

# AROUND CORRECTIONS

Official Newsletter of the  
Virginia Department of Corrections



Fall 2015

Editor-in-Chief Lisa E. Kinney

Editor Win Sisson

## Director's Message



In the last Director's Message, I identified several of the initiatives implemented over the past five years and how they have served to position the agency to better respond to our vision, mission, and some challenges. However, challenges remain. For several years, the legislature hasn't funded the Department to the levels necessary to cover all our costs. For example, we haven't received necessary funding for several years to cover the complete cost of leases for P&P offices, the IT unit, utilities, and gasoline. The level of underfunding is approximately \$32 million.

In an effort to pay our bills, the Department has been keeping a vacancy rate of 3.3%, which helped address but did not cover the shortfall completely. As I've toured our correctional facilities over the past couple of years and had the opportunity to dialogue with supervisors and officers, I have received a clear indication that while staff are "good soldiers" and willing to make sacrifices to do the difficult work they do every day, it's exacting a toll on our

employees. Staff are having trouble getting days off; supervisors are running shifts instead of taking care of their supervisory duties. I cannot in good conscience allow that to continue without challenging the decisions made to address the budget deficit.

Therefore, I recently authorized a reduction of the 3.3% vacancy rate to a 2.5% vacancy rate and the immediate hiring of more than 400 correctional officers. I've also reviewed with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security the challenges we're facing in doing our jobs and they have agreed to introduce budget language for the upcoming session that will provide the Department with an additional \$16 million towards the reduction of our long-standing budget deficit, facilitating the hiring of much-needed staff.

I am happy to make this investment in staffing because we fully realize that supporting and equipping our staff appropriately is what it's going to take for this agency to be the best it can be. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all staff for the work that has been done in this agency that's making a difference for all the people of the Commonwealth, resulting in a safer place to live and work.

*Harold Clarke*

## Department Celebrates Employee Appreciation Week



During Employee Appreciation Week, October 4-10, the Virginia Department of Corrections honored many outstanding employees. Director of Human Resources Paul Broughton (retired) and Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott received Director's Awards for Career Achievement. OWDS Senior Marion R. Curry was named Headquarters Employee of the Year. P&P Officer for District 30, Hampton Shannon Moore was named Eastern Region Employee of the Year. RNCC Canine Officer Christopher Phipps was named Western Region Employee of the Year, and Lt. Steven A. Jones of Coffeewood Correctional Center was named Central Region Employee of the Year.

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## Few Offenders Remain in Restrictive Housing in Virginia Prisons



Across the nation, from state houses to kitchen tables, a conversation is brewing about the number of people America incarcerates, how those people are treated once they're in the system, and the struggle to appropriately handle those who need restrictive housing. When Virginia instituted in 2011 an innovative program to give state inmates pathways out of restrictive prison housing, 511 offenders were housed in administrative segregation, whether for their protection or the protection of others. Four years later, only 160 offenders remain.

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## VADOC Wins Datathon Award



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The application uses a variety of state and local data to help home buyers make better decisions about purchasing a home.

The VADOC team, comprised of leader Kartikey Yadav, Wayne Clarke, Timothy Cooper, Kathryn Jones and Darryl Kerkeslager, created the application.

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### Director Award Overall Trophy Winners 2015

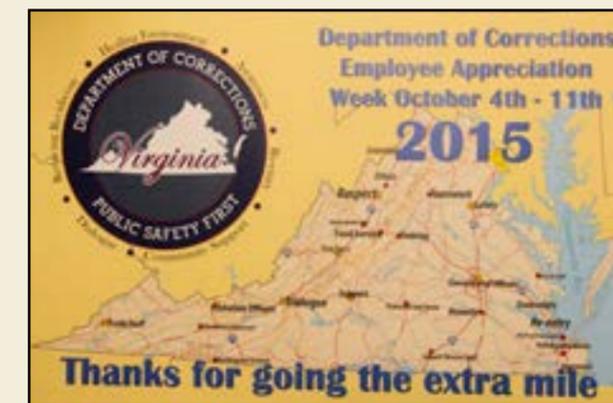
CATEGORY	WINNER/TITLE
<b>Support:</b>	
Fluvanna Correctional Center	Puliti A. Moses, Unit Manager
<b>Healing Environment:</b>	
P & P District 35, Manassas	District 35, Healing Environment Committee
<b>Respect</b>	
Human Resources, Atmore	Barry Elgert, Compensation Coordinator
<b>Honesty</b>	
P & P District 13, Lynchburg	Allison Dixon, Probation & Parole Officer
<b>Safety</b>	
Security Operations, Atmore	Carlos Hernandez, Strike Force Coordinator
<b>Ethics</b>	
Reentry & Program Unit, Atmore	H. Scott Richeson, Director Reentry & Programs
<b>Commitment</b>	
Wallens Ridge State Prison	Greg Hamilton, Vocational Instructor
<b>Learning</b>	
Human Resources, Atmore	Brittany Crane, Grievance Coordinator

