

# AROUND CORRECTIONS

Official Newsletter of the  
Virginia Department of Corrections



May 2015

Editor-in-Chief Lisa E. Kinney

Editor Win Sisson

## Director's Message



As we celebrate VADOC employees with service awards this month, I want to thank you for your commitment to serve. That commitment to serve – not just your years of service – is the choice you make to be here because of the nobility of what we do.

When you look in the faces of children whose parents are incarcerated, you realize what a difference we can make in people's lives. An estimated three million kids have at least one parent incarcerated. These are the at-risk children stuck in a quagmire of crime and punishment. If you've been in this business for a long time, you've seen generations of families come through the correctional system. That's what we're here to stop. We're not just giving parents second chances; we're trying to reduce the cycle of crime and punishment by giving children new and good beginnings.

We have a lofty mission statement:

We enhance the quality of life in the Commonwealth by improving public safety. We accomplish this through reintegration of sentenced men and women in our custody and care by providing supervision and control, effective programs and re-entry ser-

vices in safe environments which foster positive change and growth consistent with research-based evidence, fiscal responsibility, and constitutional standards.

If you can't recall the whole statement, all you need to remember is that we are in the business of helping people to be better. When we do that, we're creating lasting public safety. Take pride in the work that we do. It's important that we autograph our work with excellence. We must be committed for all the right reasons. Failure to do so is a failure to effect positive change.

We must continually work to be better at what we do. Dialogue provides us with the tools and skills needed to create a Healing Environment. When we use motivational interviewing to better communicate with offenders, we're on the road to success and to fulfilling our mission statement.

You have the tools. Make a commitment to be good students of Dialogue and the Healing Environment. If you have questions, reach out to someone you trust to seek coaching. If you see a colleague with questions, view it as a coaching opportunity. Thank you for your efforts and commitment to serve.

*Harold Clarke*

## Virginia Department of Corrections Marks Correctional Officers' Week



Virginia's correctional officers play a critical role in keeping correctional facilities safe and promoting offenders' successful reentry into our communities after they've served their time. The officers' efforts have helped the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) receive national recognition for its reentry efforts, a point of pride as the Department recognizes Correctional Officers' Week, May 3-9.

"Virginia's correctional officers approach their profession with courage, commitment and dignity. Their dedication and their day-to-day striving for excellence and innovation make the Department one of the very best in the country," said Director Harold Clarke.

[READ MORE](#)

## Crime Victims' Rights Week: Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims



The Virginia Department of Corrections this week held events to recognize Crime Victims' Rights Week, which ran from April 19 through April 25. This year, Virginia marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Virginia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights.

The theme for the 2015 National Crime Victims' Rights Week is Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims. The Victim Services Unit (VSU) of the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) provides notification assistance and referral services to victims of offenders in the custody of the Department. "The Victim Services Unit works closely with crime victims to keep them informed regarding the status of the offenders who harmed them and to answer their questions about how the system works," said VADOC Director Harold Clarke. "The VSU also educates our

[READ MORE](#)

## Offenders Follow Longstanding Virginia Tradition to Become Surveyor Assistants



Vocational students at Green Rock Correctional Center have found something they have in common with some of our nation's Founding Fathers – an aptitude for surveying.

Surveyors have a long and storied history in Virginia, and now offenders at Green Rock are taking steps to successfully reenter society by learning to be surveyor assistants. The course combines the earliest surveyor tools, such as plum bobs and rods, with computer-aided drafting software, global positioning technology, and tripod total stations that collect critical data. With these tools, students define, measure and map boundaries of land, air and sea while aiding licensed surveyors. Virginia prison officials believe this is the only program of its kind in a prison setting.

[READ MORE](#)

## Virginia Department of Corrections Marks Correctional Officers' Week

Virginia's correctional officers play a critical role in keeping correctional facilities safe and promoting offenders' successful reentry into our communities after they've served their time. The officers' efforts have helped the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) receive national recognition for its reentry efforts, a point of pride as the Department recognizes Correctional Officers' Week, May 3-9.



"Virginia's correctional officers approach their profession with courage, commitment and dignity. Their dedication and their day-to-day striving for excellence and innovation make the Department one of the very best in the country," said Director Harold Clarke.

