



The

RESOURCE

A publication of the Mississippi Department of Corrections





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MDOC MISSION STATEMENT

To provide and promote public safety through efficient and effective offender custody, care, control and treatment consistent with sound correctional principles and constitutional practices.



Message from the Commissioner

I am pleased that the 2016 Legislature granted me the authority to realign the pay for correctional officers and probation and parole agents. I intend to renew this request for the entire agency in 2017. As I said when Gov. Bryant appointed me, my goal is to get MDOC employees the pay they deserve for doing a job nobody else wants to do.

I also have another year to reorganize the agency without needing State Personnel Board approval. I want to be clear. I didn't ask to be removed from SPB in order to fire employees. Besides, the agency is chronically understaffed in key areas. I hope the realignment will improve our retention and our ability to hire.

My newfound respect for Corrections has not wavered. Within this edition you will find many examples of how seriously we take our public safety mission. Pursuant to that mission, we are constantly assessing what we need to do to be fiscally responsible. We have closed four community work centers, including Yazoo County in March and Jackson County in April, and will have closed Bolivar County by the time you read this. We have reduced the population at the 15 regionals to contract requirements. And, we plan to close Walnut Grove Correctional Facility, one of the four private prisons, in Leake County in September.

We are working with the state Department of Mental Health to more adequately assist inmates with mental health issues while they are incarcerated and after release. We will be expanding our alcohol and drug treatment programs. We have an arrangement with the Mississippi Department of Employment Services WIN Mobile Job Center for inmates nearing release from prison to obtain pre-release job assistance. We are continuing to meet our statutory obligation to provide inmates with identification when they re-enter society. Additionally, a partnership is in the works with the state Department of Medicaid to ensure inmates on Medicaid don't lose that service while incarcerated.

Also, as mandated by the Legislature, we are replacing the RID program. And, we have reduced inmate telephone cost by more than 50 percent under new Federal Communications Commission's regulations.

As you can see, it has not been status quo at MDOC in these last six months. Admittedly, many of these changes have come with some criticism. We continue to face criticism for lockdowns instituted as a result of officer assaults or contraband discoveries. I will not tolerate any of my staff being assaulted. If it takes constantly suspending inmates' commissary, telephone and visitation privileges to get that message across, so be it. MDOC is not a daycare center. Our staff have rights just as inmates have rights. Conversely, we also will not tolerate corrupt staff or mistreatment of inmates under our care. I welcome input on how we can continue to improve at MDOC, but as I have said, I intend to run MDOC in the best interest of the state, taxpayers and our employees.

Thank you for what you do for our department and the great state of Mississippi.

Marshall L. Fisher
Commissioner

Officer: "I thank God that it wasn't worse."

Surviving An Inmate Assault

PARCHMAN - As the raging inmate tried to press a broken broom to her throat, Lt. Clarissa Williams Johnson used all her strength to fight him off.

Johnson believes she would have been killed had the inmate succeeded.

"Although this happened Jan. 12, it is still hard for me to believe it actually happened to me," Johnson said during a recent interview. "A lot of people say, 'You are still living.' I appreciate the Lord saving me, but it is still heavy on me. It could have been worse. I thank God that it wasn't worse."

Johnson, a correctional officer for 20 years, works at the state prison where the most inmate-on-staff assaults occurred the first six months of the year. Of the 29 cases in 2016, 21 have occurred at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

"This is another example of the high risks that MDOC's grossly underpaid employees face on the job on a daily basis," Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "We will be presenting this case to the Sunflower County District Attorney's Office for prosecution."

Johnson was attacked in Unit 26 B Building after she had told an inmate his punishment for a rule violation.

His privileges were going to be suspended for two weeks, she said.

The inmate, identified as 26-year-old Clarence Jones, #185623, is serving 16 years for domestic-re-



Lt. Clarissa Williams Johnson

lated aggravated assault in Warren County. He was sentenced on Aug. 30, 2013.

In addition to the criminal investigation, MDOC also is investigating the assault to determine whether policies and procedures were followed and whether any changes are needed.

On the night she was assaulted, Johnson said she had conducted disciplinary hearings after feeding as she normally did. She had completed hearings in A Building and had done about three, including Jones', in B Building. She had started on another hearing when the inmate returned with the broken broom he apparently had gotten from a mop in the hallway.

She stood up from her seat when she saw him coming around the corner, she said. "When I saw him with the stick in his hand, I drew my mace," she said. "He took the stick and hit me across my right arm and the mace hit the floor, and I was left with nothing. He was swinging the broom at me. And I tried to catch the broom. I caught it with my left hand. The broom stuck me in the hand..."

They tussled, falling to the floor with him straddling her, she said. He punched her several times and attempted to get the broom to her throat, she said.

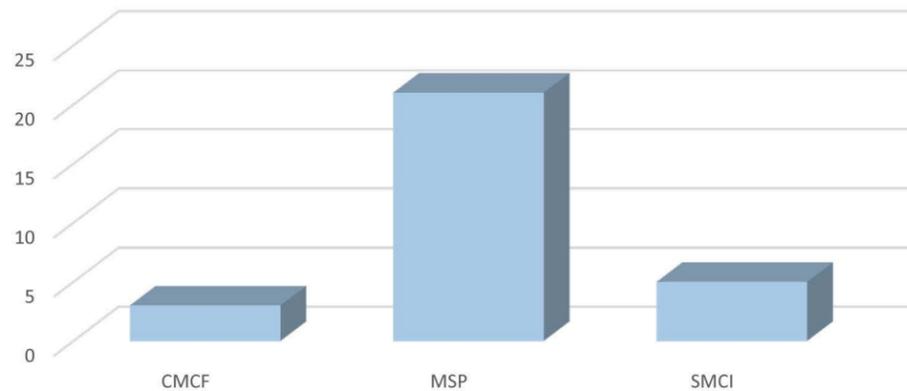
"Get up off me! Get up off me! What do you think you are doing?" she recalled telling the inmate.

She hollered to one of the other two correctional officers in the area to get all available staff, she said. The inmate got up before help arrived.

She had never had any trouble with the offender, she said, though she had held hearings with him on two prior occasions.

[Continued on page 34]

2016 Inmate on Staff Assaults



Johnson's injuries include a black left eye, a broken bone in her left sinus area, cuts to her left hand, nerve damage to two left fingers, and a torn rotator cuff on her right shoulder.



Victims Have a Voice

By Dilworth Ricks
Victim Services Director

JACKSON – Victims seeking support, information, and advocacy can find all three at the Mississippi Department of Corrections' Division of Victim Services.

The Division of Victim Services has been servicing crime victims and their families whose offenders are in the custody or under the supervision of the MDOC since November 2000. It is the only correction-based victim service provider in Mississippi.

We currently serve over 8,500 clients. Clients can trust that we are doing all we can to help them build back their lives.

The division assists with complaints about offender threats, housing location, harassment, and / or any unauthorized contact (via unwanted phone correspondence, Facebook harassment, etc.).

Victim Services also notifies victims of release dates fifteen (15) days in advance.

Victims must opt in to receive services. There are multiple ways a victim can register. Victims may register online at www.mdoc.ms.gov, via email at victimservices@mdoc.state.ms.us, via telephone at (866) 522-4087, via fax at (601) 576-3528 or via mail (forms are available at local district attorney offices). A mail-in copy also can be printed from MDOC web-

site. Victims must keep their contact information updated to ensure timely notifications.

We offer opportunities to participate in Restorative Justice, which includes Victim Impact Panel and Victim / Offender Dialogue (VOD). VOD is a victim-initiated process in which the victim of a violent crime (or the surviving family member) and the offender who committed the offense agree to have a confidential face-to-face meeting in a safe and structured setting. The focus is on the harm done to the victim and the offender's responsibility for the damages/injuries of that harm. If meeting the offender face-to-face is not preferred, there are other options for communication.

Collaborative efforts are being made to ensure that there is a balance to the voices heard. The MDOC's leaders are constantly assessing how to carry out our public safety mission. Victims can give feedback on any issue they feel strongly about at voice@mdoc.state.ms.us. Although we may publicly refer to a "victim's voice" comment, at no time will we disclose confidential information regarding a victim's identity unless given permission by that victim. The MDOC wants victims to know that we will be responsive to their needs under the law, and their voices matter.

Victims' Voices

Responses submitted by victims, expressing their take on MDOC's suspension of inmate privileges for reasons including contraband and assaults on staff:

"The reason they are there is because they have already committed crimes. It upsets me when I hear that an inmate has contraband, like a cell phone....They are not there to be on any social media. Some have committed severe crimes like murder. The person they killed can no longer talk on a cell phone or be with their families. They made choices that put them there."

"The people that killed my father didn't care about his rights, yet now we are to care about their rights? I don't understand that rationale and would vote to diminish the majority of privileges any inmate has until he /she puts forth the effort to show that he/she has truly committed to changing their life for the better."

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give my opinion in regard to this matter. I agree that if there is an offender assault or contraband is found the offender's privileges should be suspended for the longest time possible...The fact that they are being punished for a crime does not negate additional punishment for additional infractions."

"I believe that visitation, telephone, and canteen services should be suspended when behavior warrants. These things are a privilege and not a right and I always assumed that one of the purposes of these things was to provide inmates with incentive to behave properly."

Commissioner Stands up for Victims

When *The Greenwood Commonwealth* published an inmate's letter critical of the use of lockdowns at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, the publication evoked

the following response from Commissioner Fisher. His response has been among the most popular posts on the MDOC Facebook page, reaching 52,697 as of June 27, with clicks

still occurring weekly. It was originally posted on April 18. Here is the letter reprinted in its entirety in case you missed it.

Dear Editor, Greenwood Commonwealth:

Please accept this correspondence in response to the letter that you recently published from a state inmate. While I believe the constitutional right to free speech is important, I also believe that crime victims should have a voice, and that the voice of the victims should not be misplaced by menial complaints of perpetrators of crime. The recently published letter was entitled "How would Fisher like own medicine?" from a state inmate who takes issue with how I address violence and contraband in prisons.

By virtue of my position, I have grown accustomed to individuals defaming me, but I am curious if anyone vetted the author of the "medicine" article. Perhaps that is not common practice. However, I would encourage you to take the time to be informed before you publish a letter without vetting the source or substance of the information.

Let me provide you with some historical criminal background on the writer. This inmate cost the state of Mississippi time and money when he escaped from the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman in May 2000. Following his escape, he and another escaped convict broke into the residence of an elderly couple who were returning from church and bound them. Two days later, they were discovered severely dehydrated by a delivery person. The two escapees stole 11 firearms and the couple's vehicle among other items. I would also note that your writer had been serving 88 years without parole for armed robbery and was wanted in other states at the time of his Mississippi convictions. Besides the armed robbery conviction, he is also a convicted kidnapper and burglar. This inmate is serving life with seven convictions.

Prior to being captured by law enforcement in Indiana, he and his "fall partner" were the subject of a multi-state manhunt, during which time they stole another vehicle at gunpoint from another victim. Subsequently, according to media accounts, they engaged in two shootouts with police officers, actions they would be lauded for today by some misguided weasels in this country. Fortunately, they were both captured in Lake County, Indiana by some very brave police officers. Both were charged with two counts of attempted murder, two counts of attempted battery and resisting law enforcement among other crimes, according to media reports. Your writer was armed with a handgun he attempted to pull when the officer arrested him, according to the officer.

I know all letters to the editor aren't from credible sources, but this one was a ground ball. Publishing something like this impacts the newspaper's credibility. Most importantly, this particular letter writer is a multiple-offense felon who has left a trail of victims along the way.

Yet, you give him the microphone, ignore the victims' feelings and publish his letter as if it was a newly discovered "Dead Sea Scroll." I am sure the voiceless victims will not be concerned about his lack of privileges.

Ironically, I am not attacking the messenger in addressing his letter because he had no point/purpose to convey other than to whine because he isn't treated as if he is in a day care center. The real world for my Corrections officers comes down to things like "survive the shift." Also, not every inmate is a hardened criminal doomed to a life of crime and institutionalization. Many of my dedicated staff are devoted to aiding and assisting these people with their rehabilitation and re-entry to society. I am committed to that effort as well. However, to allow someone with this inmate's history to play the "victim card" is despicable at best.

I am a career lawman who has served my country honorably both in the military and in civilian life. I take our mission at MDOC very seriously. Please, if you are going to give predators a voice, allow those victimized by their senseless, heartless crimes to weigh in. So how do you like that "medicine?"

Marshall Fisher
Corrections Commissioner
Mississippi Department of Corrections

Some responses to the commissioner's letter
MDOC Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MississippiDepartmentOfCorrections>

Please, if you are going to give predators a voice, allow those victimized by their senseless, heartless crimes to weigh in. So how do you like that "medicine?"

Marshall Fisher
Corrections Commissioner
Mississippi Department of Corrections

52,697 people reached Boost Post

Like Comment Share

Mary N John Bailey, Charlie Randall and 680 others Chronological

298 shares 90 Comments

View previous comments 50 of 90

Mike Thank you Mr. Fisher we appreciate not only your past service but your position as well. Keep up the good work!
Like Reply Message 2 April 19 at 3:42am

LaNelle Yea Mr. Fisher!!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 5:38am

Maurice God bless you and your staff for the dangerous work you do for our state. Keep up the good work.
Like Reply Message 4 April 19 at 6:36am

Sonshine Commissioner Fisher, I pray for you, correctional staff, incarcerated, families, and Kairos volunteers every week. Jehovah God goes with you
Like Reply Message 1 April 19 at 7:36pm

Shannon Thank you very much for your response! It is refreshing to see someone take a stand! More voices like yours need to be heard!
Like Reply Message 3 April 19 at 7:54pm

Bert That's a corrections commissioner if I've ever seen one.
Like Reply Message 2 April 19 at 8:16pm

Ron Great words Commissioner! I wish you had come on board before I had decided to retire!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 9:39pm

Robert Bravo, Don't do the crime if you can't do the time Dodo!!!!
Like Reply Message 2 April 19 at 11:15pm

John Is it any surprise that the greenwood commonwealth failed to perform ANY investigation - much less a thorough investigation of the inmates complaint?
Like Reply Message April 19 at 11:31pm

Shannon Thank you for taking your time to provide much more information about the writer.
Like Reply Message 1 April 19 at 11:35pm

Scott I worked over there ... amazing what some of the people did that landed in prison ...and some of the stuff they have done behind bars ... of course the news media does not report except what they want the reading public or listening public to hear ... not what is really the "meat" of the story ... no crime is without victims ...and the victims voice is seldom heard
Like Reply Message 1 April 20 at 3:13am

Sara Fisher for President!
Like Reply Message 3 April 20 at 3:37am

Michael Well said sir
Like Reply Message April 19 at 8:19am

Shonna You are my new hero.
Like Reply Message April 19 at 9:11am

Chandra Sadly in many ways the media today has become the enemy. They no longer truly fact check from multiple sources. They slant their stories due to the political leanings of their corporate ownership or their own beliefs. They are more concerned about getting their stories out first and having their name in the byline. The truth they put out is all politics.
Like Reply Message 2 April 19 at 9:45am

Martha Exactly! People are where they are due to choices they made for themselves. If you want a better life make better choices and surround yourselves with better people who lift you up not down. In the words of my bestie "Y'all need to find Jesus even if it does put him in an awkward spot." LOL!
Like Reply Message 1 April 19 at 9:57am

Randy Amen Commissioner!!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 10:33am

Johnny Ahhhh...the fair and balanced media.....no bias there.....lol
Like Reply Message 1 April 19 at 1:01pm

Paul R. Mr. Fisher, I am 100% behind you and for what you are doing to help our system of Corrections. I do hope you do something with the Canteen and phone system.
Like Reply Message April 19 at 1:11pm

Dee Yes, thank you needed to be said!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 1:15pm

Jimmie I commend you, sir having been victim of what we believe was attempted murder. By the time grand jury met the only one of the 3 adults present had died. Do it was the perpetrator against the victim. Nothing was done. A few years later he walked to his e... See More
Like Reply Message 1 April 19 at 1:26pm

Roxanne Thanks for speaking for victims. My Mom was murdered almost 20 years ago. The media and others seem to only want to protect the killer. There is no regard for truth or for the survivors.
Like Reply Message 5 April 19 at 1:52pm

David Well stated Sir!!!!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 2:32pm

Nathan I just graduated from academy and had an opportunity to meet our commissioner. He is a great man and really cares about us officers. Thank you commissioner!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 2:46pm

Hilba Thank you !!!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 7:20am

Ed Amen, Mr. Fisher!
Like Reply Message April 19 at 7:43am

Thomas And that my friends is the bottom line. Well said, these people most times than not never get both sides of a story they choose to report whatever sounds juicier besides I'll always believe that if break the law and are convicted once and choose not to change your ways and continue to be convicted another 6 times for violent crimes you have no rights.
Like Reply Message 5 April 20 at 5:21am

Zach Good for him! Great letter.
Like Reply Message April 20 at 7:23am

MDOC Top Cop Matt Reynolds

JACKSON – Thousands of dollars' worth of contraband was discovered and a large smuggling ring was disrupted in February thanks to Corrections Investigation Division Investigator Matthew Reynolds, Mississippi Department of Correction's 2016 Top Cop.