### Overall Employee of the Year Award Plaque Winners

CATEGORY	WINNER/TITLE
<b>Headquarters</b>	Marion R. Curry, OWDS Senior
<b>Central Region</b>	Steven A. Jones, Lieutenant, Coffeewood Correctional Center
<b>Eastern Region</b>	Shannon Moore, P&P Officer Sr., District 30, Hampton
<b>Western Region</b>	Christopher Phipps, Canine Officer, River North Correctional Center

### VADOC Public Service Award Overall Trophy Winners 2015

CATEGORY	NOMINEE/TITLE
<b>Star Award</b>	
Kelli Brown	Probation & Parole Officer, P&P District 3, Portsmouth
<b>Career Achievement</b>	
H. Paul Broughton	Human Resources Director
N.H. Cookie Scott	Deputy Director of Administration
<b>Community Service &amp; Volunteerism</b>	
Erica Mullins-Nibblins	Sergeant, Coffeewood Correctional Center
<b>Customer Service</b>	
Michele Cass	Senior Probation Officer, P&P District 34, Williamsburg
<b>Innovation</b>	
Architectural & Engineering Services Unit	Headquarters/ASD/VCE Region
<b>Teamwork</b>	
Pocahontas State Correctional Center Food Service Department	
<b>Workplace Health, Wellness &amp; Safety</b>	
Steve Small	Safety Specialist, St. Brides Correctional Center



### VADOC Appreciates Its Employees!



## Few Offenders Remain in Restrictive Housing in Virginia Prisons: Virginia Continues Program Recognized for Transforming Highest-Security Prisons

Across the nation, from state houses to kitchen tables, a conversation is brewing about the number of people America incarcerates, how those people are treated once they're in the system, and the struggle to appropriately handle those who need restrictive housing. When Virginia instituted in 2011 an innovative program to give state inmates pathways out of restrictive prison housing, 511 offenders were housed in administrative segregation, whether for their protection or the protection of others. Four years later, only 160 offenders remain.

Virginia was nationally recognized in 2013 for transforming the state's toughest prisons with wide sweeping culture change, including new opportunities for high-risk offenders to earn their way to lower security level prisons. The Virginia Department of Corrections' (VADOC) innovative Administrative Step-Down program, partnering Red Onion State Prison (ROSP) with neighboring Wallens Ridge State Prison, received the State Transformation in Action (STAR) Award from the Council of State Government's Southern Legislative Conference.

The Step-Down initiative allows offenders in restrictive housing more step-by-step opportunities to earn their way to a lower security status and lower security prisons. In the four years since the Step-Down program began, more than 350 restrictive housing offenders have participated in the program. To date, only nine offenders enrolled in the program have had a setback resulting in their return to restrictive housing.

"It's in everyone's best interests – offenders, staff, and the public – for these high-risk offenders to participate in programs and move into the general prison population before they are released back to our communities," said VADOC Director Harold Clarke. "Further, the Step-Down program is important even for offenders with life sentences; they are contributing members of the prison community and they have a real effect on the men who are going back out into the public."

