

## 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 is hard to believe that with the New Year I am entering into my second year as Commissioner of this proud agency. Before I go any further, I want to take this opportunity to once again thank all of you for your outpouring of kindness, love, support, and prayers I received following the news of my father's death last month. My family and I were simply blown away at the expressions of sympathy and condolences from the amazing people of this department. It meant more

to me than you will ever know.

With that said, it is time to look forward to the year ahead. We have accomplished a great deal, but there is still more to achieve. I am ready - with your help of course - to take our organization to the next level.

First and foremost, we will continue to focus on our ongoing success with regard to our primary mission of insuring that our facilities remain safe, secure and orderly. It is something that every one of us should be extremely proud of. It is also something that we can never take for granted.

see **Looking Forward**/page 8

## Governor Attends Graduation

The Pre-service Graduation of Class 274 was made that much more special by having the Honorable Governor Ned Lamont serve as the guest speaker for the event. The ceremony was held on December 5, 2019, at Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development in Cheshire.

A total of 136 correctional trainees graduated after successfully completing the pre-service training program.

In his address to the audience the Governor congratulated the graduates, and emphasized the importance of their work.



**Governor Ned Lamont**

see **Class 274 Graduates** /page 7

November 16, 2019  
through  
January 28, 2020

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## Wrapping Up DoC's Season of Giving

In what is an annual tradition various facilities and units throughout the Department of Correction show their generosity by collecting gifts for those who may otherwise go without during the holiday season. Below is a sampling of examples of the incredible charitable individuals who make up our staff.



DCF Social Work Supervisor Karen Smith (L) and Bridgeport CC's Pamela Neuendorf.

### Bridgeport CC

During this past holiday season, Warden Robert Martin and staff from the Bridgeport Correctional Center teamed with the Norwalk Office of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for a Toys for Tots fundraiser. A multitude of toys were donated in addition to more than \$1,200 in cash donations - which was used to purchase even more toys and gift cards. Special thanks to Secretary Pamela Neuendorf who was instrumental in coordinating the toy drive.

### Brooklyn CI

For the past several years, Brooklyn Correctional Institution staff have participated in a "Wish Slip" Program with Norwich DCF. Staff select a "Wish Slip" for a child, and then takes the time to go out shopping to purchase the items noted on the slip in order to make a child's Christmas memorable and fulfilled. Warden Stephen Faucher is proud to say that this year was no different. A total of 59 "Wish Slips" were delivered to the Norwich DCF Office on Monday, December 16, 2019 by Administrative Assistant Kelley Rochefort, Secretary Louise Downer and Correction Officer Kevin Partridge. They were greeted by DCF staff who expressed their thanks for the continued support our facility provides to this cause.

In addition to donations from staff, the Brooklyn facility continues to receive support of this program from DoC retirees, family members and past employees.

### Human Resources:

Members of the Human Resources Unit teamed up with staff at Connecticut Medical Children's Center to make the holidays brighter for those unfortunate enough to be in the hospital during the holidays. Throughout most of December, collection bins were placed at Central Office. Once collected, the bounty was dropped off at the hospital helping to brighten the holidays for the young patients.

Thank you to Principal Human Resource Specialist Sarah Fasano-Fernicola for her work to organize the toy collection.



Human Resources' contribution to CT Children's Hospital

## Wrapping Up DoC's Season of Giving cont...

### Northern CI:

Staff members of the Northern Correctional Institution generously donated a variety of gifts for 30 children under the care of the Milford DCF office this Christmas. The gifts ranged from bicycles, toys, clothing, and games, to gift cards. This was the first time Northern participated in this act of kindness for Christmas. Coincidentally, this was the first time the Milford DCF office worked with the Department of Correction in receiving toys for children under their care.



Some of Santa's Helpers with their bounty at Northern CI

Working with Jennifer Martin-Drennan of the Milford DCF office, Counselor Supervisor Carlene Davis of Northern CI received the names of 30 children along with their wishes for Christmas. Each of the names were written on a star for staff to randomly choose from. Through the generosity of the staff at Northern CI these children had a much brighter Christmas.

### Security Division:

The agency's Security Division (with the support of Central Office staff) partnered with the Hartford Office of the Department of Children and Families to provide gifts for deserving children. Thanks in large part to the hard work of Administrative Assistant Bette Condon, enough gifts were collected so that 81 children had multiple presents under the tree on Christmas morning.

### Operations:

Members of the various Operation's units - the Correctional Emergency Response Teams (C.E.R.T.), The Special Operation Group hostage rescue team (SOG), Situational Control Hostage Negotiation Team (SITCON), the Central Transportation Unit (CTU), The Honor Guard and K9 Units - made time during the holiday hustle and bustle to ensure that the children at Connecticut Children's Medical Center had something to smile about.