Reynolds was one of about 50 Top Cop recipients honored at the Police Memorial and Appreciation Day in Jackson at the Mississippi Trademart Center on May 19.

Reynolds' work, started from a confidential informant's tip, led to the arrests of four women, including a correctional officer and relatives of the inmate involved, on charges of conspiracy to introduce contraband. Prosecution is pending.

The investigation is still ongoing. Therefore, more arrests may be made.

"Without his work ethic, without his determination, there would have been several pieces of this puzzle that he may have missed," said MDOC Director of Investigations Sean Smith. "Matt is very dependable; he's timely; he believes in getting the job done. He believes in not finishing until he's completed the entire task. He's a person I would definitely like to have covering my six (watching my back)."

Reynolds, who has worked in law enforcement for 14 years, began his career with MDOC in January 2008. He previously worked with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Gulf Coast Regional Fugitive Task Force through the U.S. Marshals Service.

"I'm very honored to receive this award," Reynolds said at the event. "In CID we do everything as a group, as a unit. I want to thank all in our unit who all work together to achieve the same goal within MDOC."

In addition to recognizing outstanding service, the program also remembered six officers who died in the line of duty in 2015, including Sgt. Iris

Smith, a South Mississippi Correctional Institution officer killed in a head-on collision last May.

To see a video on Reynolds' recognition visit <http://www.mdoc.ms.gov/Pages/MDOC-Officer-Who-Halted-Major-Contraband-Honored-as-Top-Cop.aspx>

Q&A with Investigator Reynolds:

Q: Why did you decide to pursue a career in law enforcement?

A: I decided to pursue a career in law enforcement at an early age. I guess I have always been drawn to law enforcement ever since I can remember...I wanted to help my community and I enjoy the excitement.

Q: What goes through your mind when you begin an investigation and a pursuit and/or receive a tip? Do you have a checklist of what to do next? If so, what does that entail?

A: When I first receive any information, I try to determine whether the information is credible or not. In our line of work, we receive information and complaints all the time. Some are factual and good information; however, people often times have ulterior motives. Once I decide if the information or the informant is credible, I begin to go through the investigative process to gather all information I can.

Q: What is the hardest part of your job? What is the easiest?

A: The hardest part of my job at times is staying focused on an investigation and completing the task at hand without leaving any loose ends. Often times, we work multiple cases throughout the state that are tedious and time consuming. The easiest part of my job is the fact I work with a great team of investigators who are all will-



Matt Reynolds

ing to come together to make sure the job is done right and that we all stay safe.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of your job?

A: The most rewarding part of my job is being able to help people and to make sure that corrections maintains a certain level of integrity, and that each employee does his or her job, and does it the right way.

Q: What do you do outside of work for fun?

A: Outside of work I mainly spend time with my kids and family; family is the most rewarding and important thing in my life.

Q: Do you have a memorable moment (out-of-the-ordinary situation; proud moment; meaningful achievement; etc...) in your law enforcement career that stands out? If so, what is it?

A: Being awarded the Top Cop Award for the Metro Area for 2016 is definitely one of my proudest moments. I have worked hard and constantly try to improve myself as an investigator and it means a lot to be recognized for that.

Q: Do you have any advice for someone who is considering a career in law enforcement or as an investigator?

A: My advice to anyone attempting a law enforcement career is to leave the job at the office and not to bring any of the negative aspects of the job home with them.



Nearly 50 Top Cop awards were presented on May 19 to local, state and federal officers for outstanding performance and leadership.



The Mississippi Highway Patrol Honor Guard present the colors.



South Mississippi Correctional Institution Superintendent Jacquelyn Banks speaks at the event on behalf of Sgt. Iris Smith's family. Smith, who worked at SMCI, was killed in an automobile accident while escorting an inmate to the hospital on May 25, 2015.



Pictured left to right: MDOC Director of Investigations Sean K. Smith, Top Cop recipient Investigator Matthew "Matt" Reynolds, Hinds County Judge William "Bill" Skinner, and MDOC Commissioner Marshall Fisher.

Agents Credited with Thwarting Escape in April

GULFPORT - It was most unfortunate for a Harrison County Community Work Center inmate but fortunate for the Mississippi Department of Corrections. Two observant Probation and Parole agents saw him doing something he should not have been outside the Harrison County Courthouse on April 11.

Agents Barbara Gill and Allison Long were walking into the parking garage to leave after being dismissed from court in Gulfport when they saw a male inmate worker dressed in green and white inmate uniform talking to someone in a civilian car. A few minutes later they saw the same inmate wearing blue sweat pants and walking around the front of the vehicle driven by a woman.

They stopped the inmate and asked him if he was a worker. He confirmed he was. He went to the parked Harrison County vehicle on the lot and changed back into his inmate clothes.

Gill and Long then escorted the inmate, identified as Larry Perkins, to his supervisor inside the courthouse. Perkins, then housed at the Harrison County Community Work Center, was issued a rule violation. He is now housed at South Mississippi Correctional Institution.

Perkins, 32, came to prison in October 2015 for the sale of a controlled substance in Forrest County. He received three years to serve and five years' probation.

"These agents did a great job," Commissioner Marshall Fisher

said. "I thank them for their service and dedication."

Deputy Commissioner Christy Gutherz also praised the agents for "doing an excellent job" in thwarting the apparent attempted escape. "Thank you for the keen eyes," she said.

The quick action of the agents was the second time MDOC employees prevented an escape. On June 6, inmates Joshua Teague and Jeremy Ogle were caught before getting off the grounds at SMCI. It was a group effort, including the roaming perimeter officer and the officer conducting the security count on the zone where the inmates were housed.

Crossroads, MDOC Partner for Transitional Beds

JACKSON - Female offenders needing a place of refuge upon release from prison are benefitting from a new partnership between the Mississippi Department of Corrections and Crossroads Ministries Inc.

Since January, MDOC has contracted with Crossroads, a faith-based nonprofit organization, to provide 20 beds for women. The number adds to the 100 beds for males at New Way Mississippi Inc. for a total of 120-beds in the MDOC transitional housing program.

The contract with Crossroads will be in effect until Dec. 18, 2018, with two optional one-year renewals. MDOC pays \$20 a day for up to 25 offenders for no more than six months to transition with Crossroads Ministries.

"Partnerships of this type are critical in achieving our end results, which is to resolve lives, thus decreasing recidivism," said Deputy Commissioner Christy Gutherz, speaking at an event for Crossroads in Ridgeland earlier this year. "When the life of one of these ladies is changed, also are the

lives of the family members and most importantly those of her children."

Gutherz said MDOC's relationship with Crossroads is part of a national trend to acknowledge the role of faith-based organizations in re-entry. "MDOC embraces the ideas grounded in faith-based programs and the values they bring to our offenders. I applaud the staff at Crossroads."

Crossroads Outreach Ministries started in 2009 after Vicki DeMoney, Linda Edwards, and Renee Page, who had a prison ministry and a kairos bible study noticed that post-release women had nowhere to go. They found a way to help women put the pieces of their lives back together.

"You cannot accomplish a better living after situations and backgrounds from which these women have come without a determined hand reaching out to them," says DeMoney. "I want our ministry and what we have been doing here to change lives and our community."

Crossroads Ministries operates two homes in Madison County

in two phases. In phase 1, women go through a 120-day, 15-course program in which they receive housing, food, clothing, medical attention, counseling, life skills and other classes. They graduate to Phase 2 in which they receive help in finding a job and housing to become independent.

Cheryl Thrash came out of a domestic violence situation and says that she literally would not have lived to see the next day if it were not for Crossroads Ministries.

"Crossroads restored me with my family," she said. "They have healed my heart, helped with my self-esteem, and now there is hope for a job."

Vehemently, she added, "I don't think there is another place that exists like Crossroads. Because of them I have confidence in myself again."

More information can be obtained about Crossroads at www.crossroadsms.org.

Wendy Hatcher Home Opens for Ex-Offenders

Lora Cole
Former Deputy Commissioner
of Community Corrections

JACKSON - A ribbon-cutting ceremony for The Wendy Hatcher Transitional Home, located at 933 Cooper Road in Jackson, and a book signing reception honoring former MDOC Chaplain Wendy Hatcher were held on June 18.

Chaplain Hatcher, her immediate family and hometown friends were among the 100 plus attendees. Also present were volunteers, community leaders, MDOC retirees and a significant number of ex-offenders whose lives were positively impacted by Chaplain Hatcher. Many ex-offenders changed their negative behaviors and perspectives on life because of the spiritual life experiences provided by the Chaplain during their incarceration. Some of their success stories are dramatic.

The Transitional Home was established to provide reentry services for female ex-offenders. It was founded by former inmates Pauline and Freddie Tripp, both of whom became productive members of their community after being released from MDOC almost 25 years ago. The home sits on 27 acres of beautiful property and is still in the process of being furnished.

Chaplain Hatcher signed her book, *Time Served: The Wendy Hatcher Story*. All of the proceeds from the sale of her book will be donated to

the transitional home. The book can be purchased online at www.amazon.com or at the bookstore at New Horizon Church International in Jackson.

The story of Chaplain Hatcher's life is a very interesting read. The historical account of her childhood experiences living in a small seaside fishing village outside of London, England during World War II is informative and enlightening. Her acclimation, or lack thereof, to the Mississippi Delta as the young bride of an American serviceman and her later experiences as a volunteer and official Chaplain at the Mississippi State Penitentiary go from

inspiring to sad and at times hilarious.

Highly experienced and well trained correctional professionals know that there is no way to accurately predict which individual offenders will succeed and which ones will become recidivists. Some, with all of society's indicators going against them upon their release, succeed against all odds while others who seemingly have every possible strong support system in place upon their release still return to incarceration. The individual testimonies given by ex-offenders at the end of Chaplain Hatcher's book are insightful to say the least.



The outside view of the Wendy Hatcher Transitional Home.



One of the many newly furnished rooms in the Wendy Hatcher Transitional Home.



Wendy Hatcher signs copies of her book after the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The foreword in the book was written by retired Kansas Corrections Secretary Raymond Roberts and retired District Attorney Laurence Mellen.



Founders of the Wendy Hatcher Transitional Home Freddie Tripp (left) and Pauline Tripp (right) with Wendy Hatcher (center) at the ribbon cutting ceremony.



MDOC retirees former CMCF Superintendent Margaret Bingham, former Personnel Director Shirley Weidman, and former Deputy Commissioner of Community Corrections Lora Cole attended the event.

Inmate Rehabilitation

MDOC Making a Difference Behind the Wall with Inmates

The Mississippi Department of Corrections is constantly assessing its inmate programs to address substance abuse, mental illness, and educational and vocational needs, in preparing inmates to return to their communities.

As mirrored nationwide, many

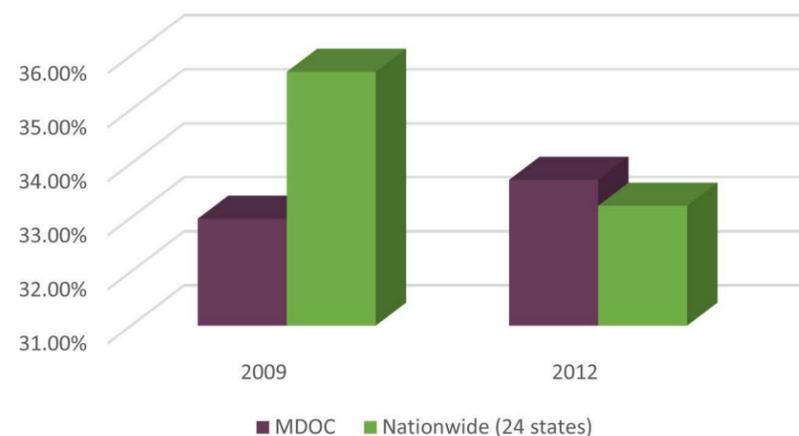
offenders have committed their crimes while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Based on data in June, more than 15,000 of the roughly 19,500 MDOC inmates self-reported having a substance abuse problem.

The following stories highlight

specific programs: the various classes in the vocational school at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, the 1A Program at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Pearl and the A&D at the Flowood Community Work Center.



Calendar Year Average Recidivism Rates



1A Program: Changing Lives of Female Offenders at CMCF

JACKSON - I am not the person I was six months ago.

That's what each of the female graduates of the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility 1A Program conveyed when they graduated on June 30.

Inmate Jennifer Benton, for example, said she is no longer easily angered or prone to fighting.

Inmate Tina Wilhelm says she is ready to be the law-abiding, drug-free citizen she was 15 years or so years ago and wants to help others.

And, inmate Jacqueline Fiveash says she now can show her father that she can accomplish something.

The women's assertions show that the 1A program is changing lives, supporters say.

But testimonials alone aren't the only proof that the program is making a difference for female inmates.

Supporters point to the few number of inmate graduates who have returned to prison since the program began seven years ago.

The 1A Program's recidivism rate reportedly is among the best of Mississippi Department of Corrections' rehabilitation efforts.

"This program has been the best secret that MDOC could possibly have," said Anne Dennis, who has taught the art program participants since the 1A Program began. "I think it should be implemented in every state and every prison. But it takes the right heart for the volunteers and contract (workers)."

Commissioner Marshall Fisher wants to triple the number of participants and to expand the program to male inmates.

"I believe in this program," he told participants and volunteers at the last graduation.

The program, which runs with the help of volunteers and is overseen by Natasha Jackson, has evolved into two phases since its inception in 2009. The first phase deals with parenting, problem solving, art, recovery, and battlefields of the mind. The second

phase includes art and healing.

Dennis, one of the original staffers, said it has been a joy to see the women realize the creativity within themselves as they have responded to the art and healing program she teaches.

"It is not to make artists out of them," she said of her class. "It is to help them to get their active minds on to something so that their emotional levels become neutralized. It is just a subtle way for them to release stresses that are keeping them in bondage."