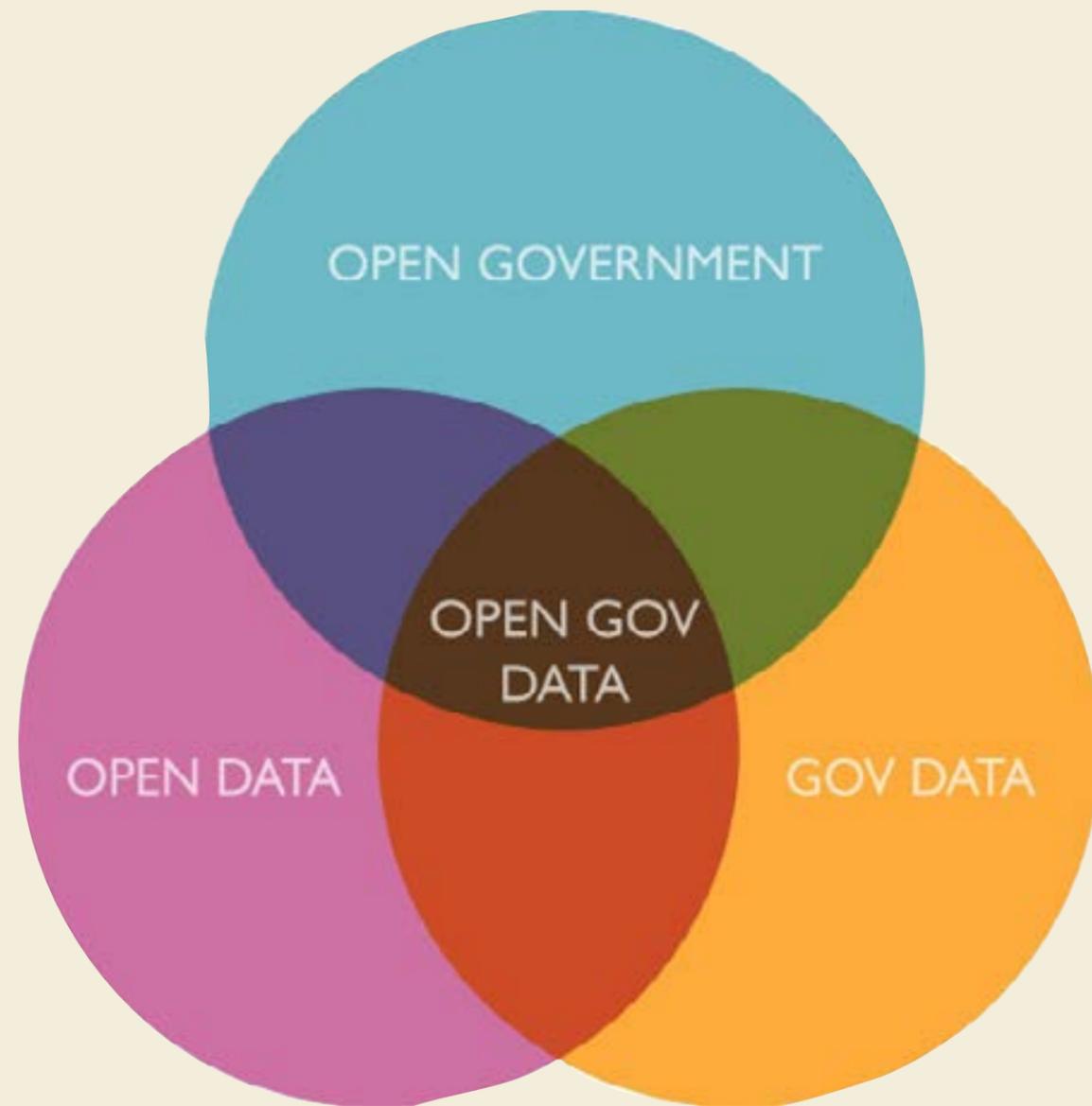
The vast majority of Virginia's offenders (around 90 percent) will be released back to the community at some point. In 2010 and 2011, before the Step Down program began in earnest, 50 and 58 (respectively) VADOC offenders were released straight from restrictive housing to the community. In 2012, there were 21 such releases and in 2013 there were 11. In 2014, only four individuals were released straight from restrictive housing. So far in 2015, only two have been released straight from restrictive housing.

"We have seen incredible progress on the part of so many men in this program," said VADOC Reentry and Programs Director Scott Richeson. "We have based our programming on evidence based practices involving strategies to motivate participation and using cognitive behavioral programming for participants to learn new ways to think, make decisions and behave pro-socially. We also have a number of offenders at any given time who refuse to move out of restrictive housing. These are people who, for a variety of reasons, do not want to live and interact with the hundreds of other men in prison. We continue to look for strategies, programs and earned incentives to encourage their participation in the step down process. We recognize that due to safety concerns, there will always be some offenders who require restrictive housing management but we want that number to be as low as possible."

"After going through the Step Down program, some of these men are participating in educational programs and performing prison jobs for the first time in years," said Clarke. "Not only has this been good for the offenders, but the staff at these high-security prisons report that they feel safer and less stressed at work." This program exemplifies the VADOC's mission to increase long term public safety through strategies that reduce offenders' criminal risks.



## VADOC Wins Datathon Award



The Department of Corrections received high praise recently for creating an application designed to help new residents and home buyers as part of the Annual Commonwealth Datathon Challenge coordinated through the Office of the Virginia Secretary of Technology. A VADOC team developed the Home Finder Dashboard.

The application uses a variety of state and local data to help home buyers make better decisions about purchasing a home.

The VADOC team, comprised of leader Kartikey Yadav, Wayne Clarke, Timothy Cooper, Kathryn Jones and Darryl Kerkeslager, created the application. The Datathon's multi-tiered, two-day competition brought together teams of students, state employees, and professionals from across the Commonwealth who created new applications designed to improve government.

The Virginia Home Finder, described as an innovative mash-up of state and local government data that will benefit citizens, took third overall in the statewide competition.



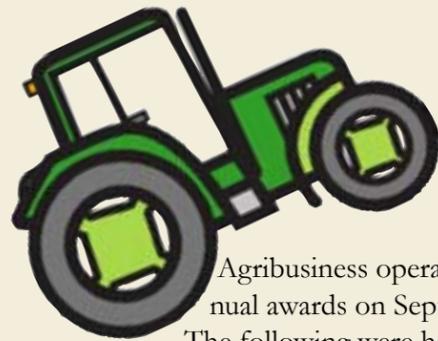
“The Datathon is beneficial to us on many levels,” said Senior Software Architect Wayne Clarke. “It helps us grow as a team. It helps us move forward as professionals, and ultimately, it leads to the type of creative change and progress we must make to keep the Commonwealth on the cutting edge.”

