

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.

Season's Greetings

The holiday season is a time of celebration, but also a time of reflection; when we can look back on the challenges and successes of the previous year, yet also look forward with optimism to the year ahead.

Many of us will spend time with our loved ones, take stock and give thanks for the blessings we have received throughout the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude for the difficult, yet important work you do on a daily basis. Without your dedicated service, simply put – we would not be successful. Although this past year presented many challenges, thanks to you we have confronted and overcome whatever has stood in our way.

I also extend my appreciation, and ask that you do so as well, to those who provide their compassionate support year round (even on holidays) in order for you to fulfill your daily duty of protecting the public.

My thoughts also turn to those staff members who serve in our country's military, may they return soon safely home to their friends and family.

I wish you all the best for the holidays, with much health, good fortune and prosperity in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Scott Semple
Commissioner

December 6, 2016
through
December 23, 2016

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Peer Support Training

As part of the agency's latest employee wellness initiative, the POWER Program's Post Incident Response Committee facilitated a weeklong peer support training program in conjuncture with the Connecticut Alliance to Benefit Law Enforcement Inc (CABLE). Approximately 50 department staff members attended the training which was held November 28 through December 2 at the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development. A goal of the POWER Program is to establish a peer support network - points of contact throughout the agency who would provide peer support with the ultimate objective of reducing the negative effects of trauma on staff.



Participants of the recent weeklong peer support training.

Those participating in the training learned, among other things: the effects of acute, cumulative and chronic stress on the mind and body; how to recognize possible symptoms of post-traumatic stress injuries; how to identify and assist peers struggling with compulsive behaviors or addictions; how to support co-workers during challenging times; the difference between peer support and counseling; and the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Although there is still much work to be done, the training was an important step toward helping to establish the necessary framework upon which to build a peer support network for the agency.

Fulfilling Wishes at Brooklyn CI

Thanks to the generosity of staff members of the Brooklyn Correctional Institution, dozens of children under the care of the Department of Children and Families will have at least one of their Christmas wishes come true.

The idea was the brainchild of Correction Officer Michael Behrle. He along with Secretary 2 Louise Downer coordinated the "wish slips." The children were able to say what they wished for, what their hobbies and interests are, and staff members from the facility would choose a slip and fulfill the child's "wish." In all, sixty wish slips were fulfilled for children in the care of DCF's Norwich office. The gifts were brought to the Norwich DCF office on December 12, so they could be distributed to the children in time for Christmas.



Gifts for Children under the care of DCF courtesy of staff of the Brooklyn Correctional Institution.

Down Time

by The Old Screw

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There are two words in corrections that are very critical but not understood by most families and even new Staff—DOWN TIME.

The need for down time can be the cause of a lot of misunderstanding and arguments among Officers and their spouses. The spouses usually have difficulty grasping why the Officers need space when they get home from work, why they need to read a book, watch TV, exercise, or work on something instead of talking with their partners. The need for down time can also cause a lot of hurt and anger from children who do not comprehend why daddy or mommy want to be left alone for a little while after getting home from work.

Some staff will argue that they can leave work and step right into family life—that they feel no stress from their work, that “there’s nothing to it.” Only God knows how many times this was said before the divorce. (I know, I am on my second marriage.) Anytime we put our life on the line day after day, no matter what type of facility we work in, the thought that someday we may not come home is always in the back of our minds. We fear (here’s the forbidden word!) that someday that lovely wife or husband or small child might not see us again.

Male Officers have a real problem with their emotions. They think it makes them less of a man to admit to being stressed, and so they try to hide these feelings. In my opinion, it takes a braver man to admit to the stress.

The truth is that in our line of work the adrenaline starts pumping sometimes even before we get to work. Just thinking about what happened there the day before, or what we have to deal with once we get there, can get us going. And the adrenaline surge doesn’t stop just because we’re heading home at the end of our shift. It continues to circulate in our body when we walk in the door. That’s why we need the down time. We need the time and space to shift from the stress-filled work world to family life.