Dennis describes the program as changing people inside out. "I wished I had had it when I was a young adult or even before then. This program really makes you understand why you make the decisions you make and how to change that," she said.

That is definitely what the program has done for Benton, who is serving 15 years for manslaughter in Jackson County. Before participating in the program, she said, she was just angry and "hating people without a cause." She had been in six fights while in prison. She had not talked to her daughter-in-law for 14 years.

The program motivated her to write a letter and apologize to her daughter-in-law, Benton said. Her family can even hear the difference in her over the telephone, she said. She used to hang up when talking to her sister. "But when I call her now, she said, 'This is not my sister, put her on the phone.'"

"It taught me how to love, how to fall back in love with myself," Benton said. "I had fallen out of love with myself. I didn't even want to live."

Wilhelm said she didn't want to be in the program at first because she was still filled with anger about being in prison. "I was still thinking about the streets," she said.

She is in prison for a second time. She was first incarcerated for embezzlement. Now she is serving nine years for delivery of a controlled substance from Harrison County. But after being chosen out of 500 women to be in the program, she said,

she feels blessed.

"The last six months of my incarceration here at CMCF has been the most intense and it was from the help of this program," she said. "This is an amazing place. When they bring us over here, they give us the pride and dignity as though we are not in prison. They don't see these stripes. They see the person we are deep inside, and they teach us who we really are and who we want to be."

Wilhelm said she wants to be the person she was before she turned to drugs when her mother died.

"This program here has taught me how to rededicate myself to Christ and how to stay strong," she said. "It has taught me how to speak to people again. It has taught me how to want to do right again and not to get high. I want to go out of here and I want to be an advocate, a speaker. I want to be one of those to stand up and say, 'Hey, I have been where you are.' This program has taught me that I want to be one of those statistics to not come back to prison. This program did not judge me. This program welcomed me with open arms and loved me from the word go."

Like Wilhelm, Fiveash said she wants to help others who have been in the same situation she has. She is serving three years for residential burglary in DeSoto County. A high school dropout and mother of two, she said, she has suffered from low self-esteem and is bipolar. She likes how the program has made her feel about herself. "I am loving who I am finally and it's all the glory to God," she said.

Completing the 1A program was an accomplishment for her, she said. "I can finally show something that I didn't give up on myself with...I just can't wait to make my daddy proud."

She is also eager to be a mother again to her 2-year-old daughter, she said.

"I am just ready to better myself," she said. "I thought I would never make it. I thought I would never have any accomplishments."

Rehabilitation

Flowood A&D Program: A Sobering Dose of Reality

JACKSON - Two large thick folders filled with thank you cards and letters are reminders to counselor Stacy Wright that he is making a difference with female inmates completing the Alcohol & Drug Program at the Flowood Community Work Center.

"It keeps you grounded when you question yourself sometimes," Wright said of the content of the envelopes. "It is not the greatest paying job, but I love what I am doing. Sometimes you find some people are resistant and don't want to put forth the effort. You have to get that reminder of the ones that did."

Wright has worked at Flowood the past six years. His latest card came from the June 30 graduating class of mostly long-term program participants.

Several of the 13 graduates

referenced working with Wright when asked about the program.

For example, Sonya Agee, who describes herself as a longtime functioning addict, said having someone like Wright putting his faith in her and drug testing her without hesitation, if he suspected drug use during the program, helps her appreciate "I am doing something right."

"Mr. Wright, he pretty much keeps you on your toes. He helps you want to stay sober," Agee said.

Wright uses a curriculum based on the 12-step program. "But we incorporate workbook activities, videos," he said. "We try to have a whole lot of things to give them different ways, different alternatives to achieving their recovery."

There are group discussions and one-on-one counseling. With an

open program, offenders come and go and are in different stages with graduation day coming twice a year from the minimum (short term) 12-week to the maximum (long term) one-year programs.

In fiscal 2016, there were 71 A & D graduates at Flowood.

Plans are in the works to start providing AA meetings at Flowood at the suggestion of Commissioner Marshall Fisher, who has been assessing MDOC programs. AA meetings are already offered at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility.

"This will give them a leg up when they do go in the free world," Wright said. "They will be used to going to these types of meetings."

[More graduation coverage is on page 37]



Counselor Stacy Wright hands a graduate of the Alcohol and Drug program her certificate on June 30.

Testimonials

The Women's Special Treatment Program, commonly referred to as the 1A Program, is a six-month program designed for female offenders with several challenges, including mental health, parenting issues, interpersonal and coping difficulties, and re-entry needs. Females must be free of any rule violations for six months before being accepted into the therapeutic group-oriented program.



Rebecca A. Wilson, 31
Possession of marijuana

Wilson, who is weeks shy of her 32nd birthday, said she didn't realize she was a recovering addict until she went through the Alcohol and Drug Program.

"I realized I had an addiction to more than just smoking weed," said Wilson, who worked at a fast-food restaurant before coming to prison. "Money. I had an addiction to the fast life, fast money. Just addicted to a lot of things that I didn't realize could be addictive."

She is serving a five-year sentence for possession of marijuana in Jones County in July 2012. With the awareness comes knowing that "I have to take it one day at a time. You just have to work it. You just can't rush through it because you will end up failing."

She vows that she does not want to return to prison. She will be on probation for three years once she is released. She is eligible for parole on Oct. 4, 2016.

"Through this program I have learned that I can accept myself for who I am. I can accept my addiction now and know that I am a recovering addict. Basically, I am just going to work and try to do the best I can to find somebody that I can talk to, somebody positive. Stop the negative talk because I had a lot of anger in me. I was really accusing people when I shouldn't accused nobody but myself because I had a choice to make and I made that choice for myself.

Wilson said she realizes "that sometimes we are not going to have everything that we want. You just have to keep praying about it and work on it a little at a time."



Sonya Agee, 37
Possession of methamphetamine

"I am just happy to be clean and sober," Agee said. "It's been a long road. I have been a drug addict for 20 something years, and I have been sober for 18 months currently."

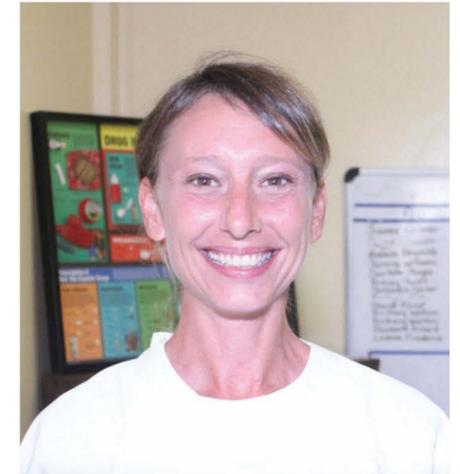
Agee has been in prison since Feb. 10, 2015 after receiving a five-year sentence for possession of methamphetamine in Lee County. Describing her work as a bartender reveals she was a functioning addict. She said she has used other drugs, including cocaine and marijuana, as a result of growing up with parents who abused drugs and alcohol.

Going through the A & D Program has helped her to see that she must stay sober for herself because all of her immediate family members, including her father, who died recently, are gone. She said her father was a law enforcement officer who at times enabled her drug use.

"There is no one else out there to take care of me," she said. "The program helps. Having other people around you to support you, going through the same situations. I think you just really have to desire and want to change."

Agee is eligible for parole in August. "I just got to keep a strong willed mind. I've always been independent, but I just have to work, go home, stay to myself, and disassociate myself from others. That is something I want to stop doing, is not use drugs no more. I have been using drugs so long. There is another life out there for me."

Knowing that Stacy Wright, the A&D counselor, is pulling for her helps, she said.



Kelly Renee Thompson, 42
Obtaining controlled substance/fraud

Thompson's addiction to pain medicine landed her in prison. A registered nurse, she said, she first started using pills at the age of 34. She said she thought she could manage her addiction alone. She was initially placed in a drug court program in 2013, but violated the terms.

"You gotta work those steps," said Thompson, sentenced to five year for obtaining controlled substance through fraud in DeSoto County. "I had quit working the program because your first step is to admit you are powerless, that your life has become unmanageable. Well, my life didn't seem unmanageable to me. I had been sober for a while, I had a house, a car, a family, friends, great career. So I quit working on myself."

She stopped doing all the things required for sobriety. "I thought I could do it on my own without the help of God or a higher power or someone else. I thought I could do it myself."

But she said as the A&D program has taught her and others, "Never give up. If you fall, it's OK. You are human. That does not make you a bad person. Keep fighting. Keep trying. Keep going for it because the moment you lay down...."

Thompson, who is eligible for parole in December, said she has experienced several traumatic things in her life. "I could have quit and I would be six feet under right now, but for some reason God said 'Get back up.'"

She credits her mother's love and support for keeping her going. "She is my rock. She is my hero," Thompson said. "She never quit believing in me and now (I) can believe in me again."

Mississippi Prison Graduates First Class in Theatrical Arts

LaReeca Rucker - June 9, 2016

HOLLY SPRINGS - Upon entering the Marshall County Correctional Facility just outside Holly Springs, Mississippi, visitors were scanned, patted down and led through several locked doors to the gym.

Inside, inmates wearing white and black striped pants with "MDOC Corrections" written on the back in block letters waited inside the building that featured icons of sports teams on the walls, from the Chicago Bulls to the Miami Heat.

Two barber chairs were positioned on the floor of the basketball court. A sign on the wall read: "It's simple. Learn from yesterday. Live in today. Hope for tomorrow."

Fans blew in the warm room as inmates, wearing headset microphones, performed pieces they had written in a fictional barber shop setting. With passion, authenticity and conviction, each delivered a performance that could rival professional actors.

Many recited lengthy monologues and spoken word poetry they had written about a variety of topics, including gang violence and racism, wearing no costumes, only state issued Mississippi Department of Corrections clothing.

Imprisoned philosophers shared their creativity and thoughts about the world from their individual perspectives.

"How could he run if he's got shackles on his feet? Why would anyone want to run a race like that," said one.

"Personally, I'm my own worst enemy. To myself, I had to learn to be friendly," said another. "No matter where I am, I am the determining factor of my success," another spoke.

The performances were part of Oxford, Mississippi resident Louis Bourgeois's Prison Writes Institute. Bourgeois, 46, is the director and an instructor for the program described as the only liberal arts program offered to Mississippi inmates. They currently have classes at Parchman Farm in

Sunflower County, the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Pearl, and the Marshall County Correctional Facility in Holly Springs.

Michael Ewing, a professional actor, led Thursday's program.

"Revolutions in small rooms make big things possible," he said following the performances. "It's an adaption of a quote. This has been a revolution. I know I've given those guys something. They have transformed me."

"Words and conversations are how we build bridges ... Stories build bridges. ... Somehow, someday, I will carry those men with me each day. Somehow each day, I will carry their stories with me and tell their stories every day."

In a classroom after the event, a quote on the wall read: "Exceptional people are dedicated to empowering those in their path with wisdom, knowledge, ability and zeal to excel above and beyond all expectations of others."

State Representative Jay Hughes attended the event.

"I wanted to look at education and the importance of it in every aspect of our society," he said. "It doesn't just happen in schools."

Hughes said he was interested in learning if more education and programs, such as the Prison Writes Initiative, could result in less recidivism in the prison system.

According to some of the latest statistics released by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2015, Mississippi held 3,200 fewer prison inmates at the end of 2014 (down 15 percent from 2013) as a result of new policies that encourage supervision of nonviolent offenders in the community instead of in prison.

The states with the highest imprisonment rate per capita among persons 18 or older were Louisiana, Oklahoma, Alabama, Texas and Mississippi with 788 per 100,000 people imprisoned. Maine imprisoned the fewest state residents per capita, fol-

lowed by Massachusetts, at the end of 2014.

Fifty percent (95,800) of sentenced inmates in federal prison in September of 2014 (the most recent date for which federal offense data was available in this report) were serving time for drug offenses. The same was true for 53 percent in state prisons. Violent offenders represented 7 percent of the federal prison population (14,000 prisoners.)

Ras Pickens, the Marshall County Correctional Facility's warden of education, said there are approximately 1,200 inmates in the Marshall County prison. He said they are offered a GED program that graduates approximately 10 people each year.

The inmates names could not be published, but one who participated in the Prison Writes Initiative said he was currently working on his GED.

"I told my story," he said. "I didn't have a father. My grandmother raised me. I've been here since I was 16. I'm almost 30."

Those who completed the Prison Writes class were given certificates after the program. Thursday's class was the first class in the Mississippi prison system to graduate in the theatrical arts, Bourgeois said.

"Essentially, they had to write their own scripts during the semester and perform them in the end," he said. "They also studied a great deal about the history of theater throughout the term."

Bourgeois said they'll start the program again at the three prisons in the fall. They are also trying to secure funding to implement classes in the Leakesville prison.

"We are mostly funding this ourselves and could use help from the community," he said.

Bourgeois said the program is a non-profit, and all donations are tax deductible. To learn more, visit www.voxpress.org.

Story courtesy of LaReeca Rucker and previously published by the Huffington Post.

WIN Job Center Stops at Parchman

PARCHMAN - Slightly more than a dozen state inmates nearing release got a glimpse of the job hunting process when the Mississippi Department of Employment Security WIN Mobile Job Center visited the vocational school at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman on June 9.

"Primarily what we are showing them is what jobs are out there,"

said Emmitt Sparkman, MSP director of education. "We are exposing the inmates just like a person in the community would try to seek a job."

Fifteen selected offenders received an overview and orientation of the WIN Job Center Services. They went on the Job Center bus and did job searches on the MDES web site MDES.MS.GOV/MsWorks.

Inmate Perry Amos, who is in carpentry, said he looked at job listings in his area. Imprisoned since 2015 for receiving stolen property in Simpson County, he is expecting to be released within a year.

"It was a couple (of jobs) that caught my eye," Amos, 24, said.

The experience was good, Amos said, because he had never used a job hunting service before. "I know whenever I get out, go to the Job Center and look. It made me feel good being able to see what kind of job opportunity they have out there for (ex) inmates," he said.

MDES staffers provided the offenders information about returning to the workforce, including what employers want from applicants. Seven MDES staffers joined the visit.

"The MDES staff performed a great service to the selected offenders and increased their ability to successfully re-integrate back to our communities," Sparkman said.

Before leaving, the MDES employees visited with the vocational school instructors to get information about the job skills offered to the inmate students. They dined on a meal prepared by Culinary Arts Program Instructor David Hadley.



Inmates learn how to search for jobs aboard the mobile WIN Job Center.



Inmates listen to Mississippi Department of Employment Security WIN Mobile Job Center staff.

Vocational Programs: Giving Inmates Skills for Their Future

[Continued on page 22]





Horticulture is one of the programs offered in the vocational school at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. [Below] Inmates work on a vehicle in the auto mechanics class at Parchman.

Nathanael Murphree, an academic teacher in the vocational program (far right), discusses inmate programs as former Hancock County Supervisor Steve Seymour (far left) and Rep. Richard Bennett (middle) listen. Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams stands next to Seymour.

In the diesel mechanics class, Instructor Jimmy Wiggins (far right) shows the tour group the training area as inmates work on a truck.

During a June 23 tour at MSP, several House Corrections Committee members observe inmates at work.



PARCHMAN - While in prison, state inmate Perry Amos has learned a skill he hopes will keep him from returning.

Amos, a first-time offender serving time for possession of stolen property in Simpson County, is enrolled in carpentry at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

"I had a job (before coming to prison), but it was no major job," Amos said. He hung chickens at a local business.