The Virginia Home Finder Dashboard provides the ability to view key indicators about all the counties in the Commonwealth. The dashboard is a self-service tool designed to be accessed through a mobile phone, a tablet, or through a PC or MAC. On the dashboard's landing page, users can view state-level details for median household income, Virginia's unemployment rate vs. the United States, and population densities by county on the map of Virginia.

Users can then select any county on the map to view the high level information for demographics, economics, crime and health data, and environmental factors in that area. For the next level, viewers can choose among supporting dashboards that provide detailed information on those four key drivers; this allows users to view and compare county data with statewide data in order to make better decisions according to their key desires. The application is available on a limited basis.



## Agribusiness Awards



Agribusiness operations gave its annual awards on September 2, 2015. The following were honored:

- Farm Supervisor at Green Rock Jesse Adkins: 2015 Progressive Farmer Award
- State Farm Meat Plant Manager Jimmy King: Agribusiness All Star for Leadership and Innovation
- Bland Farm Supervisor Senior Donald Musick: Agribusiness All Star Award for Leadership and Innovation
- Nottoway Farm Manger James Wilmouth: Agribusiness Manager of the Year
- Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Martin Johnson: Agribusiness All Star for Leadership and innovation
- Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Hugh Blythe: William H. Gillette Award for Outstanding performance in Institutional Agribusiness



Jesse Adkins, Farm Supervisor at Green Rock, won the 2015 Progressive Farmer Award. From left: Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Farm Supervisor at Green Rock Jesse Adkins, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott, Assistant Agribusiness Director Jim Snodgrass, Assistant Agribusiness Director Harry Redd



State Farm Meat Plant Manager Jimmy King won the Agribusiness All Star for Leadership and Innovation. From left: State Farm Agribusiness Director Frank Baber, State Farm Meat Plant Manager Jimmy King, Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott



Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Hugh Blythe won the William H. Gillette Award for Outstanding performance in Institutional Agribusiness. From left: Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Hugh Blythe, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott, Assistant Agribusiness Director Harry Redd, Farm Director at Deerfield Ryan Blythe



Bland Correctional Center Farm Supervisor Senior Donald Musick won the Agribusiness All Star Award for Leadership and Innovation. From left: Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Bland Farm Supervisor Senior Donald Musick, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott, Assistant Agribusiness Director Jim Snodgrass, Farm Manager at Bland Alan Strock



Nottoway Farm Manger James Wilmouth won the Agribusiness Manager of the Year Award. From left: Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Assistant Agribusiness Director Harry Redd, Nottoway Farm Manger James Wilmouth, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott



Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Martin Johnson won the Agribusiness All Star for Leadership and innovation. From left: Director of Agribusiness Operations Kenny Raiford, Farm Supervisor Senior at Deerfield Martin Johnson, Assistant Agribusiness Director Harry Redd, Deputy Director for Administration Cookie Scott, Farm Director at Deerfield Ryan Blythe

## The Southern States Correctional Association Seeks to Boost Its Virginia Membership



The Virginia chapter of the Southern States Correctional Association offers its members unique opportunities to achieve career growth and development while tapping into a wide professional network. Recently, the SSCA Virginia chapter held a variety of meetings, events and promotions, shown left, to increase its membership, including the ever-popular annual sale of smoked Boston Butts, shown directly below. For more information about SSCA and how to become a member, contact Lois Fegan at [lois.fegan@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:lois.fegan@vadoc.virginia.gov) or check out the SSCA [website](#).



## VADOC Emergency Support Team Recognized

When danger strikes in Virginia, be it flood, hurricane or fire, the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Center swings into action engaging emergency responders.

This includes a team from the Virginia Department of Corrections.

Recently, the Department recognized the members of its Emergency Support Team for their efforts working 12-hour shifts in response to Hurricane Joaquin.

Hurricane Joaquin formed on September 28 and dissipated on October 15. Typically, VADOC's team focuses on supplying available assets to emergency situations, especially vehicles and surplus supplies.

From left with Director Harold Clarke are: Larry Collins, Ron Lucas, Carlos Hernandez and Trevor Presley. Not pictured: David Thomas.

## Gangs - Future Search

At the Gangs – Future Search Conference on September 17, Director Harold Clarke delivered an inspiring message focused on the importance of Dialogue.

“The Department of Corrections is a microcosm of our larger community,” he said. “We dialogue to find a common ground.”

The Director relayed a story in which many different people were asked to estimate the weight of a large oxen. After all had given their answers, each from his or her unique perspective and experience, the answers were added and the total averaged.

