prior to the event to reach out to members of the public and agency staff in order to publicize the career event, as well as the Correction Officer employment posting. Flyers were distributed to a wide range of locations throughout the state of Connecticut and Massachusetts including: colleges, public libraries, Town Halls, Chambers of Commerce, YMCAs, fitness centers, post offices, grocery stores, churches and businesses.



Hundreds of individuals attended the DoC Career Event.

Informational meetings were also held to answer questions regarding the Correction Officer Career Event. Additionally, targeted emails were sent to the military and to representatives of colleges to publicize this event. Thanks to the hard work of the Affirmative Action and Human Resources staff members, the event was a resounding success, helping to ensure an outstanding pool of future employees.

A Leadership Fellow

Warden Amonda Hannah of the Bridgeport Correctional Center recently completed the Transforming Youth Justice: A leadership Development Program 2018 Leadership Cohort of the TOW Youth Justice Institute at the University of New Haven.

The Graduation of 2018 Leadership Fellows took place Friday November 9, 2018. According to the Institute, the Transforming Youth Justice: A leadership Development Program, is a nine month leadership experience designed to support leaders who can enhance the use and effectiveness of evidence-based practices, programs and policies related to youth justice with a focus on youth up to the age of 21.

Cohort members are selected from applicants who represent all aspects of the community and youth justice system in Connecticut.

Congratulations to Warden Hannah on her hard earned achievement.



Warden Amonda Hannah (C) at the 2018 Leadership Fellows graduation is supported by Warden Allison Black (L) and Deputy Warden Denise Walker (R).

Crisis Intervention Training



L TO R: Mike DeSena SN-CF, Garner CI; Lt. Noel Brown Hartford CC Medical Unit; Ret. Cpt. Heather Ziemba PhD.; Cpt. Wayne Cole, NHCC; CSAC Tracy Dineen-Hutchins, York CI; Lt. John McCormack, MWCI; Ret. PTO Richard Buika.

Current and former Department of Corrections employees are now equipped with the tools and strategies to help prevent suicidal behavior among members of our nation's military thanks to a recent two-day training.

Held at the MG Maurice Rose Armed Forces reserve Center in Middletown, CT on January 9 and 10, the workshop was entitled *Addressing Suicidal Behavior in the U.S. Military: Strategies for Assessment, Crisis Intervention and Treatment*. The training was presented by Dr Lisa French, Psy.D. and Dr. Erin Frick Psy. D. in conjuncture with The Center for Deployment Psychology. The intensive two-day module provided instruction in the assessment and treatment of suicidal ideation and behavior. Video demonstrations and participant role-plays were utilized to practice key assessment and treatment techniques. The training provided a detailed review of epidemiology of suicide in the civilian and military/veteran communities.

The workshop also provided an introduction to the Department of Defense's and Veterans Administration's supported nomenclature for self-harm and suicidal behavior.

Also discussed were current theories dealing with risk and protective factors for suicidal behavior. The training was designed for behavioral health providers and first responders working with service members and veterans who are seeking in-depth training to incorporate into their work life. The training focused on five areas: Analysis of suicide rates in civilian and military populations; examining unique challenges associated with suicide risk assessment and prediction; categorizing suicidal and non-suicidal thoughts and behaviors; assessing suicide risks considering both proximal and distal risk factors; and utilizing cognitive behavioral therapy for the treatment of suicidal behavior.

Succession Planning Ownership

The following article is another in a series submitted by the Human Resources Unit on the subject of Succession Planning and Workforce Development

Are you taking ownership of your professional development?

Taking ownership of your professional development and acting on it will assist you in your career growth. It is important to become knowledgeable about the organization's career paths and the qualifications and experience required for upward mobility. It will give you the opportunity to choose a path along which to grow and to be prepared for the next position.

Taking ownership of your professional development requires:

- Being proactive and setting goals.
- Remaining focused on the goals.
- Discussing your goals with people that can assist you with achieving them.
- Visualizing how your goals may be achieved in pursuit of your career.
- Motivate yourself by reading; listening to positive things; keeping company with positive people that share your goals; attending seminars.
- Challenging yourself by taking on work assignments outside of your daily work to gain knowledge and skills.
- Taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves.

As the organization continues to grow, change opportunities may become available in new areas that require different skills, knowledge, and abilities. This will create opportunities to pursue qualifications and training to prepare you to take advantage of those opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the current and future needs of the organization.