If Amos, 24, succeeds in not returning to prison, he will not only be helping himself but also helping the Mississippi Department of Corrections to reduce its recidivism rate.

Lowering MDOC's current recidivism rate of 35.9 percent for Fiscal 2012 is one of Corrections Commissioner Marshall Fisher's goals. He wants programs expanded to include more inmates. And, he wants to see more inmates completing the programs.

"Re-entry won't work if we don't help an offender get a skill while he or she is inside the wire," Fisher said.

Amos is getting training at Parchman, the prime location for the agency's vocational programs. Of the 10 trades offered at MSP, carpentry is among the most popular, ranking with welding, heating, air conditioning and refrigeration.

"The majority of your offenders do not have any type of job skills," said Emmitt Sparkman, who has directed the Vocational Education Program at Parchman the last three of his

41 years in corrections. "They have been part of crime most of their life. They failed in the traditional school settings. They are school dropouts. So they have menial job skills. And many of the type of jobs they have had have been fast-food restaurant type jobs. So the vocational programs at the Mississippi Department of Corrections to me has been a positive."

Several state lawmakers got a chance to see the programs firsthand during tours this spring.

"We try to have 15 students per class," Sparkman said. "We try to keep them filled at all times."

Not only do inmates get good job training but also the agency saves the state money by using inmate labor to repair electronic items and service automobiles, Sparkman said.

Lawmakers observed inmates in class, working on projects, or taking a break.

The current recidivism rate is 25 percent over three years for the vocational programs, Sparkman said. The department does not track how many offenders get jobs once they leave prison.

As of June 30, there were 242 inmates in vocational school at MSP, including 144 in the day program and 98 in the night program. Minimum and medium custody inmates are eligible, with priority given to those within five years of release.

"Most of our instructors have over 10 years in the trade," Sparkman said. "Some of your best instructors are in their 50s and have been working

since they were teenagers in that field and they just can't do that physical labor anymore but they have a wealth of knowledge."

Instructors are required to visit the industry related to their trade twice a year to ensure that they are teaching inmates the necessary skills, Sparkman said.

All the vocational programs use a Mississippi community college curriculum. Student inmates can obtain individual certifications in carpentry, culinary arts, welding, electronics, HVAC, and small engine repair.

"We are trying to find other certifications," Sparkman said, explaining that the HVAC instructor found the North Carolina State Board of Refrigeration Examiners for certification and is seeking EPA certification for his student inmates as well.

"So a guy that completes 1900 hours in HVAC, he's got a diploma based off a community college curriculum; he's got NCCR (National Center for Construction Education and Research) certification; and he is going to have EPA certification," Sparkman said. "So when he walks out and applies for a job, you tell me who are you going to hire? They got a strike because they are ex-offenders. So you give them every certification."

The length of the programs may prevent some inmates from completing them, Sparkman said. Hours range from 1500 to 1900 to complete a trade at MSP.

Giving incentive also could encourage more inmates to partici-

pate.

"Unless you have an incentive to change behavior, it is not going to work," Sparkman said. "And, when we give incentives everybody wins."

Inmate Zachary Stringer is counting on the trades he is learning to help him when he is released. Stringer, convicted of manslaughter in 2013 in Marion County, is working on obtaining his third trade. He learned groundskeeping while at the Youthful Offender Unit, completed diesel mechanics, and is enrolled in the small engine repair course now.

When he is released, Stringer said, "I might go to college, but I know those would be very helpful trades to have to get a job while I figure out what I would like to do."

Stringer, 20, said he enjoys what he is doing while learning diesel mechanics. He attends classes Monday through Thursday seven hours a day.

"I love my job," Stringer said. "I look at it as a job. I come and try to do my best. I look forward to doing something productive so that I don't have to sit on the zone all day."

Like Stringer, fellow Unit 30 inmate Amos has his vocational class to keep him from idleness. He chose carpentry, he said, because he likes being outside and his father does that type of work.

"It is going to keep me out of trouble, and I will always have something to do," said Amos, who is scheduled to be released within a year.

MSP VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Horticulture

Culinary Arts

(with Safe Serve certification)

Welding

(completion recognized by the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation/National Center for Construction Education and Research)

Electronics

(completion recognized by the International Society of Certified Electronics Technicians)

HVAC

(completion recognized by the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation/National Center for Construction Education and Research and North Carolina State Board of Refrigeration Examiners - EPA Certification Test)

Auto Mechanics

Auto Body

Carpentry

(completion recognized by the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation/National Center for Construction Education and Research)

Small Engine repair

(completion recognized by the Equipment & Engine Training Council Technician)

Diesel Equipment and Repair Services

In Fiscal 2016, the Mississippi Department of Corrections served 691 students in vocational programs, of which 433 were at MSP. Of the academic programs, 1,109 were in adult basic education. MSP had 414 students and 698 were in the pre-release program.



The inmate population at regional jails, including Leake County Correctional Facility, pictured here, was reduced to contractual requirements earlier this year. The move allowed MDOC to reinvest saving in the department.

Budget Constraints Prompt Inmate Moves in 1st Half of 2016, Allowing MDOC to Reinvest Savings

JACKSON - Budget constraints have prompted the Mississippi Department of Corrections to make two major moves regarding the housing of state inmates this year.

The department is preparing to close one of the four private prisons by Sept. 15. And, it is holding the 15 regional jails to the contractual number of inmates.

The decisions follow other necessary actions, including closing community work centers and ending a paid Joint State County Work Program.

"We are continually assessing MDOC's operation," Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "While the focus is on being fiscally responsible, public safety remains our No. 1 priority. Hard choices are just as necessary this year as they were last year when I became corrections commissioner."

The department announced on June 10 plans to close the Walnut Grove Correctional Facility in Leake County. The prison population factored in the decision.

"MDOC's budget is lower than what we anticipated," Fisher said. "Pursuant to an intensive budget review and evaluation, we have determined this is the most prudent action. We have the space in our state-run prisons to house the 900 inmates at Walnut Grove."

Fisher said MDOC has been

pleased with Management & Training Corporation's performance at Walnut Grove and the other three privately operated prisons (Marshall County Correctional Facility, East Mississippi Correctional Facility and Wilkinson County Correctional Facility) it manages for the state.

"We look forward to continuing to work with MTC," Fisher said. "Ending our contract for Walnut Grove is about being fiscally responsible."

MTC employees at Walnut Grove can apply for positions at MDOC.

MTC has managed Walnut Grove, which opened in March 2001, since 2012. The current contract cost is \$14.6 million annually.

The Walnut Grove announcement came four months after populations at the regional jails were reduced to contractual obligations.

The agency shifted 602 inmates from regional jails to the state's three prisons when the decision was announced Feb. 5. Money saved from the move was reinvested in the department.

Regional facilities receive \$29.74 per inmate per day. MDOC is contractually required to provide 80 percent occupancy.

County officials, however, criticized the department for its decision, prompting a response from the commissioner.

"Those citizens (in the affected counties) may want to question the wisdom of the officials in their respective counties who based budgets on inmate populations that cannot always be guaranteed," Fisher said in April. "While I sympathize with the citizens of the affected counties, the Mississippi Department of Corrections cannot continue to pay counties above contract requirements when it has space to house the inmates. I have an agency to run. Public safety is paramount to MDOC's mission, not subsidizing counties' budgets."

MDOC's 2016 budget was \$23 million less than the Legislative Budget Office's recommendation. The agency's budget was cut twice (January and April), totaling roughly \$6 million, as a result of statewide budget cuts.

MDOC did not seek additional funding for fiscal 2017. It is getting \$326,079,680 from the general fund and \$31,332,451 from the special fund for a total of \$357,412,131 from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Fisher reminds critics of the circumstances under which he became commissioner 18 months ago.

"Situations that currently exist and existed before my arrival were not created by me," he said. "As I have previously stated, I am not bound by decisions made via a wink and a nod."

Two more Community Work Centers Close



Jackson County Community Work Center is one of the four Community Work Centers closed as of June 30.

Editors note: The Department of Corrections was preparing to close its fifth Community Work Center at press time. Bolivar CWC in Rosedale is slated to close in early July.

JACKSON – Two more community work centers have closed in the first half of the year.

As of July 1, the Mississippi Department of Corrections has closed four centers since May 2015, primarily because of inadequate staffing, which poses a public safety risk.

“We do not pay enough to attract enough people to work at these centers, and I don’t have enough staff to share from other locations,” Commissioner Marshall Fisher said.

When the Jackson County Community Work Center in Pascagoula closed in April, key positions, including commander, supervisor and case manager, were vacant. The seven cor-

rectional officers working there were reassigned to other units, and the remaining 22 offenders were moved to other facilities.

The Yazoo County Community Work Center closed in March. All eight staff members and 35 inmates were relocated.

The department had announced in December that the closures, including Bolivar County Community Work Center, were likely. The department has been trying to address staffing at Bolivar to avoid closure. Centers in Alcorn and Jefferson counties already were closed in 2016.

MDOC now operates 11 community work centers, down from 17.



Yazoo County Community Work Center closed in March.

They are located in Flowood and Noxubee, Quitman, Washington, Madison, Pike, Wilkinson, Forrest, George, and Harrison counties. Locations in Simpson and Leflore counties have been converted to technical violation centers, which were created under the 2014 comprehensive crime reform law to serve as an alternative to incarceration.

For more information about community work centers, go to <http://www.mdoc.ms.gov/Community-Corrections/Pages/Community-Work-Centers.aspx>

New Task Force Targets Outstanding Warrants

JACKSON - The Mississippi Department of Corrections is targeting offenders with outstanding warrants for various MDOC-related violations, including failure to report, fleeing supervision, or failure to pay supervision fees, in a special statewide roundup.

The sweep, which began in April, had netted about 140 offenders as of June 1.

The agency is being assisted

by multiple law enforcement agencies as it goes after wanted probationers and parolees.

“This is a great example of teamwork to address a public safety issue,” Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. “These offenders have been released from prison to the community for supervision and have decided that they still don’t want to follow rules.”

Offenders arrested in the

sweep likely will be returned to prison. They have been convicted of both violent and nonviolent offenses.

A high number of offenders on supervision make it difficult for agents to target wanted persons, Fisher said. “Some agents have caseloads as large as 300. Being able to hire more probation and parole agents should be of some help,” he said.

Inmate Workers Helping Non-Profits, Communities



Inmates help load food at the Mississippi Food Network in Jackson.

JACKSON - The Mississippi Food Network cannot do what it does without the help of inmate labor.

That’s the message Food Network CEO Charles H. Beady Jr. made loud and clear to Commissioner Marshall Fisher when Fisher visited the facility on June 15.

As many as 14 female offenders from the Flowood Community Work Center are usually assigned to the nonprofit on Beatty Street in Jackson.

“They are pulling orders,” Beady said showing Fisher where the offenders work in the 62,000-square-foot main warehouse. “If not for them, it would cost us a tremendous amount of money to pull these orders. What you all are doing is saving us money. There is no way the food bank can afford to do what we do without those ladies.”

Beady presented Fisher a plaque during a luncheon. He and the board had invited the commissioner to the food bank to show appreciation of MDOC’s inmate workers.

Fisher said the food bank can continue to count on MDOC for the inmates.



Mississippi Food Network CEO Charles H. Beady Jr. shows Commissioner Marshall Fisher the warehouse stocked with food headed for needy Mississippians.



Food pictured here is headed to around 150,000 people that are fed by the Mississippi Food Network each month.

“I wish we could provide more inmates,” he said. “I think programs like these are very beneficial to the community. That’s why I wish we didn’t have to close community work centers. I think they are good programs.”

Inadequate staffing, however, has forced MDOC, to close four of its original 17 Community Work Centers (CWCs) in the last year. A fifth center is scheduled to be closed by early July. MDOC has been unable to attract enough people to CWC jobs largely because of low wages.

During the last fiscal year, CWC inmate labor saved counties about \$12.9 million, based on the minimum wage of \$7.25 and 1,782,068 hours worked. The number of hours is slightly higher than the last fiscal year (from July 2014 to June 2015) in which 1,689,443 hours were worked, amounting to \$12,248,461.75 saved.

The Food Network is one of 45 agencies helped by Flowood CWC. Male inmates from Hinds County Joint State County Work Program also assist.

Meet the Mississippi Parole Board

The Mississippi State Parole Board consists of five members. All but one was appointed by Gov. Phil Bryant after he first took office in January 2012. Betty Lou Jones, the longest serving

member, was appointed by Gov. Haley Barbour, Bryant's predecessor, in 2008. Three board members have law enforcement background on the city, county and federal levels. The parole

board meets weekly to consider cases for parole. It reviews cases per month. The parole rate in May, the most current available month, was 46%.



Steven Pickett

Steven Pickett has been chairman of the Mississippi Parole Board since October 2013. His term as a board member was effective Nov. 10, 2012.

His professional career includes previously serving as a deputy Chancery Clerk, deputy sheriff, Chief Deputy to then-Sheriff Malcolm McMillin, Hinds County Justice Court judge, and Youth Court Resource Officer.

Chairman Pickett is a member of Leadership Jackson, the Board of Directors Willowood Developmental Center, FBI-LEEDA, and the NRA. He also is an active supporter of the Mississippi Center for Police & Sheriffs, which annually hosts the state's largest Law Enforcement Memorial and also operates Joyce's Hope Home for Girls. He serves on the State Re-entry Council and the Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force.

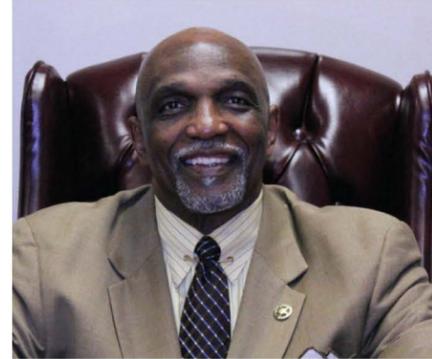
Chairman Pickett, a native of Hinds County, lives in Raymond. He is actively involved in the Siwell Road Church of Christ. He and his wife of 26 years have three grown children.



Betty Lou Jones

Betty Lou Jones has been a board member for eight years, having been appointed in 2008.

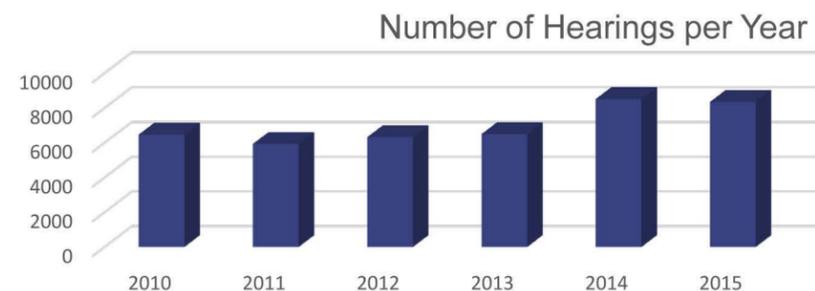
Ms. Jones began her professional career as a social worker in 1967. She formerly worked at the agency now known as the Department of Human Services. She was director of Social Services at Jeff Anderson Regional Medical Center from 1971-1987. She is active in many Meridian civic organizations, including Merrehope, Jimmie Rodgers Foundation, Trees of Christmas, Keep Mississippi Beautiful, Mississippi Heart Association, Diabetes Foundation of Mississippi, Meridian Council for the Arts, American Cancer Society and Habitat for Humanity.