The group’s number, the average of the estimates for an oxen that weighed more than 800 pounds, was off by only six pounds.

“Collectively,” Director Clarke said, “the community made the proper assessment, and that is the purpose of Dialogue. Working together is better than doing things the way we have always done them - that is the beauty of dialogue. Thank you for being here. What evolves from this depends on how we come together.”



## VADOC Values Veterans



### VADOC: Calling All Veterans, Largest State Employer of Military Veterans Seeks to Hire More

The Virginia Department of Corrections wants those men and women who have served our country to know their skills are needed when they return home.

these very capable, very deserving men and women and is the largest single employer of veterans among Virginia state agencies,” Schwartz said.

Veterans make up about 13 percent of the Virginia Department of Corrections’ (VADOC) 11,500 employees.

The Commonwealth of Virginia boasts a large veteran population. While Virginia’s population ranks 12th nationwide (8.2 million), its number of working-age veterans ranks fourth, at 513,000.

The effort to increase its veteran ranks comes as part of the Virginia Values Veterans initiative sponsored by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. The V3 initiative, as it is known, helps link veterans with businesses seeking to employ them.

Virginia ranks first in the nation per capita for veteran labor force participation (65 percent in 2014) and veteran labor force growth, which was 19 percent from 2010-2014.

VADOC began its V3 partnership roughly six months ago and has hired more than 100 veterans since then. The Department expects to hire another 100 in the next six months. “Veterans possess the skills and training we need,” said VADOC Director Harold Clarke.

For more information about V3, visit [dvs3.com](http://dvs3.com).



### Aiding Incarcerated Veterans

In the Department’s ongoing efforts to involve military veterans and engage related services, it held a stakeholders meeting for incarcerated veterans at Headquarters on September 25. Approximately 30 representatives from state, federal and local veterans’ service agencies attended

along with various VADOC staff to discuss improving the coordination of services for both incarcerated veterans and those transitioning to the free world. Administrator for Reentry Services Dudley Bush chaired the meeting.

“Veterans, even at a young age, have shouldered a great deal of responsibility, and are a natural fit for our agency, which prioritizes safety and security, teamwork, discipline, and communication skills.”

The Department offers a variety of jobs and opportunities for advancement. “In addition to corrections officers, we hire a wide range of employees, from teachers, welders, dentists, doctors, and nurses, to food service workers, truck drivers, and project managers,” Clarke said.

The Virginia Department of Corrections is a leader in employing veterans, said V3 Program Manager Andrew Schwartz. “The Department recognizes the excellence of



## VADOC Intern Honored as “Big Picture Thinker”

Don't let Myles Busching fool you.

He keeps a low profile as he toils away quietly with Jim Bruce and others in the Department's Policy and Initiatives Unit.

But he thinks BIG.

The second-year student in the Wilder School's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program at Virginia Commonwealth University recently received the school's “Big Picture Thinker” Award. To read more about his award, click [here](#).



## Charles Sims Named State Director of Torch Run

Charles Sims became the State Director of the Law Enforcement Torch Run on September 15, 2015.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics Virginia unites officers from law enforcement agencies and corrections departments across the state

in an effort to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Virginia year round. Torch Run efforts to raise funds include collecting corporate sponsorships; selling candy, T-shirts and hats; and hosting unique fund raising events such as Zombie Runs, Tip-A-Cops, Dancing with the Stars, Polar Plunges, Plane Pulls, Lock-ups and golf tournaments, to mention a few.



Each summer, law enforcement officials carry the *Flame of Hope* across the state, culminating with the Torch Run Final Leg and the lighting of the cauldron to officially open the Special Olympics Virginia Summer Games in Richmond. The 1,900-mile, 7-day Torch Run involves more than 2,000 law enforcement officers and personnel representing more than 200 law enforcement agencies across Virginia.

“This is truly an honor, and I am proud of the Department's high level of commitment to the Torch Run and Special Olympics,” said Mr. Sims, who has been active in Special Olympics activities for many years and serves as one of three VADOC Liaisons to the Torch Run Council. He is the first Virginia Department of Corrections staff member to become the Virginia State Director.



## Scenes from the Virginia Correctional Association Annual Training Institute



The Virginia Correctional Association held its annual Training Institute in Midlothian on October 1-2 and took time to celebrate some of its most outstanding members.

Above are: Awards Committee Chairman, Chuck Kehoe, left, and VCA President Donna Lawrence, center, with winners: Criminal Justice Employee of the Year LeCretia Wat-

kins of Lunenburg Correctional Center, second from left, VCA Lifetime Career Achievement Award winner Contract Monitor Manager Cathy Thomas of Headquarters, fourth from left, and VCA member of the Year, VCA Secretary Martha Wright of Dillwyn Correctional Center, right.