Ownership is self-driven and requires some motivation. Therefore, create a positive environment by setting your goals, sharing your goals with those that will help you achieve them, and visualize the achievement of your goals.

One way to demonstrate ownership is by creating a standard operating procedure (SOP) - an electronic guide or notes to pass on information about your current job. This will not only show mastery of your current position, but will also ease the transition and demonstrate your readiness for the next step.

The growth and success of any organization requires knowledgeable and creative people who will contribute positively to the development of the workforce taking the organization to its optimal performance.

Around the Cell Block



SOUTH CAROLINA – The South Carolina Department of Corrections suspect contraband smugglers have used potato guns to launch banned items such as drugs, tobacco and cell phones over the 50-foot-tall netting recently installed around the agency's higher-security prisons.

ALABAMA - A federal appeals court in Alabama on Wednesday delayed the execution of a Muslim inmate who said the prison was violating his religious rights by barring an imam from being present during the lethal injection.

PENNSYLVANIA - Despite the circumstances, Bill Cosby said his time in prison is an "amazing experience," his press spokesman Andrew Wyatt said in a recent TV interview.

**Total
Supervised
Population
on
February 14, 2019
18,029**

**On February 14, 2018
the population was
18,432**

DOC Generosity

Once again, as is always the case during the holiday season, the generosity of the staff of the Department of Correction was on full display. The following is a recap of the efforts made by various facilities and units within the agency that helped to ensure a happy holiday for many, many children.

Warden Amonda Hannah and her staff from the **Bridgeport Correctional Center** teamed up with the Bridgeport and Norwalk Department of Children and Families (DCF) to promote a “Giving Tree” fundraiser. Bridgeport CC staff were left with requests for holiday gifts from local children in need on an ornament affixed to the Giving Tree. Due to the usual overwhelming generosity of Bridgeport CC staff, all requests were fulfilled with plenty of extra gifts donated (photo #1). A special thanks goes to Secretary Pamela Neuendorf for converting cash contributions into even more toys.



MacDougall- Walker CI and **District One House** organized a charity bowling event held at Silver Lanes in East Hartford. The fundraiser, organized by Lieutenant Steven Radkovich, raised more than \$600, which was used to purchase toys, and in turn they were donated to the Enfield Police Department’s “Toys for Joy” program. Pictured is Lt. Steve Radkovich of MWCI (L) then Captain Don Acus of the District 1 Office (second from left) (photo #2).

The staff of the **Osborn Correctional Institution** donated 57 gifts to children in the care of the DCF’s Middletown, CT office (photo #3).



At the **Brooklyn Correctional Center** – spearheaded by Correction Officer Mike Behle and Secretary II Louise Downer - staff, family and friends were able to fulfill the gift wishes of 90 children under the care of the Department of Children and families in Norwich, CT (photo #4).

The **Tactical Operations Unit** collected over \$2,200 to purchase needed toys. The toys were donated to the Connecticut’s Children’s Medical Center in Hartford, CT on December 22, just in time for Christmas. The toy drive is an annual tradition for the Tactical Operations Unit and the contributions increase with each passing year. Pictured L to R: Captain Wayne Cole, Captain Kevin Piteriski, Lieutenant Pete Gingras, and the Director of Tactical Operations, Roger Bowles. (photo #5).

More DoC Generosity

Not to be outdone, the **Security Division** and **Central Office** staff partnered with the Hartford office of DCF to fulfill the Christmas gift wishes of 55 children (photo #6).

Additionally, the staff of the **MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution** worked with Suffield Community Aid (SCA) to help provide 266 Suffield town residents with a holiday basket.



According to the Executive Director of SCA, Janet Frechette, thanks in large part to the support of the MWCJ staff, not a single household who qualified to receive help was turned away.

Year in and year out during the holiday season (and beyond), the men and women of the Department of Correction step up to help those less fortunate.



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Greyhound program helps youth offenders

This article first appeared in The Cheshire Citizen and was written by Joy VanderLek

It's not the fastest land animal. That would be a cheetah. However, when it comes to the world's fastest dog, the greyhound is number one. Greyhounds clock in at an amazing 40-plus mile-per-hour. That's why the dogs are known as the racing breed, most are bred to race and mainly found at dog tracks.