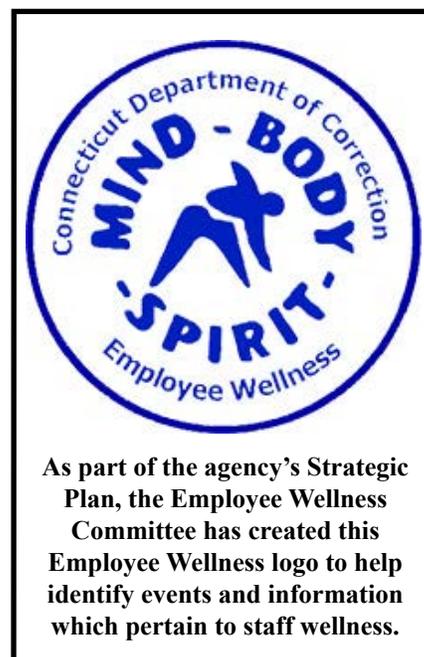
Some staff think that a few beers or other drinks after work with fellow Officers are the way to relax, and that they even deserve that kind of break. Many an affair started during this kind of “choir practice.”

Affairs also happen because an Officer thinks that only another Officer will understand them. Officers can come to believe this when their spouses don’t accept and respect their need for down time.

It seems at times like getting a divorce is a requirement for the job. Many of the problems may start with the unmet need for down time.

For those of you married to an Officer, it is rough when your spouse comes home from work and doesn’t want to talk or do anything with you for a while. You may think, “What did I do wrong?” The answer usually is, “Nothing.” It’s just that your spouse needs Down Time! Officers don’t like to bring their work home. Some of the things that happen in our profession are very crude or downright sick. By not talking about them, they think they are protecting you. Even when both spouses work in corrections, it is sometimes hard to relate. Yes, even these families need down time.

The best solution is when the spouses are open and explain things to each other. This can be hard to do, but the reward is a more stable marriage and better understanding of one another.



MADD Respect

The members of the Department of Correction’s Victim Services Unit were recently honored during the Connecticut state office of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Recognition Ceremony to honor “Community Champions.”

Held Thursday, November 17, 2016, at Anthony’s Ocean View, MADD Connecticut’s Executive Director Janice Heggie Margolis presented Counselor Supervisor David Snyder and Counselor Mark Bonaventura with a Victim Assistance Award.



Victim Services’ Counselor Mark Bonaventura (L) and Victim Services’ Counselor Supervisor David Snyder (R) With MADD Connecticut’s Executive Director Janice Heggie Margolis at MADD’s 2016 Community Champions Recognition Ceremony.

In total, 38 Community Champions were honored for their contributions in helping to further MADD’s mission in ways, “that each has the capacity to do so.” Additional honorees included legislators, state’s attorneys, police, media, victims and volunteers. Without their help, MADD would not be able to make the progress that they do.

According to MADD, someone is injured in a drunk driving crash every two minutes. In addition, two out of three people will be impacted by drunk driving in their lifetime. Last year, MADD provided more than 160,000 supportive services to drunk and drugged driving victims to help them cope with the devastating impact of substance-impaired driving crashes.

Congratulations to Counselor Supervisor Snyder, and Counselor Bonaventura for being honored by MADD for the important work that they do.

Around the Cell Block



VIRGINIA – The Virginia Department of Correction is hosting a toy drive specifically geared for children whose parent(s) are incarcerated.

OKLAHOMA - Oklahoma Department of Corrections officials say the number of offenders in their system has reached the highest level in department history. A total of 61,012 people are either incarcerated, on supervision or on probation.

FLORIDA - A DUI suspect accused of leading deputies on a high-speed chase and crash, allegedly told authorities when he was apprehended that his dog was the one behind the wheel. The bulletproof alibi fell through as no dog was found at the scene.

**Total
Supervised
Population
on
December 23, 2016
19,207
On December 23, 2015
the population was
19,830**

Better than a Hole-in-One

Members of the Commissioner's Cup Charity Golf Tournament committee, along with Commissioner Scott Semple gathered in his office on November 15, 2016 to present checks from the proceeds of the tournament. This year's golf outing was held on September 2 at the Blue Fox Run golf course located in Avon, Connecticut and thanks to a great turnout, a total of \$5,000 was able to be donated to two separate recipients.