## Mud Run 2015: Down and Dirty



Submitted by Lois E. Fegan

More than 50 people came out to the State Farm Correctional Complex on September 26, 2015, to participate in the 2nd Annual State Farm Mud Run sponsored by the Southern States Correctional Association. More than 15 correctional facilities were represented as well as people from VADOC and DJJ Headquarters. Indian Creek Correctional Center won the Best Dressed award for getting t-shirts made which stated "Keep Calm and Get In the Mud."

### 10K Winners

Male: Chris Allen (Powhatan Reception Center) 0:58:40

Female: Crystal Butler (Caroline Correctional Center) - 1:30:23

### 5K Winners

Garrett Durvin (Deep Meadow Correctional Center) - 0:49:03

Michelle Kerkeslager (Non-DOC) - 1:00:16

Congratulations to all participants for finishing a unique race course - complete with streams, fields, "the horseshoe" mud pits and trails. Your hard efforts raised almost \$1,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project. Keep up with us on Facebook and look out for emails about the 2016 race soon!





**Long  
Term  
Offenders  
Prepare  
For  
Reentry**

Submitted by Debbie Howard

On September 23, former offenders Hasan Zarif and Leroi Mason visited Haynesville Correctional Center to speak to long-term offenders about making a successful reentry to their communities.

Their visit to the men, known informally as the long-termers' group, was part of a broader effort to promote the reentry of those who have been incarcerated for ten years or longer. Similar seminars and workshops are being offered through the cognitive communities at Greenville, Deep Meadow and St. Brides correctional centers.

"Long termers need to be prepared as much as any others for their eventual return to their communities. They, like the vast majority of offenders in Virginia, will one day be released. The difference for this population is that they have more to catch up on and must make a bigger adjustment," said Offender Workforce Development Manager Gwynne Cunningham.

Many of the long-term offenders are parole-eligible and go up for review every year. "It is important that we help these men prepare themselves," Cunningham added.

The workshop delivered by Mr. Zarif and Mr. Mason was designed to inform their Haynesville audience about recent changes in society and how those changes will effect them upon their release.

The long-timers discussed restoring one's rights, reunifying with family, keeping the right attitude, and being successful after incarceration. They learned about resume building, computer skills and keeping the right attitude. They also talked about other resources available for the recently released including those offered by Mr. Zarif's organization, Goodwill Industries.



Mr. Mason, left, and Mr. Zarif giving their presentation. This topical seminar is just one example of bringing the community within the walls.

**Danville Holds First Job Fair for Former Offenders**



From left, Reentry Specialist from the Attorney General's Office DeVon Simmons, Virginia Cares Barry Mayo, Danville P&P Chief Doug Morrison, Regional Administrator of the Western Region Jamilla Burney-Divens and Danville Mayor Sherman Saunders

Heavy rain September 29 did not dampen the spirits of former offenders who participated in Danville's first job fair designed specifically for them.

More than 300 returning citizens packed into the Danville Community Market for the Danville Job Fair for Returning Citizens hosted by Pittsylvania County Community Action.

Employers did their part as more than 30 arrived prepared to receive applications and offer jobs to ex-offenders. Among the attendees were representatives of EBI (upholstered furniture), Kickback Jack's, Golden Corral and KFC (restaurants), Adecco (human resource consulting), Lowes (home improvement retail chain) and Presto (manufacturing).

The event received a wide range of community support with Danville's Mayor Sherman Saunders and the Reentry Coordinator from the Attorney General's Office DeVon Simmons attending.

It was truly a community effort. Many organizations brought crucial support, including the Community

Market, the Danville Police Department, local judges, the Dan River Reentry Council, the Martinsville Reentry Council, Averette University, several faith-based groups and other organizations.

Job fair organizers offered special praise to VADOC staff, especially Danville Probation and Parole Chief Doug Morrison.

Green Rock's Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS), Dwane Massenburg, collected information from each ex-offender so that event organizer Southwest Care Case Manager Barry Mayo would have plenty of follow up information for the employers.

"This was a great event," said Green Rock's OWDS Massenburg. "We all hope society may be a little bit safer because somebody was able to find adequate employment and continue to move forward with their lives."

## Petersburg/Dinwiddie Re-entry Council: Leadership, Partnership and Mentorship

The Petersburg/Dinwiddie Re-entry Council held its first Petersburg Men's Forum & 1000 Young Men Success Conference on Saturday, September 12, 2015. In all, 187 participants attended.

The council has a strong desire to see some positive changes take place in the Petersburg area to decrease the crime rate. The goal: take Petersburg from the most dangerous list to the most successful list!

Special guests present were: The 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit – Petersburg Circuit Court Judge, The Honorable Dennis Martin; Mayor Howard Meyers; Vice Mayor Samuel Parham; Councilman John Hart; Petersburg School Board Chairman Kenneth Pritchett; Petersburg Police Chief Dixon; Regional Operations Chief George Hinkle; and Regional Administrator Marcus Elam.