What happens when the dog's racing life is done? That's when Rick Lukas gets involved. Lukas created and is president of the board of Connecticut Prison greyhounds, a 501© 3 nonprofit. Its mission has a twofold benefit: to help train greyhound dogs so they can get adopted and placed into homes, and to give a sense of purpose and responsibility to incarcerated youth. Before he began his own nonprofit, Lukas was involved in greyhound adoption organizations for decades. His love of greyhounds came from his mother who adopted a greyhound for a pet. "That's where it all started," said Lukas, who moved from Pennsylvania and is now a Southington resident. "When my mom passed away, I kept her greyhound and also went and got my own."



Connecticut Prison Greyhounds' Rick Lukas with Emmett.

Lukas explains that when race tracks release dogs to be adopted, the dogs need to be taught "life skills." The former racing dogs, for example, do not know how to climb stairs and don't know what sliding glass doors are. "These dogs have never been in a house," Lukas said.

Connecticut Prison Greyhounds works in connection with the state's Department of Correction, said Lukas. To get the program established, the volunteers went to the Manson Youth Institution in Cheshire, on weekends, for two years. "I've been there since its inception," Lukas said. "It worked out very well," he said, adding that there are now four handlers for two greyhounds. The dogs have their own area in the complex, with a large play yard. Connecticut Prison Greyhounds teach youth handlers how to check the dogs for ticks, clip their nails, clean their ears, check their teeth, examine paw pads for injury. Handlers are taught "everything we know" about greyhounds, Lukas said.

The handlers are under the age of 21, youth offenders at the Manson Youth Institute. Those chosen to train the dogs are determined by current program liaison, Captain Joanna Salvatore, a 19-year veteran of DoC. Salvatore, who owns two dogs herself, is pleased with the program's effect. "The program is wonderful for the inmates. It's so positive. It teaches responsibility. It really makes a difference."

One handler, whose name cannot be disclosed, said, "This program changed my life for the better. I was stressed out before this opportunity and it's given me a new reason to focus my energy in a more positive way. I am grateful this job opened many doors for me and gave me the experience that I needed. I have a new passion to pursue when I go home."

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A Hall of Famer

Congratulations to Lieutenant Brian LaPila of the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development for recently being inducted into the Connecticut Powerlifting Hall of Fame.

Some of Lieutenant LaPila's accomplishments that helped earn him a spot in the Class of 2018 inductees include:

- Lt. LaPila was the 2009 American Powerlifting Association (APA) World Raw Bench-press Champion
- Lt. LaPila holds three different world powerlifting records
- Lt. LaPila holds four different national powerlifting records
- He also holds numerous states powerlifting records

Additionally, Lt. LaPila has also used his love of the sport to benefit others. He created the "Bench-press for Breast Cancer" event – which was held annually from 2009-2015 - with 100% of the proceeds donated to the Connecticut affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer research.

In 2015, Lt. LaPila organized "Bench-press for Suicide Prevention and Awareness." All of the proceeds from this event were donated to the Hartford, affiliate of the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention. As a result of these charitable events, Lt. LaPila was able to donate approximately \$50,000 to the worthy causes.

With the New Year came more honors for Lt. LaPila. Middletown Mayor Daniel Drew honored Lt. LaPila in a ceremony held at city hall, with a proclamation recognizing his life's achievements and contributions to the city.

Mayor Drew declared that January 18, 2019, was Brian LaPila day in the city of Middletown, CT.



Lt. Brian LaPila (L) with Middletown Mayor Daniel Drew.

For the Love of Dogs from page 7

Training for the dogs usually runs a course of six to eight weeks. The handlers feed and walk the dogs and teach basic skills, where they learn, among other things, how to sit, stay, come, and more, Lukas said. Some dogs need an extra round or two for a variety of reasons.

That was the case with Elvis. The elderly greyhound was a surrender, whose new owner was made to choose between a new girlfriend or the dog, said Lukas. Elvis ended up becoming a mascot of the facility. "Elvis caught my heart," said Captain Salvatore. "He would actually greet me every day."

"I've learned a lot about greyhounds," said Salvatore, who didn't realize how relaxed the dogs really are. She calls them "couch potatoes."

"They are great dogs," said Salvatore.

Update: Connecticut Prison Greyhounds held its 15 graduation at the Manson Youth Institution on December 15, with one greyhound graduating the program and another coming in for training.