Nehemiah Flowers, Jr.

Nehemiah Flowers Jr. was appointed in July 2013. Prior to his appointment, Flowers was the U.S. marshal for the Southern District of Mississippi from 2002 to 2008. His professional career began in 1969 as a newscaster with WLBT-TV 3 in Jackson. He also was director of public affairs. Mr. Flowers served on the staff of U.S. Rep. and Sen. Thad Cochran for 30 years. He retired as the Mississippi Office director of Constituent Services. He is a veteran of the United States Army Reserve, where he retired as a Command Sergeant Major.

Flowers has been recognized nationally as a pioneer for racial equality. He was featured last year in *The Oklahoma Daily* student paper for being the fourth black student to play for the University of Oklahoma football team.



"We especially like to hear from parole agents."

- Kathy Henry



William "Butch" Townsend

William A "Butch" Townsend was appointed in October 2013.

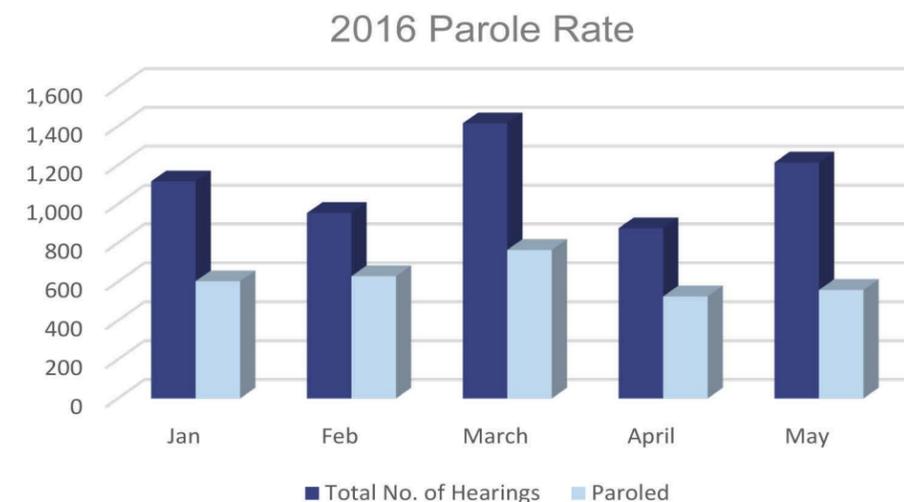
Mr. Townsend is a third generation law enforcement officer with more than 39 years of experience. He served as police chief for the cities of Florence and Pelahatchie. For 25 years, he worked at the Pearl Police Department, serving as chief of detectives, senior investigator for both the Criminal Investigations and the Juvenile divisions. He also was the public information officer.



Kathy Henry

Kathy Henry was appointed in July 2014.

Ms. Henry worked for 25 years as a public school English teacher and school counselor. She also served for eight years on the staff of then-U.S. Congressman Chip Pickering. She served 17 years on the State Advisory Committee for Juvenile Justice and was appointed as a federal representative to the Federal Juvenile Justice Committee.



Q&A

Q: How often do you meet?
A: Every [work] day of the week.

Q: How many and what kind of cases do you see per day?

A: It varies. On Mondays we see people in person that come into the office: families of victims, victims, and victim advocates protesting the release of someone. We also teleconference with people on Mondays about that and talk to them on the phone. Two days a week we see lifers or people we requested to see on camera.

That's in addition to what we do everyday: paper cases. We'll have someone make a decision on those then we'll all check them to make sure we all agree to those decisions. Everyday we also see revocations of people who have violated their parole.

The total number people we see, those eligible for parole and those whose parole is being revoked, it averages out to around 1,000 or more per month, with an average of 40 cases and 5 revocations a day. Our decisions are typically 99% unanimous, which makes our board very harmonious.

Q: What is something you would like to see happen more often in this process?

A: We welcome input from Parole agents and any institutional information such as the rule violations that we can scrutinize very closely.

We especially like to hear from Parole agents. We don't have access to their data. They are welcome to call us at (601) 576-3520 or e-mail if they have a concern.

Parole Board Staff:

- R. E. Wentworth, Revocations Investigator
- Theresa Afanador
- Alma Heard
- William Case
- Kay Washington
- Brenda Rouser
- Silas Anderson
- Stephanie Skipper



DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL STUDIES

April 18, 2016
Marshall L. Fisher, Commissioner
Mississippi Department of Corrections

Dear Mr. Fisher,

On April 15, 2016, I had the opportunity to take part in a tour of and educational session at MSP Parchman as part of The University of Mississippi's Conference on Rethinking Mass Incarceration in the South. Thirty-nine guests participated in the event. The guests were from all over the country: California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Georgia, Alabama, and other states. Ms Raynette Wells helped me organize the event and served as our guide. Her tour was professionally conducted, well-organized, highly informative, and energetic.

Our tour group deviated from the standard Parchman Farm tour. We conducted a student-centered session in the Spiritual Life Center that highlighted the Ole Miss/Mississippi College Prison-to-College Pipeline Program (PTCPP). An offender who had completed PTCPP helped the professors, Drs. Patrick Alexander and Otis Pickett, facilitate the session. Conference participants were given a broad sense of what the course content and structure was/is and how much the professors and offender learned from PTCPP. The Q & A session was well received by all in attendance.

We were also treated to lunch that was prepared and served by Mr. Roger Davis and his staff. I've learned from previous tours to expect nothing but perfection, but this time, the DOC employees far exceeded my expectations. The employees were polite, attentive, and engaged. All interacted well with the guests.

Thank you for the opportunity to showcase the extraordinary work your employees perform at MSP Parchman. The pride, in maintaining the institution in an exemplary manner, emanated from each individual who interacted with our guests. Our visit to MSP Parchman was so appreciated and added tremendously to the success of the three-day conference.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Linda Keena
Associate Professor of Legal Studies
The University of Mississippi
207 Odom Hall
University, MS 38677 U.S.A.
O: 662.915.1998 F: 662.915.7981

Odom Hall 202 | P.O. Box 1848 | University, MS 38677-1848 | (662) 915-7902 | Fax (662) 915-7981 | www.olemiss.edu

Southaven Police Department



STEVEN E. PIRTLE
Chief of Police

WILLIAM M. ANDERSON
Deputy Chief of Police

MISSISSIPPI

May 13, 2016

Dear Mr. Pannell:

This letter is to commend Probation & Parole Agent Garry Welch for his assistance in a recent case we worked in Southaven.

On April 25, 2016 we received a missing person complaint involving a citizen of Southaven. We were able to establish Drew Mitchell Johnson as a person of interest in the case. Once I learned that Johnson was out on Parole I contacted Probation & Parole Agent Garry Welch for assistance. Garry informed me that he had just been assigned the case file on Johnson from an Agent that just left the job and that Mr. Johnson had "gone dark" and he was issuing a Parole Violation warrant for his arrest. He also informed me that he could provide me with historical GPS data from the ankle bracelet. The very next morning he hand carried the data to us which we were able to use to locate the deceased body of our missing person. This case is now being worked by the Memphis Police Homicide Unit.

We have called on Agent Welch and Leo Cunningham on many occasions. They have assisted us day and night and are always very professional. Please take time to acknowledge and commend these Agents for a job well done.

Respectfully,

Chief Steven E. Pirtle
Southaven Police Department

Lt. Mark E. Little
Criminal Investigation Division

8691 Northwest Drive • Southaven, Mississippi 38671 • (662) 393-8652 • Fax (662) 280-4718

MDOC Helping Other Law Enforcement

K-9 available to sniff out fleeing suspects, find missing persons



Bubba, a K9 Unit tracker, helped assist Hinds County Sheriff's Department in a recent search.

JACKSON - When Perry and Greene Counties Sheriffs' deputies needed help catching a fleeing couple in March, K-9 from South Mississippi Correctional Institution (SMCI) in Leakesville responded to their call for assistance.

When Yalobusha County Sheriff's Department needed help catching a fleeing fugitive in May, Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP) at Parchman's K-9 unit joined the search party upon request.

And, when the Hinds County Sheriff's Department needed help searching for an escaped offender in June, K-9 from Central Mississippi

Correctional Facility (CMCF) near Pearl was among the units summoned to help.

"If our dogs are available, we should help," said Commissioner Marshall Fisher. "It is the right thing to do."

Overall, MDOC has 31 dogs. There are Bubba and Rufus, who were used during the search for the Hinds County escapee. MSP's Scrappy tracked the suspect in the shooting of a Clarksdale police officer in February. Max, Ruby and Sid of SMCI were used in the hunt for the fugitive couple caught in Greene County.

[Continued on page 34]

Inmates help Quitman County with Flooding



MDOC inmates help with flood control at the Quitman County Sheriff's Office in March.

Agency donates bulletproof vests to WCSD

Press Reports - April 27, 2016

JACKSON - The Webster County Sheriff's Department thanks the Mississippi Department of Corrections, along with Community Corrections director for Region 1, Lee McTeer, for their donation of 10 bulletproof vests.

"With our agency being so small, funding is extremely limited," Sheriff Tim Mitchell said. "These vests will be used to provide protection for several of our Webster County deputies. Again, I, along with my entire staff, thank you!"

MDOC Commissioner Mar-

shall Fisher, in a statement to the WCSD, said, "It is an honor for us to be able to donate to your department to promote safety for your deputies. "Law enforcement agencies unfortunately have become increasingly targeted for violence/violent acts. The safety of these brave men and women is important. This equipment may protect one of our finest from injury or death."

Picture and story courtesy of The Webster Progress-Times



Investigator Landon Griffin and Mitchell display bulletproof vests donated to the Webster County Sheriff's Department by the MDOC.

Inmate Phone Calls Increase After Rates Drop

JACKSON – State inmates are talking more than ever on the telephone now that calling home is much cheaper since the Mississippi Department of Corrections adopted the per-minute cap that the Federal Communications Commission set last year.

Effective March 17, the cost per minute dropped from 22 cents per minute to 11 cents and associated fees were eliminated or reduced.

As a result, by the end of June the number of minutes had increased by more than 100 percent. For example, in November 2015 phone calls totaled 661,712 minutes. By June the number had jumped to 1,535,319 minutes.

The rate drop is the second action under Commissioner Marshall Fisher's administration to decrease direct costs to inmates' families. In September, commissary prices were cut by 24.44 percent.

"We had been receiving constant complaints from inmate family members and others regarding the high cost for phone service," Fisher said. "This decision should significantly reduce expenses to the families."

The FCC capped rates for local and in-state long-distance inmate

calling and cut the cap on interstate long-distance calls by up to 50 percent.

For example, a 10-minute call now cost \$1.10 rather than \$4.80. The cost of a 20-minute call went from \$7 to \$2.20.

The lower phone rate also means MDOC is losing a major source of money for the fund, known as the Inmate Welfare Fund, which was established and maintained for inmates' benefit.

MDOC uses commissions from telephone revenues and inmate commissary for the Inmate Welfare Fund, which pays for services, supplies and equipment toward inmates' educational, recreational and programmatic needs.

"The Inmate Welfare Fund will be significantly reduced because of the change in phone rates," Fisher said.

Phone commissions were \$1,469,454 last year when inmates made 585,286 calls.

The rate drop is for all state inmates, including those at the 15 regional jails, community work centers, and private prisons.



RRP Replaces RID as Alternative Program

JACKSON – The Mississippi Department of Corrections has a new program as an alternative to the Regimented Inmate Discipline program, commonly known as RID.

After July 1, the department is replacing the paramilitary program with an evidence-based program entitled Recidivism Reduction Program (RRP). The new program includes five components of programming designed to help the offender with educational, vocational, cognitive behavior therapy, alcohol and drug treatment, and pre-

employment needs.

The cognitive behavior therapy model, Thinking for a Change, has been proven effective in changing criminological thinking patterns. The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) created Thinking for a Change. MDOC staff members are receiving NIC facilitator training for the Thinking for a Change program.

There will be 28 beds for RRP at the Flowood Community Work Center for females and 100 beds for males at the South Mississippi Correctional

Institution.

Since the state law was passed in 2015 to phase out RID, MDOC worked with the Mississippi Joint Legislative PEER Committee to develop an adequate replacement program.

"MDOC is one of the state's pilot agencies for performance-based budgeting," Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "As such, we are committed to performing our public safety mission operating as effectively and efficiently as our budget allows."

Officer Assault Continued...

[Continued from page 6]

He had asked for an informal resolution this time but his actions for the rule violation were too severe, she said.

Johnson's husband, Clarence Johnson, said his wife was not able to talk about the assault two months earlier without getting emotional.

"She fought for her life (being a woman)," he said. "I was told that he was bigger than me and then he had a weapon."

He thought his wife had perhaps fallen when he received a call around 3 a.m. about her having been in an accident at work.

Once they got inside the hospital and she removed a towel she had held to her face, he said, he was stunned.

"I just hollered out," he said. "I just wasn't prepared for what I saw. I remember her eye was just closed shut, like four or five wasps had stung her, and it was jet black."

Clarence Johnson also wasn't expecting her to be assaulted at Unit 26, a work camp.

"These are people trusted to go out and come in on job sites," Clarence Johnson said. "They are the better behaved inmates. It goes to show you that when you are working around an offender you can't assume nothing. You have to always be on guard."

Lt. Johnson, a mother of five from Shelby, said she went into corrections because she needed a job. But because she enjoyed the work, she stayed.

Until her promotion to lieutenant about five years ago, she said, she had worked with inmates on lockdown. Previously, she had suffered "a slight assault" at former Unit 32, she said.

"I would tell them what they (are) supposed to do," she said of working with inmates. "I would give them what they (are) supposed to have, nothing more. I treat them like they are human. I don't give them any (extra) privileges. I don't have favorites, black or white. I treat them all the same."

Naturally, the assault has

changed her view about corrections.

"I'm not afraid," said Lt. Johnson, who turned 60 while on medical leave, "but I am very skeptical."

Lt. Johnson is still on medical leave. She is seeing a counselor and a psychologist and is in physical therapy for her right shoulder.

Clarence Johnson said he also doesn't have the same perspective about his wife's profession as he did before the assault.

"I didn't realize it could be so dangerous," Clarence Johnson said. You think about inmates kind of like (as only) being monitored, not like a police officer on the street who may stop a car and he doesn't know whether they have a gun under the seat. I thought it was safer. But it changed my perspective. It made me perceive Parchman to be more dangerous than I expected because they have shanks. Supposed he had had a shank instead of stick and he pulled that out. So she could have been killed, just like a person stopped during a routine traffic stop."



Rufus, a K-9 Unit tracker at CMCF, was part of the tracking team looking for Hinds County escapees earlier this year.

K-9 continued...

[Continued from page 32]

Some dogs are for tracking only. Some are for narcotics only. And then there are those for both. The K-9 units are used on grounds primarily for narcotic and contraband detection.

For example, on June 17, they sniffed out 28 grams of marijuana, 135 grams of spice, 413 grams of tobacco, eight cell phones and other items at SMCI.

SMCI generally averages one call a month from outside agencies.

As of June 30, it received three calls, including from Greene, George, and Wayne counties.

The dogs at CMCF go off grounds about two to three times a month.

In the first six months of the year MSP responded twice to outside law enforcement assistance. In addition to the K-9, MSP also has six horses that can be used for manhunt operations.