The event was successful and generated excitement to organize another, similar event. Phase II of the event will challenge the men to become mentors for the youth who were in attendance.



Judge Martin



Mayor Meyers



Clothes Raffle



Men and Youth



Dialogue Panel



ROC Hinkle, right, and RA Elam

## Wendy Lohr-Hopp Honored for Innovative Work in Victim Assistance

### Submitted by Amber Leake, Victim Services Unit

On November 19, the Virginia Victim Assistance Network presented VADOC Victim Services Director Wendy Lohr-Hopp with the Award for Innovation. This award is given to a person who has shown exemplary creativity in furthering the delivery of services to victims of crime.

Mrs. Lohr-Hopp has dedicated more than 17 years to Victim Services at different state agencies in multiple capacities advocating for victims in Virginia. She maintains representation on multiple councils, boards for local non-profit organizations, and local Victim Coalitions across the state. Her voice in the Department of Corrections ensures that victim sensitivity is always considered or noted and she serves as a constant reminder that victims are a part of the public safety mission for the Department.

Mrs. Lohr-Hopp oversees staff training for facilities and probation offices on the impact of crime on vic-

tims and the community. She assisted with the creation of the OVC Listen and Learn Victim Impact Curriculum that was adopted by Virginia and is a successfully run program within multiple facilities. She also drove the creation and implementation of the first "Victim Module" housed in the Department's Offender Management Computer system (CORIS). This module provides an easier way to record/track interactions with victims, assist them with general information, and notify them of status changes of offenders in their cases.

Mrs. Lohr-Hopp also brought the Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) program to Virginia. With the help of John Wilson from Just Alternatives, a national non-profit program promising victim-centered practices in corrections, and Jan Dow, Victim Offender Dialogue Coordinator, policies and procedures were created that focused on crime victims. Mrs. Lohr-Hopp wanted to ensure fidelity and victim sensitivity, and unlike other states, also included domestic violence and sexual assault cases. In 2012, VADOC staff members were

trained as facilitators, and soon afterwards, the first VOD was launched. The demand for this interaction between victims and the offenders in their cases has risen exponentially since 2012, so in early 2016, there will be an additional training of facilitators to meet the high demand for VOD's.

In an offender-centered agency, Mrs. Lohr-Hopp ensures that victims are represented/considered in as many facets and decisions as possible. Each year for National Crime Victims' Rights Week, she uses her vast network and experience with victims to provide meaningful presentations to the VADOC staff and in 2015, was able to send a powerful message by providing a victim the opportunity to come and speak about her experience in participating with the VOD program. Congratulations to Mrs. Lohr-Hopp on her Award for Innovation.



## Virginia Has Drastically Reduced The Cost Of Offender Phone Calls In Recent Years — Average offender phone call now \$1.48\*

*\*offender phone rates are being lowered further as this publication goes to press*

Communication between incarcerated offenders and their families and friends is an important step in the reentry process. To that end, the Virginia Department of Corrections has worked diligently over the last five years to drastically reduce the cost of offenders' phone calls.

Virginia was nationally recognized in 2013 for transforming the state's toughest prisons with wide sweeping culture change, including new opportunities for high-risk offenders to earn their way to lower security level prisons. The Virginia Department of Corrections' (VADOC) innovative Administrative Step-Down program, partnering Red Onion State Prison (ROSP) with neighboring Wallens Ridge State Prison, received the State Transformation in Action (STAR) Award from the Council of State Government's Southern Legislative Conference.

Regrettably, information contained in an October 22 news release from the Federal Communications Commission concerning Virginia created confusion for offenders and families regarding what they are being charged for phone service.

Phone rates for Virginia offenders are as follows:

- A local collect call is \$1.00 for 20 minutes, while a local prepaid/debit call is \$0.90 for 20 minutes
- 86% of all calls made from Virginia Department of Corrections facilities are local calls that fall under the self-imposed rate caps above
- The average cost per call for inmates in VADOC facilities is \$1.48 – with an average cost of \$0.0871/minute

Global Tel\*Link (GTL) handles offender phone calls for the Virginia Department of Corrections. Over the last five years, Virginia has been at the forefront of efforts to bring affordable phone service to incarcerated offenders, working with GTL to rein in the average cost of phone calls from Virginia state correctional facilities.

In 2010, the average cost of a phone call from a Virginia facility was \$4.06; today, the average has fallen to \$1.48 (with an average cost of \$0.0871/minute). Under the FCC's proposed rules announced yesterday, the average cost per call could be allowed to go up.

The VADOC will continue to make every effort to keep phone service affordable for offenders and their loved ones. The Department of Corrections does not receive any commissions from offender phone calls.



### CTSU Helps Feed Those in Need



From left are: Cindy Barbour, Rick Davis, Joanne Gray, Jackie Williams and Abhi Punje.