L to R: Captain Michael Pafumi, Director Ron Cotta, Captain Wayne Cole, Captain Kristopher Limmer, and Lt. Marenza Tasarz drop off toys at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

## Wrapping Up DoC's Season of Giving cont...

### Willard-Cybulski CI:

Staff at Willard-Cybulski CI stepped up to help those less fortunate by partnering with Enfield Social Services to help families who reached out for assistance. Spearheaded by Counselor Lori Calabro, gifts were collected and wrapped to fulfill the wish lists of children in need during this holiday season. Monetary donations were also used to shop for more gifts and provide gift cards for the families of the children.



L to R: Willard-Cybulski's Counselor Ashlie Ouellette-Aviles, Counselor Lori Calabro, and Secretary Karen Piccoli.



L to R: York CI's Counselor Karolina Urbanowicz, Captain Colt Foley, Counselor Jennifer Page, and Captain Eva Agathos.

### York CI:

The staff of the York Correctional Institution also teamed up with The Norwich office of the Department of Children and Families to collect gifts for children under DCF care. The staff provided presents for more than 50 children, and they used a box truck to deliver them.

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## Employee Assistance Unit Toll-Free Number

The recently created Employee Assistance Unit (EAU) has added an important new feature to help those needing assistance, an official toll-free dedicated EAU phone number.

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

The number is intended to be an immediate telephonic portal for all DOC staff, retirees, and family/loved ones seeking assistance, support, resources/referrals, and guidance for personal and/or job-related problems affecting one's overall well-being and quality of life.

# A Letter of Gratitude

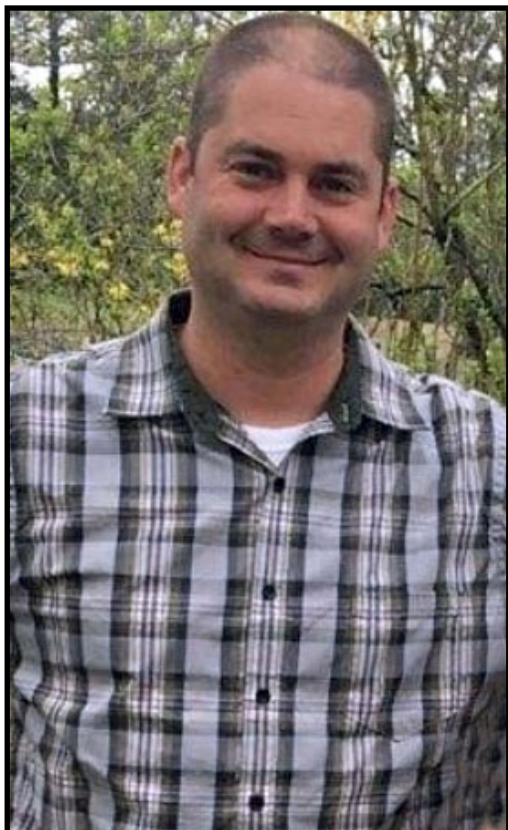
*Warden Faucher thanks staff for their support during Brooklyn CI's time of need*

**TO:** All Department of Correction Staff

**FROM:** Stephen Faucher, Warden

**SUBJECT:** THANKS AND APPRECIATION

On December 11, 2019, Brooklyn CI lost one of its own, with the unexpected passing of Correction Officer Chris Thomas.



**Chris Thomas - gone too soon**

Chris was assigned to Brooklyn Correctional Institution as a 2nd Shift Officer. But he was more than just an Officer, he was a friend to all of his co-workers and a family man, who left behind his wife April and two daughters (Madison & Taylor), as well as his extended family.

The assistance that was rendered from the Department of Correction - as well as from other individuals - is truly appreciated, and we are grateful for everything that was done to support the staff and the Thomas family during this devastating time. The department-wide Pay-to-Park brought in funds to assist April and her family

during this loss. The outpouring of support and the collections received from a variety of areas are truly appreciated, along with the generosity and kindness bestowed upon the Thomas Family during their time of need.

The funds collected were dispersed to the Thomas family on December 24, 2019.

Thank you all for being part of our Brooklyn CI Family when needed - you are all valued and this department-wide collaboration was so very much appreciated.

# Around the Cell Block



**WASHINGTON** - A bill that would make about 9,000 felons eligible to vote is moving ahead in the Washington state Legislature. The proposed bill would make felons automatically eligible to vote once they are released from state prison. Under current law, they are eligible once they have completed probation.