To all MDOC Military Personnel & Veterans

**Thank You
For Your Service**

Graduations

Academy Officers

MSP Class 2016-6M

Date: Jan. 5

Guest Speaker:

Chaplain William Sabree

Graduates:

27 (6 male, 21 female)

Class Motto:

"Corrections made us a family, but standing our ground and sticking together will make us a unit"

MSP Class 2016-1M

Date: March 3

Guest Speaker:

Warden Timothy Morris

Graduates:

26 (5 males, 21 females)

Class Motto:

"Correcting and protecting with Honesty and respect"

MSP Class 2016-3M

Date: (pictured below)
April 22

Guest Speaker:

Warden Sonja Staniel

Graduates:

25 (12 males, 13 females)

Class Motto:

"The final weapon is the brain. All else is supplemental"

MSP Class 2016-2M

Date: March 31

Guest Speaker:

Christy Gutherz
Deputy Commissioner of
Community Corrections

Graduates:

22 (11 males, 11 females)

Class Motto:

"Many dreams, one team"

MSP Class 2016-4M

Date: May 27

Guest Speaker:

Trooper Milton R. Williams, Jr.
Mississippi Highway Patrol

Graduates:

18 (10 males, 8 females)

Class Motto:

"Success is a journey, not a destination" - Ben Sweetland

CMCF Class 16-7C

Date: Dec. 15, 2015

Guest Speaker:

Warden Wendell Banks

Graduates:

7 (4 males, 3 females)

Class Motto:

"Striving for Success"



MSP Class 2016-3M

SMCI & CMCF Class

Date: Jan. 29

Guest Speaker:

Jessie Kelly
CMCF Director of Chaplains

Graduates:

CMCF: 8 (5 male, 3 female)
SMCI: 9 (5 male, 4 female)

Class Motto:

CMCF: "Together we stand, divided we fall"
SMCI: "Hard work, Sacrifice, & Determination Equal Success"

Central Office/ Administration



On June 7, five employees completed a Mississippi State Personnel Board certification program. Johnnie Ellis, Robin Ingram, Reginald Johnson, Chunga Jones, and Tiffany Wilson earned their certificates in the Administrative Services Certification Program (ASCP).

The MDOC employees were among 179 government employees representing 32 agencies across the state graduating the Mississippi Certified Public Manager Program, the ASCP, and the Executive Services Certification Program.

Vocational, GED, A&D Inmates

Flowood CWC A&D

Date: June 30

Guest Speakers:

Jacqueline Wright,
Rankin County P&P
A&D Coordinator

Graduates:

15 (1 short term, 14 long term)

Youthful Offender Unit

Date: June 24

Guest Speaker:

Former District 21 Sen.
Kenny Wayne Jones

Graduates:

11 (2 GED, 4 Barbering, 5 Custodial Care)

SMCI A&D

Dates: June 15

Guest Speakers:

Academic Teacher Mark Gillie

Graduates:

37 (27 short term, 10 long term)



Inmates in the long-term and short-term Alcohol and Drug Program graduate on June 30. The program is for offenders who are within six months to a year of their release. [Additional A&D coverage is on page 16]

Employee Recognition

Each quarter, employees at the three main prisons - Mississippi State Penitentiary, Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, and South Mississippi Correctional Institution - the three regions of Community Corrections and Central Office are recognized with the following awards. The pictures are from quarterly meetings at MSP, May 3; CMCF, May 5; SMCI, May 10; and Central Office, May 24, 2016.

Award of Excellence

- An employee by his or her actions or deeds has contributed to the betterment of society or to the community

Heroism Award

- The saving of a life or the prevention of serious injury to a department employee, an offender under the supervision of the department, or a citizen
- Personally risking own safety to save a life or prevent serious injury or to protect or save state property from natural or man made disasters

Employee of the Month

- Professionalism and effectiveness in dealing with staff, inmates/offenders, or the public
- Significant contribution to operational productivity or efficiency
- Outstanding abilities, special skills or achievements in carrying out job assignments

Tenure

- An award presented every five years of an employee's term with the Mississippi Department of Corrections

Extra Effort

- Shows exemplary work attendance
- Significant contribution to work force cohesiveness, pride, morale, enthusiasm, & productivity
- Enhanced interpersonal, interagency or general public communication
- Willingness to enhance personal and professional education and growth

Safety Award

- An employee who has exhibited an exceptional effort towards safety by identifying and preventing a deficiency that could have caused significant bodily injury to employees and great loss

MSP/R1

Mississippi State Penitentiary / Region I



Tenure, 35 years: Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams, Annie Heard, and Superintendent Earnest Lee



Tenure, 30 years: CCD Lee McTeer, Jacklon Haywood, Allen Langdon, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Tenure, 30 years: Deputy Commissioner Williams, Derra Hill, and Superintendent Lee



Tenure, 25 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Myertis Washington, Edmonia Talton, Glenda McFarland, and Superintendent Lee; [Front row] Yvonne Battle, Antionette Norman, and Jacqueline Hunter



Tenure, 25 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Laura Hopson, and Superintendent Lee; [Front row] Shevelyn Dale, Raynette Wells, and Bernice Hampton



Tenure, 25 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Verneda Williams, Charles Hall, Dorothy Jackson, and Superintendent Lee; [Front row] Annie Rucker, Mary Johnson, and Gwendolyn Drummer

MSP/R1



Tenure, 25 years: Superintendent Earnest Lee, Melanie Townsend, and Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams



Tenure, 20 years: CCD Lee McTeer, Jean Hooper, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Employee of the Month, September: CCD McTeer, Deloris Craddieth, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Employee of the Month, November: Superintendent Earnest Lee, Diane Plez, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Tenure, 20 years: CCD Mcteer, Patricia Haynes, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Tenure, 10, 15, 20 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Shronda Willis (10), and Superintendent Lee; [Front row] Trent Franklin (15), Lucinda Addison (15), and Diana Washington (20)



Extra Effort July and August: Superintendent Lee, Lucina Addison (Aug.), Diane Plez (Aug.), Arlisa Martin (July), and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Extra Effort, September: CCD McTeer, Mike Herman, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Tenure, 5, 10 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Ruthie Sumner (10), Jacqueline Rivera (10), John Waller (5), and Superintendent Lee; [Front row] Beverly Cox (10), Marilyn Patton (10), and Blendean Washington (10)



Tenure, 5 years: CCD McTeer, Leonardis Cunningham, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Extra Effort, September: CCD McTeer, Patricia Haynes, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Safety: [Back row] Patricia Dean- Wilson, Everett Matheney, Tony P. Harris, and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Lynn Dixon, Russell Scott Pannell, and CCD McTeer

MSP/R1



Safety: Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams, Patricia Dean- Wilson, Sonja Stanciel, and Superintendent Earnest Lee



Safety, Extra Effort: Patricia Dean-Wilson, Robert S. Harris, and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Co-workers of Annie Heard (pictured right) give her a standing ovation for her tenure of 35 years at the Employees Recognition Program held at the Mississippi State Penitentiary on May 3.



Annie Heard hugs Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams after receiving a plaque for 35 years of service.

Not Pictured

Heroism

July - December

Eric Harris (Region I)

Tenure

5 Years

Lonnie Kidd (MSP)
Lakechia Miller (MSP)
Lindsey Babb (Region I)
Robert Cook (Region I)
Marquita Gardner (Region I)
Eric Harris (Region I)
Stanley Modzelewski (Region I)
Demoria Shannon (Region I)
Tina Wayne (Region I)
Nicole Williams (Region I)

10 Years

Clemestine Anderson (MSP)
Ravern Beard (MSP)
Brenda Bradley (MSP)
Kristine Chapman (MSP)
Bonita Epps (MSP)
Gwendolyn Hunter (MSP)
Claude Lee (MSP)
Tratonya McClain (MSP)
Sonja Moore (MSP)
Joe Morris (MSP)
Viola Owens (MSP)
Janice Scales (MSP)
Minnie Woods (MSP)
Susan Swindle (Region I)
Rodney Tutor (Region I)

15 Years

Cora Clemons (MSP)
Delores Nix (MSP)
Shantel Pugh (MSP)
Chandra Robinson (MSP)
Gloria Robinson (MSP)
Lille Tellis (MSP)
Charles Thomas (MSP)

20 Years

Vanessa Burns (MSP)
Tammie Conrod (MSP)
Mark Davis (MSP)
Drusella McGee (MSP)
Pamela Nelson (MSP)
Thomas Seger (MSP)
Chandra Bonner (Region I)

25 Years

Matilda Brown (MSP)
Donnis Chatman (MSP)
Troy Dale (MSP)
Debra Davenport (MSP)
Rufus Gipson (MSP)
Nathan Harris (MSP)
Shirley Harris (MSP)
Donna Honorable (MSP)
Hattie Jones (MSP)
Willie Matthews (MSP)
Ruby Murry (MSP)
Carolyn Orr (MSP)
Kathy Phillips (MSP)
Curtis Pickens (MSP)

Lee Powell (MSP)
Michael Roach (MSP)
Denise Robinson (MSP)
Rickey Scott (MSP)
Mack Spearman (MSP)
Carolyn Walker (MSP)
Shirley White (MSP)
Johnny Williams (MSP)
Martha Willis (MSP)
Donald Hentz (Region I)

30 Years

James Griffin (MSP)

Employees of the Month

July

Alethea Reed (MSP)
Jeffrey Kilpatrick (MSP)

August

Robert Dudley (MSP)
Michael Weeks (MSP)
Markisha Fipps (MSP)

September

Frankie Fipps (MSP)
Brenda Bradley (MSP)
Deloise Craddith (Region I)

October

Joyce Smith (MSP)
Sequcia Wren (MSP)

November

Harold Mitchell (MSP)

December

Garriet Griffin (MSP)
Verneda Williams (MSP)

Extra Effort

July

Oradell Edwards (MSP)
Ashley Freeman (MSP)
Janet Napier (MSP)
Dianne Plez (MSP)
Ahmad Price (MSP)
Vetrike Price (MSP)
Derrick Sanders (MSP)
Danielle Tucker (MSP)
Catrina Williams (MSP)
Sequcia Wren (MSP)

August

Betty Bass (MSP)
Frankie Fipps (MSP)
Lakeshia Galloway (MSP)
Ella Hogan (MSP)
Donna Honorable (MSP)
Henry James (MSP)
Karly Lester (MSP)
Betty Melcher (MSP)
Kathy Phillips (MSP)
Isaac Scott (MSP)
Dorris Tillman (MSP)

September

Sheba Chandler (MSP)
David Collins (MSP)
Oradell Edwards (MSP)
Stacy Johnson (MSP)
Terry Malatesta (MSP)
Sequcia Wren (MSP)
Robert Cook (Region I)
Beverly Corder (Region I)
Eric Harris (Region I)
Marquita Gardner (Region I)
Frank Kirkwood (Region I)
John Simpson (Region I)
Bradley Taylor (Region I)
Kristina Vaughn (Region I)

October

Davita Cohen (MSP)
Oradell Edwards (MSP)
Erica Henderson (MSP)
Lonnie Kidd (MSP)
Ruby Murry (MSP)
Shirley Pugh (MSP)
Mildred Rome (MSP)
Clarence Tolbert (MSP)
Michael Weeks (MSP)

November

Lucinda Addison (MSP)
Cora Clemons (MSP)
Debra Davenport (MSP)
Bernice Hampton (MSP)
Jacqueline Hunter (MSP)
Juanita Jones (MSP)
Jauwika Lloyd (MSP)
Patricia Pointer (MSP)
Keba Taylor (MSP)
Diann Washington (MSP)

December

Sharon Jackson-Bailey (MSP)

Safety

July - December

Superintendent Earnest Lee (MSP)
Linda Mitchell (Greenwood Restitution Center)
Frank Stockett (Noxubee CWC)
Everett Matheny (Washington CWC)
Kenneth Fox (Region I P&P)
Russell Scott Pannell (Region I P&P)
Tony Harris (Region I P&P)

Extra Effort Safety

Robert Harris (MSP)
Jay Phillely (MSP)

Region 1 Spotlight:

Agent Eric Harris Agent Recognized for Role in Arrest of Offender Who Threatened School



Agent Eric Harris

PARCHMAN - A probation and parole agent who helped to protect Tishomingo High School when an offender threatened it in October was among the employees being recognized by the Mississippi Department of Corrections in May.

Agent Eric Harris and fellow officers at the Tishomingo County Probation and Parole office received a phone call on Oct. 6 informing them that offender Japeth Wilson, MDOC# 190376, had left a message on his mother's phone, threatening to shoot up the Tishomingo County High School and harm himself.

Harris and other officers immediately went to the school. The school was placed on lockdown. Officers assisted the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol and local law enforcement with securing the campus.

They made sure the children stayed in their classrooms, provided escorts to the bathrooms, helped provide reassurance to keep everyone calm, made sure everyone was accounted for, and served lunch.

Officers soon were alerted

that Wilson, then 19, was at a health facility attempting to turn himself in. Highway Patrol officers arrested an armed Wilson without incident.

"The actions of agent Eric Harris and the other agents involved are commendable," Commissioner Marshall Fisher said. "This demonstrates that when officers leave their homes on a daily basis they report for duty with no idea of the dangers they may encounter. Mississippi is blessed to have men and women of their caliber. We are proud of Agent Harris' contributions to public safety and the people of Mississippi."

Harris, who has been with MDOC for nearly six years, is originally from luka. Before joining the agency, he worked for four years as an officer at the Tishomingo County Sheriff's Department.

Though he is honored to have received the Heroism Award during the Employees Recognition Program in May at the Mississippi State Penitentiary, Harris said, he was just doing his job.

"I didn't do anything above

and beyond what I would do in my normal duties," Harris said. "This is my job. I appreciate that MDOC thought to give me this award but I just did my job. Each one of us knows what we're getting into every morning when we wake up, put on the badge and gun and come to the office to work. We know that we have to respond to dangerous situations."

Harris, then-MDOC Agent Melinda Whited, who no longer works at MDOC, Mississippi Highway Patrol, the city of luka and Tishomingo County Sheriff's deputies, and the school campus police officers all worked together that day until Wilson was taken into custody.

Wilson has two convictions, one in Alcorn County for burglary of a dwelling and one in Tishomingo County for burglary of vehicle. He initially received suspended sentences when he was placed on probation. After his arrest in October, his probation was revoked and he was given 16 years to serve and five years' probation for the burglar of an unoccupied dwelling in Alcorn County.

CMCF/R2

Central Mississippi Correctional Facility/ Region II



Tenure, 30 years: Superintendent Ronald King, Brian Ladner, and Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams



Tenure, 25 years: Deputy Commissioner Christy Gutherz, Diane Thompson, and CCD Todd King



Tenure, 15 years: Deputy Commissioner Gutherz, Rhonda Boyd, and CCD King



Tenure, 5 years: Deputy Commissioner Gutherz, Dusty Walker, and CCD King



Brian Ladner, a warden at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, receives a standing ovation for 30 years with MDOC during the Employee Recognition Program on May 5.