On November 12, VADOC's CTSU helped provide a meal for the needy. CTSU joined forces with Richmond Friends of the Homeless and Broomfield Christian Methodist Church, giving \$300 and feeding about 80 people at Broomfield. There was more than enough food, and the church used leftovers to feed even more people later. CTSU plans to help with another meal on December 10. To learn more about Richmond Friends of the Homeless click [here](#).

### Community Collaboration Reentry Summit OWDS Employment Retention Workshop



The Norfolk Reentry Council held a Reentry Summit -OWDS Employment Retention Workshop at Old Dominion University in Norfolk on October 26. More than 300 registered for the event, including a wide range of reentry stakeholders. Chief of Corrections Operations David Robinson served as a keynote speaker and highlighted the recent reentry efforts of the VADOC. From left, OWDS Sussex I&II Charles Davis; DeAngelo White, formerly of St. Brides and now with the Virginia Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired; Sr. OWDS for the Central Region Jennifer Jennings; OWDS St. Brides Josua Coleman; OWDS Nottoway Dawn Page; OWDS Indian Creek Alan Dorrough and Sr. OWDS for the Eastern Region Marion Curry.

## Vision With Action Can Change the World

### Statewide Unit Head Conference

The Statewide Unit Head Conference at the Academy for Staff Development held October 27-29 featured a special training session on The Power of Paradigms, drawn from the work of author Joel Barker. Presenters included James W. Schreier, Ph.D., SPHR, a consultant specializing in management and leadership training, organizational development, planning, organizational culture assessment and change. Dr. Schreier presented several sessions related to Joel Barker's Strategic Exploration Tools.

Additionally, participants received awards for implementing data effectively. The 3-D Awards were given for "Data Driven Decision-Making."





### K-9 Teams, Supervisors, Thwart Contraband

Pictured above are contraband items recovered recently by the VADOC K-9 teams. They include spice, tobacco, marijuana, and 20 gallons of “mash” used in making illegal liquor. Investigators also found a make-shift tattoo gun and related accessories.

The Department utilizes canines for various duties: patrol (64), narcotics (28), contraband (10), and tracking (10).

“VADOC K-9 units are well trained to identify contraband and illegal narcotics, such as this found recently at a facility. Their good work makes the institutions and related environments safer for both the offenders and staff,” said Statewide K-9 Coordinator Major Beverley Ragland.

### Fire Quashed Quickly, Safely at Halifax

Quick thinking by Sgt. William Gregory and Correctional Officer Reginald Martin saved the day at Halifax Correctional Unit after a kitchen fire erupted on October 17. The men were honored at Headquarters on December 1 and received the Director’s Challenge Coins, shown right, as did their Superintendent Jerry Townsend.



Below, from left are: Deputy Director of Administration Cookie Scott, Sgt. Gregory, CO Martin, Superintendent Townsend, ROC Malcolm Taylor and Chief of Corrections Operations David Robinson.





## Catch VADOC in the News!

Please note: Due to recent restrictions by VITA, some of the links may not be available between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday to Friday



**Prison Pen Pals Program - Dogs Behind Bars:** In November, WWBT-12 visited Lunenburg Correctional Center to profile the Department's highly successful Pen Pals Program that matches offenders with troubled canines.



**Virginia Department of Corrections Wants to Hire More Vets:** About 13 percent of VADOC's employees are military veterans, and because of a new Virginia Department of Veterans Services program, VADOC is looking to increase that percentage.



**A New Beginning for Virginia Prison Soul Album:** The musical group Edge of Daybreak re-released a soul, disco, jazz and funk album recorded at Powhatan Correctional Center in 1979. The album, Eyes of Love, continues to receive attention including this story by WCVE 88.9 FM.



**State's Largest Employer of Vets Seeks More:** In its evening broadcast the night before Veterans Day, WVEC 13 ABC News in Hampton Roads noted VADOC's intent to hire more military veterans.



**Inmates Create Radio PSAs:** These are the public service announcements (PSAs) delivered by prisoners in the custody of the Virginia Department of Corrections. The name of each prisoner appears directly above his or her message.



**Veterans Sought:** Watch WDBJ's coverage about the Department's efforts to hire more correctional officers as noted by WDBJ in Roanoke.



**Two Accused of Race War Plot Tied to Version of Asatru Rising in Va. Prisons:** The Richmond Times-Dispatch examined the prison history of men and their possible involvement in a white supremacist group following their arrest on conspiracy charges.



**Virginia Corrections Looking to Hire More Vets:** WCVE 88.9 NPR in Richmond helped spread the word about VADOC's desire to increase its veteran ranks.



Do you have a story idea for the newsletter (or IDOC)? Please contact Win Sisson at [george.sisson@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:george.sisson@vadoc.virginia.gov) or call (804) 887-8072.