First to receive a check in the amount of \$2,500 was former Department of Correction Stores Supervisor, Patrick Hill, who was affected by the layoffs earlier in 2016. Prior to the tournament, members of the planning committee decided to donate half of the proceeds from the tournament to an individual who had been laid off. Mr. Hill's name was drawn from a hat containing the names of those who had been impacted by the layoffs. Mr. Hill has returned to school to further his education.



Commissioner's Cup Check Presentation (L to R): Deputy Commissioner Cheryl Cepelak, Officer Marzena Tasarz, Counselor Casey Ramos, Secretary Linda Saundry, Secretary Lori Hadziutko, Warden Scott Erfe, Commissioner Scott Semple, Patrick Hill, Secretary Mari Quiros and Counselor Supervisor Dianna Gonzalez, Counselor Grace Lee, Lt. Ivette Diaz, and Deputy Commissioner Monica Rinaldi.

The other recipients of a check for \$2,500 were the members of the Hartford Correctional Center's Quality of Work Life (QWL) Committee. The Hartford facility's QWL committee was also chosen randomly from among all the other QWL committees throughout the agency.

The Commissioner's Cup Committee Chairperson, Cheshire Correctional Institution's warden, Scott Erfe, and the tournament's organizers wish to thank all those who participated - especially the volunteers who gave their time and effort to make the event such a great success.

A Cup of Gratitude

On behalf of the 2016 Cheshire Cup Golf Tournament Committee, we want to thank everyone who participated. A special thanks to all the "hole sponsors": Mad Tents, Majestic Limo, Police & Fire Insurance Co (Scott Strielkauskas), and Corrections Local 387.

Monies raised will go to benefit Special Olympics of Connecticut and various facility QWL committees. Without the help of all those involved, the tournament would not have been a success - thank you.



Thanks to all those that helped to make the 11th Annual Cheshire Cup a success.

Helping Out Harrington

Bridgeport Correctional Center’s Correction Officer William “Will Power” Harrington was recently presented with a series of checks from donations collected on his behalf. An event was conducted raising funds from the donation of a weeklong trip to the Caribbean island of St. Martin. The Correctional Peace Officers Association also made a contribution. Last but not least, staff members from the Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Center

held a softball tournament to benefit the cause. Officer Harrington has battled brain cancer for the past decade and is currently recuperating from his bone marrow transplant, after a nationwide search rendered a match, which he received in April of 2016.

Officer Harrington, his family, and the staff of the Bridgeport Correctional Center are greatly appreciative of the continued agency wide efforts to support a member of our agency’s correctional family in his battle against a rare form of cancer. Officer Harrington hopes to return to work within the next few months.



Correction Officer William Harrington receiving financial and emotional support at the Bridgeport Correctional Center.

Nice Footwork

Hartford Correctional Center’s Quality of Work Life Committee participated in a boot drive for My Sister’s Place in Hartford from November 17 through December 7. Working in cooperation with the Hartford Police Department, Fleet Feet Sports, and Community Partners in Action, the boot drive supported the *Footwear with Care* event. The event, held December 10 at My Sister’s Place in Hartford (a shelter for women and children) with the goal of providing homeless individuals with proper footwear. In addition to boots and socks, each homeless guest received breakfast and foot-care by a team of podiatrists who generously offered their time and skills at no charge.

The staff at Hartford Correctional Center generously donated new and used boots and new socks for the drive. The box at the facility was filled with more than 63 pairs of new and used boots and approximately 30 pairs of new socks when it was dropped off along with a small cash donation for the *Footwear with Care* event. All totalled, with the help of the staff from the Hartford Correctional Center, 500 pairs of boots, more than 100 pairs of socks and \$2,000 in cash was collected for the cause.



L to R: Counselor Supervisor Sandra Violette, Maintenance Officer Angelo Spera, and Counselor Supervisor Diana Gonzalez drop off Hartford CC’s collection of boots.



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CRCC Staff Honored

Congratulations to Corrigan Radgowski Correctional Center's Correction Officer Joshua Lorenzen and Lieutenant Marco Perez for being honored by the New London Elks during the organization's Law Enforcement Night event held on September 28.