CMCF/R2

Not Pictured

Tenure

5 Years

Lakhia Chambers (CMCF)
Margaret Rand (CMCF)
Virna Robinson (CMCF)
Bridgett Allison (CMCF)
Anthony Bibbs (CMCF)
Inez Lewis (CMCF)
Talya Morris (CMCF)
Stephanie Sandifer (CMCF)
Brenda Tribble (CMCF)
Ayanna Patton (Region II)

10 Years

Josephine Boyd (CMCF)
Demetrellyn Cook (CMCF)
Melanie McCain (CMCF)
Cheryl Smiley (CMCF)
James Austin (CMCF)
Denise Catchings (CMCF)
Katrina Cooper (CMCF)
Kennon Keyes (CMCF)
Albert McAfee (CMCF)
Travis Richardson (CMCF)
James Woolfolk (Region II)

15 Years

Betty Johnson (CMCF)
Linda Anderson (Region II)
Minnie Coleman (Region II)

20 Years

Terry Hawkins (CMCF)
Frederick Henderson (CMCF)
Donald Mitchell (CMCF)
Thelma Morgan (CMCF)
Kevin Nunn (CMCF)
Georgia Shelby (CMCF)
Michael Tillman (CMCF)
Doris Taylor (CMCF)
Freddy Allen (Region II)

Employees of the Month

July

Marilyn Lewis (CMCF)

August

Tonja Burks (CMCF)
Donald Mitchell (CMCF)

November

Tonja Burks (CMCF)

December

Kimberly Dingess (CMCF)

Extra Effort

July

Edna Berry (CMCF)
Josephine Boyd (CMCF)
Katrina Cooper (CMCF)
Katie Cox (CMCF)
Shenetta Draughn (CMCF)
Dy'Shawne Evans (CMCF)
Tracey Gardner (CMCF)
Brittney Garner (CMCF)
Panessa Johnson (CMCF)
Erica Jones (CMCF)
Tamala King (CMCF)
Beverly Lovett (CMCF)
Nicole Moore (CMCF)
Nathaniel Neyland (CMCF)
Schelle Norwood (CMCF)
Stephanie Perry (CMCF)
Sherry Pickering (CMCF)
Darrel Pierce (CMCF)
Linda Robinson (CMCF)
Sharon Ross (CMCF)
Joann Shivers (CMCF)
Jasmine Steen (CMCF)
Anslem Turner (CMCF)
Corey Washington (CMCF)
Travis Widener (CMCF)
Sheila Woodall (CMCF)

August

Kevin Akins (CMCF)
Mary Benson (CMCF)
Adam Cumberland (CMCF)
Dexter Expose (CMCF)
Roderick Flowers (CMCF)
Jared Hollis (CMCF)
Erica Jones (CMCF)
Broderick Mack (CMCF)
Albert McAfee (CMCF)
Shaccara Medious (CMCF)
Francis Quist (CMCF)
Brenda Tribble (CMCF)
Corshun Williamson (CMCF)

September

Beverly Bailey (CMCF)
Denise Catchings (CMCF)
Easton Dubard (CMCF)
Nikki Gowdy (CMCF)
Panessa Johnson (CMCF)
Wesley Thompson (CMCF)
Corshun Williamson (CMCF)
Joseph Willis (CMCF)
Chadisty Hickman (Region II)

October

Denise Bone (CMCF)

November

Amy Brown (CMCF)
Derrick Chambers (CMCF)
Lakhia Chambers (CMCF)
Teresa Davis (CMCF)
Jessica Hill (CMCF)
Kevin Nunn (CMCF)
Jasmine Peterson (CMCF)
Jasmine Thompson (CMCF)

December

Terry Hawkins (CMCF)
Ja'Morris Jenkins (CMCF)
Kelvin Rhodes (CMCF)
Lewis Wood (CMCF)

Safety

July - December

Wendell Banks (CMCF)
Superintendent Ronald King (CMCF)
Leander Parker (CMCF/YOU)
Shondra Matthews (Hinds Co. Restitution Center)
Valerie Buie (Madison CWC)
Dwight Robertson (Pike CWC)
Barbara Tyler (Wilkinson CWC)
CCD Todd King (Yazoo CWC)
Marlow Stewart (Region II P&P)
Rhonda Boyd (Region II P&P)

Extra Effort Safety

Brian Ladner (CMCF)
Diane Porter (Flowood Restitution Center)

CMCF Spotlight



Brian Ladner

Brian Ladner & Evelyn Diann Thompson

Two Veterans Stand Out at Recognition Program

PEARL – Standing at 6 feet 6 inches tall, Brian Ladner towers above staff and inmates at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, where he is a warden.

But these days, Ladner's height isn't the only reason he stands out. His tenure with the Mississippi Department of Corrections also distinguishes him from many employees. Ladner has been with MDOC for 30 years.

Ladner, assigned to CMCF 720 Area II, along with other employ-

ees were honored on May 5, during the Recognition Program for CMCF and Region II Community Corrections.

"You don't mind if I hang around a few more years," Ladner said to Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams amid laughter. "It's been a blessing. Stay with it (a career in corrections). It's rewarding.

Like Ladner, Evelyn Diann Thompson, another longtime employee, said she had not intended to stay as long as she has. She was honored for 25 years. She credits her faith and

supportive employees and supervisors as reasons for her longevity. Also, she keeps working because of her 16-year-old son, she said.

Ladner said he wanted to be a police officer and a state trooper but was unsuccessful after blowing out his knees. His wife, Tina, also has made a career at MDOC. She, too, was working at CMCF when he was recognized.

"MDOC is a good environment," he said. "I work with great people and great staff. These people make the job easier."



Evelyn Diann Thompson, who works in Community Correction Region II, tells the audience during the Employee Recognition Program how she has managed to work 25 years for MDOC. With a 16-year-old wanting a car, she will keep working, she said.

SMCI/R3

South Mississippi Correctional Institution/Region III



Tenure, 20 years: Superintendent Jacqueline Banks, Leesa Walley, and Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams



Tenure, 15 years: [Back row] Superintendent Banks, and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Floyd Judy, Lawanda Hayes, and Dyna Hartfield



Extra Effort, July, September, December: [Back row] Superintendent Banks, Donna Webb (Dec.), Tina Hodges (July), and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Cynthia Davis (Sept.), Carmen Breland (July), and Jana White (July)



Extra Effort, July, September, December: [Back row] Superintendent Jacqueline Banks, Anthony Beasley (July), Clara Mickels (Dec.), and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Betty Booth (Sept.), Nancy Wrinkle (Sept.), and Kellie Wilkins (July)



Tenure, 10 years: [Back row] Superintendent Banks and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Tina Hodges, Damien Bartee, and Lashawn Coleman



Tenure, 5, 10 years: [Back row] CCD Ken Valentine, Deputy Commissioner Christy Gutherz and Renon Williams (10 yrs); [Front row] Wendy Arrington (10 yrs), and Bradley Lynn (5 yrs)



Extra Effort, September: [Back row] CCD Valentine, Jason Holmes, Deputy Commissioner Gutherz, and Joe Huffman; [Front row] John Edwards, William Lucy, and Patrick Culley



Extra Effort, September: [Back row] CCD Valentine, Jeremiah Staten, Deputy Commissioner Gutherz, Eugene Tuggle, and Claude Long; [Front row] Don Winters, Jason Walker and Kennedy Greathree



Employee of the Month, August: CCD Valentine, Johnny Hancock, and Deputy Commissioner Gutherz



Employee of the Month, September, November, December: [Back row] Superintendent Banks, Patrick A. Lucovich (Nov.), and Deputy Commissioner Williams; [Front row] Donna Webb (Sept.), Cindy Harvison (Dec.), and Donna Jones (Dec.)



Safety: [Back row] Marshal Turner, Superintendent Banks, and Hubert Davis; [Front row] Patricia Dean-Wilson and Deputy Commissioner Williams



Safety: [Back row] CCD Valentine, Jason Carney, Patricia Dean-Wilson, Deputy Commissioner Gutherz, and Plez Hill; [Front row] Latonya Thompson, Judy Clawson, and Jacqueline LaFontaine

SMCI/R3



Extra Effort Safety: William Darr, Patricia Dean-Wilson, Brenda Parnell, and Superintendent Jacqueline Banks



The latest class of recruits attends the Employee Recognition Program on May 10.

Not Pictured

Tenure

5 Years

Peggy Eubanks (SMCI)
 Roderick Evans (SMCI)
 Monica Malone (SMCI)
 Angela Stockstill (SMCI)
 Obadiah Polk (SMCI)
 Jennifer Roberts (SMCI)
 Allison Richardson (Region III)
 Matthew Tullos (Region III)
 David Wallingford (Region III)

10 Years

Russell Houston (SMCI)
 Jannie Fizer (Region III)

15 Years

Sidney Crews (SMCI)
 John Anderson (Region III)
 Joyce Griffin (Region III)

20 Years

Daniel Vanderford (SMCI)
 Jamie West (Region III)
 Larry Williams (Region III)

Employees of the Month

July

Marilyn Lewis (CMCF)

August

Tonja Burks (CMCF)

October

Pamela Garretson (SMCI)

Extra Effort

July

Shelly Anderson (SMCI)
 Anthony Beasley (SMCI)
 Cherlie Berry (SMCI)
 Zachary Bolton (SMCI)
 Lorinda Carter (SMCI)
 Misty Csaszar (SMCI)
 Misty Csaszar (SMCI)
 Terri Denmark (SMCI)
 Brenda Gibson (SMCI)
 Amber Graham (SMCI)
 Amber Graham (SMCI)
 Michael Hickman (SMCI)
 Ruby Johnson (SMCI)
 Synthia Myers (SMCI)
 Jennifer Roberts (SMCI)
 Druetta Taylor (SMCI)
 Kellie Wilkins (SMCI)
 Andrea Williams (SMCI)
 Bryan Winters (SMCI)

September

Katherine Blount (SMCI)
 Betty Booth (SMCI)
 Alfred Box (SMCI)
 Hattie Elbert (SMCI)
 Darlene Frost (SMCI)
 William Harris (SMCI)
 Zenia Holcolmb (SMCI)
 Bruce Leverette (SMCI)
 Sheticia Lockhart (SMCI)
 Mayrine Robinson (SMCI)
 Nancy Wrinkle (SMCI)
 Ryan Boykin (Region III)
 Randy Brown (Region III)
 Troy Carpenter (Region III)
 Robert Hughes (Region III)
 Robert Olsen (Region III)
 Ray Polk (Region III)
 Lyndon Romeo (Region III)
 Kirby Shavers (Region III)

Daniel Sullivan (Region III)
 Antoine Taylor (Region III)
 David Wallingford (Region III)
 Jamie West (Region III)

October

Shelly Anderson (SMCI)
 Carmen Breland (SMCI)
 Terri Denmark (SMCI)
 Ashley Robinson (SMCI)

December

Hattie Elbert (SMCI)
 Monique Hilton (SMCI)
 Hope Hubbard (SMCI)
 Brittany Leverette (SMCI)
 Kayla Lott (SMCI)
 Clara Mickles (SMCI)
 Amber Speights (SMCI)

Safety

July - December

Otis Bailey (Simpson Co. TVC)
 Nathan Blevins (Region III P&P)
 Viruth Lek Phongam (Region III P&P)
 David Sullivan (Region III P&P)

Extra Effort Safety

July - December

Kenneth Dixon (SMCI)
 Ronald Dunston (Region III P&P)
 Joe Errington (SMCI)
 Jean McDonald (SMCI)
 Tynia Parker (Region III P&P)

SMCI Spotlight

Warden Hubert Davis Longtime Leader Retires

LEAKESVILLE - You won't see Warden Hubert Davis walking the grounds of South Mississippi Correctional Institution this fall.

Davis is among the MDOC employees who retired during the fiscal year ending June 30. His retirement was announced at SMCI's Employee Recognition Program in Leakesville on May 10. A retirement celebration was held in his honor on June 30.

"I started out as a CO (correctional officer) and went through the ranks and things have been wonderful," Davis said at the Employee Recognition Program. "I thank God for everything he has done for me, and I appreciate all the people that I have worked with."

He is definitely going to miss his colleagues, Davis said, as his voice started to choke with emotions. And they will miss him, Superinten-

dent Banks said. The 10,700-plus Facebook hits about Davis' retirement indicates how popular he has been. Many wish him well in retirement.

Commissioner Marshall Fisher and Chief of Staff Pelicia Hall thank Davis for his service.

Leaving the agency on a high note, Davis said, it's time to try something else. "There's something else out there for me besides corrections, and I know that," he said.

"I thank God for everything he has done for me, and I appreciate all the people that I have worked with."

- Hubert Davis



This summer, South Mississippi Correctional Institution Warden Hubert Davis plans to do something he hasn't done in nearly 30 years - not work in corrections. Davis has worked at SMCI since April 3, 1989. He was honored at a retirement celebration on June 30.



Tenure Awards, 25 years: Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams, Annette White (25 yrs), and Constituent Services Director Kevin Jackson



Tenure Awards, 20 years: [Right and center] Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams (20 yrs) and Albert Edwards (20 yrs)



Extra Effort, August: Deputy Commissioner Williams, Lakeisha Gaskew, and Constituent Services Director Jackson



Safety:[Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Patricia Dean-Wilson, and Constituent Services Director Jackson; [Front row] Jacqueline Bush, Lynn Mullen, and Aungelia Williams



Tenure Award, 5, 10, 15 years: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams and Constituent Services Director Jackson [Front row] Lynda Thomas (5 yrs), Richie Spears (15 yrs), and Sybil Baugh (10 yrs)



Tenure Award, 10, 15 years: Deputy Commissioner Williams, Arthurine Harris (10 yrs) and Johnnie Ellis (15 yrs), and Constituent Services Director Jackson



Safety: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Patricia Dean-Wilson, and Constituent Services Director Jackson [Front row] Patricia Sanders-Ford, Jackie Brunson, and Tjuana Carter



Employee of the Month, December: Deputy Commissioner Williams, Tracy Montgomery, and Constituent Services Director Jackson



Extra Effort, August, September: [Back row] Deputy Commissioner Williams, Lynda Thomas (Aug.) and Constituent Services Director Jackson; [Front row] Jacqueline Torrey (Aug.), Sheretta Graham (Sept.), and Latoya Walker (Aug.)



Central Office employees celebrate as their co-workers are recognized for extra effort, tenure, employee of the month, and safety on May 24.



Chief of Staff Pelicia Hall congratulates Central Office employees who were recognized during the award ceremony on May 24, at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, Sparkman Auditorium. She thanked employees for their contribution to MDOC's public safety mission. Sitting to her left are Deputy Commissioner Rick McCarty and Commissioner Marshall Fisher.

Not Pictured

Tenure

5 Years

Staci Stephens (CO)
Iris Trussell (CO)
Joe Cotten (CO)

10 Years

Arthurine Harris (CO)

15 Years

Linda Durr (CO)

20 Years

Karen Robinson (CO)

25 Years

Alberta Reynolds (CO)

Extra Effort

August

Princess Barnett (Records)
Johnnetta Jackson (Records)
Kelsey Lockhart (Records)
Cyntoria Pickens (Records)
Lynda Thomas (Records)
Jacqueline Torrey (Records)
Latoya Walker (Records)

Safety

July - December

James Brown (CO)
Kandace Shavers (CO)

Extra Effort Safety

July - December

Aungelia Williams (Records)



Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams

DCI Jerry Williams

Rising from Cadet to Deputy Commissioner in 20 Years

JACKSON - In 1995, sitting among a graduating class of cadets was one of Mississippi Department of Corrections' future leaders.

That 24-year-old officer, now 45, went on to become a deputy commissioner. He's none other than Jerry Williams.

Williams, deputy commissioner of Institutions, was one of three employees recognized at the Central Office Employee Recognition Program on May 24 for 20-year tenure with MDOC.

His experience and education attracted him to the agency, Williams said. He had served in the Army and worked as a security guard before turning to corrections. He holds both bachelor and master's degrees in sociology.

"I saw a lot of opportunity with the Mississippi Department of Corrections," Williams said. "I enjoyed the environment."