**VIRGINIA** - As several state legislators bring bills to stop Virginia prisons from strip searching children and banning people from visiting inmates if they refuse the invasive inspection, the state Department of Corrections says it has decided to stop the practice.

**SPAIN** - A man arriving on a flight from Colombia with what was described as a comically oversized toupee under his hat was arrested. Spanish police searched him and found a bundle of cocaine, worth about \$34,000, taped to his head.

***Total  
Supervised  
Population  
on  
January 28, 2020  
17,045  
On January 28, 2019  
the population was  
18,056***

## Intern Yesterday, DoC Employee Today

The Department of Correction's Internship Mission is to allow interns to gain experience in a professional and diverse environment to enhance their personal and professional growth. Ideally internships lead to full-time employment with the agency, which is exactly what happened with both Correctional Counselors Deborah Lugo and Dalila May.



**Former interns, current employees -  
Counselors Deborah Lugo (L) and Dalila May.**

The Counselors shared their experiences when they interned with the Department of Correction, and how it helped them when they obtained fulltime employment with the agency.

Ms. Lugo is currently working as a Correctional Counselor at the Hartford District Parole Office, but began her career as a Community Release Counselor at the Carl Robinson Correctional Institution. She stated that her internship with the department prepared her for a facility setting; its protocol for security and to be cognizant of what is going on in the facility in order for her to complete her tasks (i.e. group facilitation and time calculation). The internship gave her hands-on experience, which helped her to determine if this was the right direction for her. The experience also exposed her to different avenues she may want to explore in her career with the department. Her experience as an intern helped her transition smoothly into her current role as a DoC employee. Counselor Lugo feels that regardless of which career path one may choose, an internship at the very least will prevent you from being shell-shocked if and when you get a job working in a prison. She further stated that a prison job is not for everyone and that gives them a chance to weigh out the pros and cons of a career in corrections.

Ms. May, who also works at the Carl Robinson facility (dorm counselor and program counselor for Anger Management), stated that her experience as an intern was a great learning experience with a rapid learning curve due in part to the offender population she was working with.

Before treatment was considered, she had to learn the precautions needed to be taken for safety and security. She had to learn to think differently, again taking into account the population which she was serving.

She also learned some of the basic requirements of working in a correctional environment such as: appropriate attire within a prison setting, and how her hair needed to be styled and why. Additionally, she learned to think on her feet; de-escalation techniques and how to position herself at all times so that she would not be vulnerable to being attacked or trapped. She studied the Re-entry Relapse Prevention Workbook, and its purpose as it relates to efforts to reduce recidivism. Counselor May also witnessed some of the stumbling blocks and the barriers that offenders may experience upon re-entry. While working in group setting, she saw the vulnerability of some of the offenders – those who were afraid of re-offending. Within the group she also observed those offenders who were resistant and less committed to change. All the various attitudes combined to influence the overall group dynamic and climate.

Having interned with the department served Counselor May well as a stepping stone in her career. Upon completion of her undergraduate degree, the first employment opportunity she secured was at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School as a Youth Development Professional as a Program Counselor.

# Human Resource Super Team Members

*It's a hat trick - They captured the award all at the same time*



Two of the three HR Award Winners  
Lori Dempsey (L) and Kathy DeBoer.

## **Kathy DeBoer, Human Resources Specialist**

Ms. DeBoer took on the task of overseeing all of recruitment efforts along with her assigned duties in the absence of the HR Manager. She diligently took on the challenge of coordinating the recruitment for hazardous duty positions for two training classes which were scheduled eight weeks apart. Her strong and steady leadership during this challenging transition was pivotal and tremendously appreciated.

## **Lori Dempsey, Human Resources Specialist**

Ms. Dempsey is noteworthy for her willingness to assist her peers; share her knowledge; be reliable; friendly and hardworking. She has established herself as a great asset through effective communication between herself and her assigned facility administration, assisted them in resolving issues and being attentive to their needs. Lori is a committed mentor and has been a great help to a new HR team member.

## **Patricia Meskers, Human Resources Specialist**

Ms. Meskers is noted for her consistency in treating everyone equally. She is an outstanding business partner and has built strong relationships with the leadership team at Corrigan-Radgowski. She recently developed and delivered a training within the Human Resources Unit and got everyone involved and thinking during the training, which reflected her knowledge and command of the topic. She also assists her colleagues in resolving problems and demonstrates that she wants her colleagues to be successful by creating a learning environment. Congratulations to these three Human Resources professionals on their well-deserved award.