L to R: State Representative Paul Formica, Correction Officer Joshua Lorenzen, Lieutenant Marco Perez and Warden Antonio Santiago.

They both received a Connecticut General Assembly Official Citation in recognition for their leadership and dedicated service to the Department of Correction. Warden Antonio Santiago was on hand to present the Official Citations along with State Representative Paul Formica.

Garner CI Toy Drive



Warden Henry Falcone and the staff of Garner Correctional Institution collected toys for children in need on behalf of the Connecticut Head Start Program.

Bishop Cote Visits York

Behind an altar standing in the shadows of a basketball hoop, the Most Reverend Bishop Michael Cote of the Archdiocese of Norwich celebrated mass on Wednesday, December 21 in the West-side gymnasium of the York Correctional Institution.



Bishop Michael Cote celebrates mass at York CI

Approximately 100 female offenders gathered in the gym to take part in the Christmas-week mass. Commissioner Scott Semple and Warden Stephen Faucher were also present. The agency's Director of Religious Services, the Reverend Anthony J. Bruno joined Bishop Cote in celebrating the mass.

Employees of the Quarter



Congratulations to Counselor Kristan Mangiafico and Correction Officer Jeffery Pelkey for being named the Northern Correctional Institution's Employees of the Quarter.

Fallen Officer Honored

Among the hundreds of mourners on hand at a Brooklyn, New York church to bid farewell and pay respect to slain New York City Correction Officer Alastasia Bryan were some 20 Connecticut Department of Correction uniformed staff, including members of the agency's honor guard.

The 25-year-old Bryan was shot and killed while off duty as she sat in her car in Brooklyn Sunday, December 4. She was about to drive to Rikers Island where she had just started working as a correction officer one month ago.



Connecticut DoC pays its respect to fallen Officer Bryan

Bryan, who was still in training and did not even carry a handgun, was posted in the Anna M. Kross Center at the jail complex where she did administrative work.

Her ex-boyfriend has been arrested in connection with her death. Security video appears to show the gunman reverse his car into a parking spot and then lay in wait for about an hour until ambushing Bryan when she got into her car. According to New Haven Correctional Center's Lieutenant Julian Russell, who traveled to New York for the funeral, Officer Bryan's family, correctional family, friends and all other law enforcement agencies present were very thankful for the Connecticut Department of Correction's presence. New York City's Department of Corrections Commissioner Joseph Ponte, Warden Maxsolaine Mingo and Union President Elias Husamudeen were also extremely thankful said Russell.

After the funeral, the contingent from Connecticut Department of Correction lined up in formation along the route to the cemetery in order to offer one final salute to Officer Bryan.

Down Time

from page 2

So, when your spouse who works in corrections seems to be withdrawn and quiet, give them breathing space. Take the kids and go for a ride, or do something that your spouse can join in on later, when he or she is ready.

I am not a counselor or psychologist, but I will try to explain corrections to any family member who wants to ask. To me, we are all brothers and sisters, and I will try to help in anyway I can. I neither know all the answers nor claim to, but I come from over three decades of working in corrections and know very well the need for down time. I am proud of the fine men and women that I have worked with over the years. No matter what anyone says about corrections, be proud of who you are and what you do. Not everyone will walk among killers and rapists—and some-times worse—with only a pen to help control the people milling around them.

Take care,
The Old Screw

"The Old Screw" has worked for over 35 years in corrections, most of them as a Corrections Officer in three States—Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado. He retired as a Lieutenant.

John R. Manson Annual Scholarship Awards Breakfast

On behalf of the Connecticut Department of Correction,
Commissioner Scott Semple cordially invites you to the
Annual Fundraising Breakfast to support the
John R. Manson Scholarship Fund.

Date

Friday, January 6, 2017

Time

9:00 a.m.

Location

Café 24

CT Department of Correction

24 Wolcott Hill Road

Wethersfield, CT 06109

Suggested Donation: \$20.00 (Checks only please)

Please make checks payable to:

UCONN Foundation, John R. Manson Scholarship Fund

Please RSVP your attendance to Ginny Miller at (860) 692-7537
by Friday, December 30, 2016.

In case of inclement weather please call (860) 692-7721.