Over time, Williams went from taking orders to giving orders. He rose to the rank of captain at Central Mis-

issippi Correctional Facility before switching from supervising behind the wall to supervising in the community. Along the way, he learned plenty about contract monitoring and accreditation.

Today, Williams holds a unique position with MDOC - he has served in both Community Corrections and Institution as a deputy commissioner.

So when he tells cadets during graduations these days that they can one day be a leader with MDOC, all he has to do is point to himself.

"I saw a lot of opportunity with the Mississippi Department of Corrections"

- DCI Jerry Williams

Retirees & Appointments

FY 2016 Retirements

Each year, MDOC says farewell and congratulations to a new group of retirees. Most leave with 20-plus years. Retirees this Fiscal 2016 include:

Yvonne Battle	Jan. '16	25	MSP
Tommie Blair	April '16	26	MSP
David Bradford	June '16	29	MSP
Cynthia Cayson	Oct. '15	23	MSP
Hubert Davis	June '16	27	SMCI
Jeffery Davis	March '16	24	CC
James Gwin	Feb. '16	21	MSP
Danny Harris	Jan. '16	26	MSP
Annie Heard	Jan. '16	35	MSP
Efta Hudson	April '16	29	MSP
Gwen Love	June '16	26	CO
Tommy Mitchell	June '16	23	MSP
Dianne Plez	May '16	27	MSP
Sheila Stubbs	March '16	24	CC
Danny Trigg	May '16	30	CMCF
Martha Willis	Jan. '16	25	MSP
Mary Williams	April '16	28	MSP
Quitman Williams	June '16	18.5	SMCI
Danny Woodard	June '16	23	SMCI
John Waller	Jan. '16	32	MSP



CMCF Superintendent King and former CMCF Superintendent Margaret Bingham congratulate retiree Danny Trigg (Center).



Deputy Commissioner Jerry Williams thanks retiree Gwen Love for her service.



Pictured left to right: CCD Ken Valentine, CCAD Scotty Pannell, retiree Agent Eddie Cupit, DCCC Christy Gutherz, PPAS Sherral Banks, and CCD Lee McTeer

January - June 2016 Hirings, Reassignments & Promotions

Tina Ladner
Community Corrections Electronic Monitoring Director

Shannon Jones
Attorney

Darrell Baugh
Special Assistant Attorney General

Brian Ladner
Warden at CMCF Unit 720

Aeria Gaddis
CMCF Offender Services
Special Projects Officer III

Keith Brown
Probation Parole Agent Supervisor,
Region II, Area 2

Ben White
Probation Parole Agent Supervisor,
Region III, Area 2

Stacy Lewis
Administrative Assistant to the Deputy
Commissioner of Community Corrections

Training

Schedule for July - December 2016

The July - December 2016 training schedules are available on Misnet. Select "Training" on the top horizontal menu bar.

First Probation & Parole Training Academy

JACKSON - Fifteen agents completed the first MDOC Probation/Parole Agent Academy on June 9 at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg.

In addition to an overview of MDOC policy and procedures, including use of force, restraint and firearms, the curriculum included use of Caseload, Offendertrak and Legato; report writing; House Bill 585 implementation; use of sanctions and incentives; legal aspects of probation and parole; revocation procedures; fee collection; and physical training.

"I hoped these two weeks helped," Commissioner Marshall Fisher told the agents. "It's a start."

The goal is to move the academy up to six weeks, he said.

A second academy is planned for the fall. Agents with one month to three years of experience must attend.



Wellness

CMCF Hosts Health Fair for Employees

PEARL- Central Mississippi Correctional Facility employees received free high blood pressure and sugar/glucose screenings and basic preventive and proactive medical advice at a health fair on May 4.

The event is a part of the observance of National Correctional Officers and Employee Appreciation Week, which is celebrated during the first week of May.

Centurion, MDOC's health provider, Mississippi State Department of Health, Diabetes Foundation

of Mississippi, Mississippi State Health Disparities, MEA Medical Clinics, and The Counseling Center were among the health vendors.

"All health agencies represented here today were readily willing to support our cause," said Richard Caston, lead chairperson for the event. "A great number of employees have come to take advantage of the services provided here, and everything has just gone so well which makes us proud to host it every year."



Wellness

Parchman Employees Donate During Mississippi Blood Mobile Stop

PARCHMAN – Most people would cringe at the sight of a needle, but Lt. Robert Benford sang when he saw one in May.

Benford hummed a melody while donating at a blood drive at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

He has been giving blood generally over 20 years.

“I see this as a way to give back to the community. You never know who will be in need and who you can help by donating,” said Benford, a 20-year employee at Parchman.

He’s been donating all of the 10 years that Parchman has been hosting a blood drive.

About five million people in the U.S. receive blood transfusions

each year. Correctional officer Pamela Murray considers blood donating highly important for that reason alone.

Murray’s sister was once one of the millions of recipients of blood transfusions. She’s had at least five.

“I give simply because there are people out there who need this kind of direct help,” she said. “My sister needed it. Tomorrow it may be someone else in my family or generally the next person,” said Murray, a level one security officer since March.

Nearly 20 MSP employees donated on May 12, during the drive. The Mississippi Blood Mobile assistants said they were pleased with the participation.



MSP Fitness Center New Look

An open house was held April 29 for the relocation of the Mississippi State Penitentiary’s Wellness Center for employees. The center holds several exercise machines. MDOC promotes healthy options and wellness opportunities for officers and staff.



Lawfit Challenge

Five MDOC officers competed in the 15th Annual National LawFit Challenge on June 10.

LawFit Challenge is a series of fitness and job-related competitive events amongst law enforcement agencies. The competition consists of six exercises: sit-ups, a 1.5-mile run, 200-yard agility course, a one-minute timed sit-up test, bench press and pull-ups. The overall winner receives a handgun as the prize.



Conferences

Scenes from the 2016 MAPC Mini-Conference

TUPELO - Moving Forward With Common Goals is the theme this year for the Mississippi Association of Professionals in Corrections. MAPC held its mini-conference April 13-15 in Robin-

sonville. MAPC President and CMCF Superintendent Ron King (pictured top far-right) said, “We plan to have a great year in 2016 and have an excellent team assembled. The training be-

ing offered at both conferences should be very enlightening and beneficial.” The main MAPC Conference will be held in Biloxi this September.



DVS at Sexual Assault Symposium

MDOC’s Division of Victim Services was among the exhibitors at the 2016 Mississippi Sexual Assault Symposium on April 8, answering questions and learning to better serve victims/survivors. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. (More victims coverage on pages 7-9 and 62).

For more information, the Division of Victim Services can be reached at 601-359-5628.



Highlights

Students Job Shadow at MDOC

Two Jackson students this spring got a firsthand look at what a day is like for two Executive Staff members at the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

Siwell Middle School student Jonathan A. Rhodes, 13, shadowed father Donald Rhodes, a staff officer who travels with Commissioner Marshall Fisher.

Northwest Jackson IB Middle School Student Kennedi Stancil, 12, was attorney Corrie Cockrell's shadow. She is the daughter of Janice Stancil, who works with the legal staff.



MDOC Recruitment Targets Students

JACKSON – College students who want to earn an income while pursuing their education and be in a profession with the promise of career advancement should consider working at the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

The MDOC hosts interviews and screenings every month. The general public is invited but college students are especially encouraged to apply.

A flexible work schedule, including part-time hours or light work shifts and schedule constraints, can be available to students who apply.

Marzayvious Hutton, a Cleveland, Miss. native, is among students who now work at MDOC.

"I learned of MDOC opportunities through rapid hiring and never expected to acquire a job. However, I applied and got the job, and it has been the best thing to happen to me, while trying to make other marks in my education," said Hutton, a senior Business Administration major at Jackson State University.

Hutton has been employed with MDOC for more than a year, and plans to keep his job after he graduates.

"I work well with my colleagues at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility," he said. "MDOC has been great in terms of working with my school schedule, and if I need time off for school purposes they work with me. My work is challenging, but I am firm with the inmates and I have not been under any threat or danger so far."

College students who are graduating are eligible for promotion after one year of work experience.

MDOC's employee benefits include paid training, medical insurance, life insurance, state retirement, paid personal leave, paid medical leave, and promotional opportunities. The starting salary moved from



\$1,886.61 to \$2,075.27 per month, as of July 1, with an increase in pay after one year.

The interviews and screenings are held at the following locations:

- Central Mississippi Correctional Facility (3794 Highway 468) in Pearl;
- Mississippi State Penitentiary (Highway 49 West) in Parchman; and
- South Mississippi Correctional Institution (22689 Highway 63 North) in Leakesville.

Correctional officers are responsible for the supervision, care, custody, and control of inmates. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age, provide proof of a high school diploma or G.E.D., possess a valid driver's license and Social Security card and have no felony or domestic violence conviction. Males between the ages of 21-25 years of age must show proof of selective service registration. Applicants also must complete a math quiz, a written report, a physical agility exercise and a drug test (at no cost to the applicant). Applicants may complete the 8-week training during summer break.

For more information about upcoming opportunities, contact Personnel Services at 601.359.5696, or visit www.mdoc.ms.gov or www.msps.gov.

MDOC Celebrates National Correctional Officers & Employee Appreciation Week

The Mississippi Department of Corrections observed National Correctional Officers & Employee Appreciation Week the first full week in May.

Then-President Ronald Reagan issued a proclamation in 1984 to recognize the contributions of correctional officers to our nation.

Examples of some of the events and activities held at different facilities to show appreciation are highlighted here.

CMCF



April Wells holds a plaque presented to her in memory of her mother, Angiela Wells. Her mother, who died Nov. 15, 2015, had worked at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility for more than 15 years.

During a ceremony on May 2 at CMCF, several employees shared memories of their time working together with now-deceased colleagues.

Family members of fallen officers from CMCF were presented plaques in honor of their loved ones.

"What correctional officers agree on more as it relates to why they do not leave corrections, or why they leave and come back are job security and camaraderie," said Warden Wendell Banks, who also offered words of comfort.

"Correctional officers help make Mississippi and our society the best each can be."



Jackson Police Department's Honor Guard presented colors at CMCF's memorial ceremony in May. Other events at the prison included a basketball game, free meals, a walk, and a health fair.

SMCI

The South Mississippi Correctional Institution thanked officers and staff with ice cream, donuts and coffee, pizza, chips, cake and soft drinks throughout the week.

MSP

The Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman held its celebrations during the second full week in May. Some activities included: a softball game on the MSP Softball field; a talent show; a basketball games; a health & wellness fair; a family fun day; and free meals.



Warden Wendell Banks offers words of encouragement to CMCF employees during the memorial ceremony.

WGCF

The Walnut Grove Correctional Facility began celebrating the week with a beanbag toss competition, snacks and prizes. The facility also held an eating contest, a tug-of-war competition, a "Live at WGCF" talent show, and a BBQ cook-off. Staff received T-shirts.

EMCF

The East Mississippi Correctional Facility provided free meals to all security and non-security staff which included ice cream, pizza, chicken, nachos, hotdogs, sausages, hamburgers, potato salad, baked beans, soft drinks and water. The facility also held a "Jersey Walk," a limbo contest, and a talent show.

Commissioner Marshall Fisher thanks each correctional officer and staffer for the work he or she does in carrying out the public safety mission of the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

Highlights

Attorney General's Victim Service Awards

Nakia McLaurin of MDOC Department of Victim Services and Director of Mississippi SAVIN Gwendolynn Santos presented an award to Commissioner Marshall Fisher at the Attorney General's Office award ceremony on April 12.



Inmate Welfare Committee

The Inmate Welfare Fund Committee, which oversees money used to benefit inmates, met on April 13 at the Central Office. Deputy Commissioner of Institutions Jerry Williams, led the discussion as committee chairman.



The McShin Foundation

John Shinholser, president of The McShin Foundation, spoke to female offenders at the Flowood Community Work Center and later to male offenders at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility on April 28. The Virginia-based recovery program provides peer-to-peer counseling, and focuses on reducing the stigma attached to substance abuse.



Sgt. Iris Smith Honored

The name of Sgt. Iris Smith, who died on duty in 2015, was added to the state memorial in Jackson, Mississippi (pictured below), and on the National Memorial in Washington DC.



Prison Writes Class

A teacher for the Prison Writes Class for female offenders at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility receives flowers after graduation on May 5.



Back to Basics

Offenders at the YOU School at CMCF attended a class on mathematics and reading comprehension on May 26.



In Brief

LEGISLATION

MDOC APPROPRIATION.

Senate Bill 2877 sets MDOC appropriation for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016 and ending June 30, 2017 at \$326,079,680 for general funds and \$31,332,451 for special funds for a total of \$357,412,131.

PERSONNEL BOARD EXEMPTION. Personnel actions of the commissioner are exempt from the state Personnel Board rules, regulations and procedures for one more year, effective July 1.

PROTECTION FOR EXECUTION TEAM, SUPPLIER AND WITNESSES. The identities of the execution team, a supplier of lethal injection chemicals and those witnessing an execution, including members of the victims or the condemned person's immediate family are confidential under Senate Bill 2237, which took effect upon passage.

AUDITS

PREA

In audits during the last six months, the following facilities have passed all 39 PREA standards: Washington, Quitman, Madison, Wilkinson, Pike, Forrest, George and Harrison Counties Community Work Centers, Leflore County Technical Violation Center, and Pascagoula Restitution Center.

In addition to congratulating each facility's commander and staff for a job well done, Deputy Commissioner Christy Gutherz also thanks PREA Director Marcia Stingley, ACA Manager Bobby Welch and Branch Director Sonny Edwards "for their guidance and assistance."

Audits were scheduled for Hinds, Flowood and Noxubee County Community Work Centers and Simpson County Technical Violation Center the week of July 11.

CMCF Healthcare Inmates are receiving timely, quality health care at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, according to auditors with a respected external peer review health care panel.

As a result, the facility is being recommended for accreditation again from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC). The commission requires the correctional facility to submit information annually, but onsite visits are done every three years.

"The Central Mississippi Correctional facility should be very proud of what they are doing here from a rehabilitative standpoint and their service to the public as well as those they serve," said Barbara Mariano, a registered nurse and lead surveyor for the NCCHC, at the end of the auditing process in March. Centurion of Mississippi is MDOC's health care vendor.

Announcements

Oversight Task Force Meetings

The Corrections and Criminal Justice Oversight Task Force usually meets every third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. at the state Supreme Court Building, 1st floor conference room. Hal Kittrell, district attorney for Jefferson Davis, Lamar, Lawrence, Marion and Pearl River counties, is the chairman and Michael Guest, district attorney for Madison and Rankin counties, is the vice chairman.

Southern States Correctional Association

(SSCA) 47th Annual Summer Training Conference is scheduled for July 24-27, 2016 at the Chattanooga Marriott Downtown, in Chattanooga, Tenn. Go to www.sscaweb.org/?page_id=163 for more information. Or, register online at <https://squareup.com/store/ssca-tn-chapter>, download the registration form and email it to Judy.Lambert@tn.gov

ACA's 146th Congress of Correction

The ACA Conference is scheduled for Aug. 5-10 in Boston, Mass. Go to www.aca.org/aca_prod_imis/aca_conference for more information.

MAPC Annual Conference

The MAPC Conference will be Sept. 14-16, 2016, at the Imperial Palace in Biloxi. The Opening Session begins at 1 p.m. on Sept. 14, with training sessions that Thursday and Friday. The banquet and awards ceremony will be that Thursday at 7 p.m. A 5K Walk/Run, golf, fishing, and pistol match will be among the activities.

RESOURCE

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