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## **Class 274 Graduates** from page 1

Following his remarks, Governor Lamont, bowing to the pressures of his hectic schedule, had to depart the ceremony early. After which Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak – who was filling in for Commissioner Cook who was away on a personal family matter - took to the podium to address those gathered. She urged the graduates to keep the lines of communication open with their families and loved ones

“Through it all, it is your family and loved ones that will be your foundation,” Deputy Commissioner Cepelak added. Next up was the presenting of awards. The PRIDE award is presented to a trainee who best represents the Department of Correction motto of PRIDE by demonstrating the values of: Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, and Excellence. The trainees receiving the PRIDE award were nominated by their classmates, along with the backing of their Class Manager. The recipients of the PRIDE award for pre-service class 274 were: Sean Allaire, Jackson Lafaille, Hermisha Brown, Keith Scott, Paul Tripodi, and Domenic DiNunzio.

The class also recognized Correction Officer Christopher Stonaha as the recipient of the Victor E. Harris, Jr. award. The Victor E. Harris, Jr. award, named for a deceased officer whose enthusiastic dedication and commitment to correctional education and training still lives on in the memory of DoC staff.

Each graduate then made their way across the stage, and after receiving their badges, returned to their seats. Then, Deputy Commissioner Angel Quiros officially swore in the members of Class 274. The graduation ceremony concluded with a benediction from Chaplain Joan Burnett, who serves at the York Correctional Institution.

## Looking Forward

from page 1

We will also continue to focus our efforts on preparing offenders for successful reentry. The goal is to expand these efforts from a few specialized facilities to each facility throughout the agency. We must begin to wrap our minds around the concept that our reentry efforts should not begin near an offender's end of sentence. Instead, reentry efforts should begin (and continue) when an offender first enters the system.

I want to reassure you that even though we already have a great deal going on, and the plans are to ramp up our efforts, we will remain deliberate and methodical when it comes to implementing change. Change can and is often difficult, that is why we must be tempered with the appropriate amount of restraint.

It is important to also remember that we do not have to do this by ourselves. Collaboration with other agencies, with community providers, with faith based groups, with family members, businesses/employers, is not just important, it is essential for us to achieve our goals.

No matter what our plans and initiatives are, I firmly believe the key to any successful endeavor is communication. To that end, we will be placing additional emphasis on teaching our newest hires effective methods of communication, as well as expanding training to all of our staff in the areas of progressive corrections reform, effective communication, emotional intelligence, leadership and more.

I truly believe that people want to be part of the solution, instead of part of the problem. Therefore, it is important to ensure we train and empower our employees, supervisors and managers in the process. After all, we are all in this together, and I want everyone to share in our success.

And finally, we will continue to look for ways that we can enhance the wellness of our employees and improve our work environments. We all understand the difficulties of our chosen career and therefore, must continually strive to keep the health and wellbeing of our employees our number one priority.

I look forward to working with you in the coming year to raise the high bar we have set, even higher. Thank you for the important work you do on a daily basis.

## The Value of Internships

from page 6

Many of the lessons she learned while interning at the Department of Correction came in handy while working within the juvenile detention center.

Least of all, she knew how to keep herself safe. Not surprisingly, many of the same issues and concerns regarding recidivism were similar in both adult and juvenile offenders. Just as in the adult prison, there were some juveniles who were more motivated and committed to change than others.

Counselor May believes that her experiences as an intern helped her to transition more smoothly into her current role as a DoC employee. Being able to utilize the same skill set, working with a similar population and having to take the same safety precautions kept her in practice and made the transition much easier.

She highly recommends a student internship program - in addition to learning the ins and outs of working in a correctional environment, she also discovered the career opportunities within the department, if (and when) she chooses to seek employment in the future. The internship experience clearly made a lasting impression on Counselor May, as prior to it, she had not envisioned working as a counselor in the criminal justice system.

In light of her experience, she urges anyone to intern who is remotely interested or is considering a career in the field of corrections. You might love it or you might learn that it is just not for you - either way, it is a valuable experience which can only serve to broaden your horizon.

If you know anyone who is considering an internship with the Department of Correction, they may find more information on the "Internship" page on the agency website:

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@ CT  
Corrections**





## State Police Citations

Three members of the Department's Security Division received Unit Citation Awards from the Connecticut State Police for their assistance in several complex investigations.



**Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commissioner James Rovella (L) presents Lt. Craig Burnett with a Unit Citation Award.**

Lt. Craig Burnett and recently retired Correction Officer Donald Lavery received a citation award for their work in helping to solve a 2012 home invasion and homicide case.

Correctional Lieutenant Christopher Glynn was given a Unit Citation award for his work on Operation Praying Mantis. Operation Praying Mantis was a collaborative effort among some 90 law enforcement agencies which targeted people wanted on outstanding felony and misdemeanor warrants. The one-day statewide sweep resulted in a total of 197 arrests and 285 warrants served.

A joint statement issued by the participating agencies following the sweep read, "this operation shows the commitment and the spirit of cooperation amongst the law enforcement

community which will no doubt continue after the conclusion of this operation."

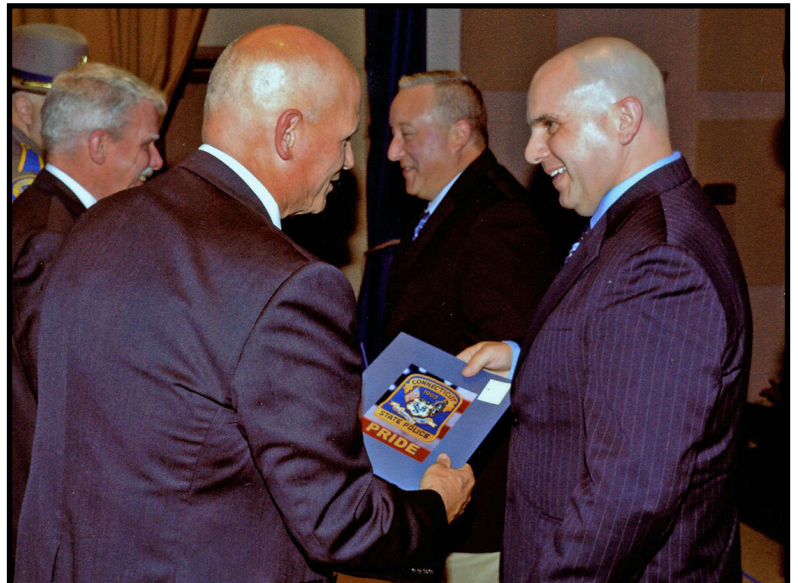
The trio received their citations during the Connecticut State Police Awards Ceremony held at the State Police's Training Academy in Meriden on October 23, 2019.

"Too often the work that you do is taken for granted," said Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz while addressing a room full of award recipients. "You have demonstrated a combination of bravery and selflessness in protecting our communities."

In all nearly 50 awards were handed out in eight categories: the Medal of Honor, the Medal for Bravery, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Lifesaving Award, the Outstanding Service Award, Unit Citation and the Commissioner's Recognition Award.

The Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's Annual Award Ceremony serves to underscore the importance of collaboration amongst Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

Please join Commissioner Cook and the Security Division's Director Antonio Santiago in congratulating the three individuals on this well-deserved award.



**Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commissioner James Rovella (L) presents Lt. Christopher Glynn with a Unit Citation Award.**

# Commissioner's Cup Donations

Thanks to the hard work of the Commissioner's Cup Tournament Committee, a total of \$8,000 was collected from this past year's charity golf tournament – one of the highest totals in the history of the event. The annual tournament was held on September 6, 2019 at Blue Fox Run in Avon, Connecticut. As a result, generous donations were made during a recent presentation at Central Office to four separate organizations. The largest of the donations was made to the Correctional Peace Officer Foundation (CPOF). The check for



**Commissioner Rollin cook, District Administrator Scott Erfe, and members of the tournament's committee present proceeds from the event.**

\$5,000 ensures that the Department of Correction is a lifetime member of the CPOF whose mission is to support the surviving families of Correctional Officers who lose their lives while working in corrections.

A \$1,000 donation was presented to Brad Cole of K9 First Responders. Through the use of therapy dogs, the organization provides aid and comfort to individuals, groups and communities impacted by traumatic events. In addition, donations in the amount of \$1,000 each were presented to the MacDougall-Walker and New Haven Correctional Center Quality of Work Life Committees.

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## A Final Request

Warden Robert Martin and staff from Bridgeport Correctional Center lined the halls to “walk-out” 25 year veteran Officer Beverly Lapolice On December 31, 2019, in honor of her retirement. In the weeks leading up to her retirement, Officer Lapolice made a request to Warden Martin to have a rope on the flag pole repaired to once again fly the P.O.W. flag in conjunction with Old Glory and the state flag. The P.O.W. flag has special meaning to Officer Lapolice as a U.S. Marine veteran. Not only was this request fulfilled, Warden Martin (also a veteran) enlisted Officer Lapolice alongside two other veterans to raise all three flags located in front of the North Avenue facility and presented her with the P.O.W. flag. We wish Officer Lapolice the best in retirement.



**Officer Beverly Lapolice (L) and Warden Robert Martin.**