Virginia now boasts the second-lowest recidivism rate in the nation. Correctional officers have taken a lead role in implementing evidence-based practices and preparing offenders for successful life outside the correctional system. Reentry preparation begins with an offender's first contact with the VADOC.

St. Brides Correctional Center's Graphic Printing Instructor Keric Brown, together with his students, created the Department of Corrections poster for Correctional Officer Appreciation Week 2015.



### Check Out VADOC's CO Week Media Coverage

(click on a masthead below to see a story)



### Governor's Proclamation for Correctional Officers' Week

5/4/2015

WHEREAS, correctional officers are responsible for supervising offenders convicted of crimes and sentenced to serve time in a local or regional jail, or state correctional facility; and

WHEREAS, correctional officers are committed to ensuring public safety by supervising offender conduct and behavior to avoid conflicts and escapes, and maintaining security within the facility; and

WHEREAS, correctional officers are dedicated to protecting offenders while promoting positive behavior, attitudes, and skills which will improve the offenders' chances of becoming productive members of society when they are released from custody; and

WHEREAS, correctional officers are crucial to the statewide re-entry initiative and reducing recidivism, as they play a critical role in preparing offenders for successful assimilation into the community after release; and

WHEREAS, correctional officers strive to maintain a safe working and living environment in correctional facilities throughout the Commonwealth, often in the face of significant challenges and dangers; and

WHEREAS, Correctional Officers' Week offers an opportunity to acknowledge and honor Virginia's correctional officers for the important work they perform each day, and for the sacrifices they make to protect the citizens of our great Commonwealth;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Terence R. McAuliffe, do hereby recognize May 4-10, 2015, as CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS' WEEK in the COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

# Virginia Department of Corrections Marks Crime Victims' Rights Week: Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims

The Virginia Department of Corrections this week is holding events to recognize Crime Victims' Rights Week, which runs April 19 through April 25. This year, Virginia marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Virginia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights.

The theme for the 2015 National Crime Victims' Rights Week is Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims. The Victim Services Unit (VSU) of the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) provides notification assistance and referral services to victims of offenders in the custody of the Department.

"The Victim Services Unit works closely with crime victims to keep them informed regarding the status of the offenders who harmed them and to answer their questions about how the system works," said VADOC Director

Harold Clarke. "The VSU also educates our staff regarding victim awareness and works with offenders concerning the impact of crime – a vital component of our reentry efforts."

In 2014, more than 1,400 new victims were registered for notification through the VSU. Based on Virginia law, registered victims are notified of inmate transfer, work release, name change, escape, interstate compact, civil commitment, death, release, and parole. Additional services offered to victims include explanation of the criminal justice process, referrals, and the Victim/Offender Dialogue Program.

Reaffirming the Department's commitment to victims of crime, the VSU will offer training and information sessions to Department staff and other allied professionals this week. VSU is again hosting a poster challenge for

offenders, which encourages them to take responsibility for their actions and to focus on the impact of crime on victims.

Engaging Communities, Empowering Victims is a reminder of how critical victim advocacy continues to be for the millions of crime victims who are helped by it each year. For victims, VSU's services mean that they and their families are not alone to face the physical, mental, and financial devastation of crime without the services and support they need.

This week is also a reminder of the work still before us to collaborate, engage, and empower all those harmed by crime. Services the Virginia Department of Corrections provides to victims help to ensure a comprehensive healing environment for everyone.

## Crime Victims' Rights Week Poster Challenge Results

Thank you to all the facilities that participated in the poster contest this year! We were pleased to display posters from Greensville Work Center, Nottoway Correctional Center, Bland Correctional Center, Haynesville Correctional Center, Green Rock Correctional Center, Deerfield Correctional Center, River North Correctional Center, Brunswick Women's Pre-Release, Lawrenceville Correctional Center and Baskerville Correctional Center. All sites will receive a certificate of participation. Please join us in congratulating them all in their effort to support our theme of Engaging Communities: Empowering Victims. After a record breaking voting turnout, we would like to congratulate the following:



Accountability: Deerfield Correctional Center



Empathy: Lawrenceville Correctional Center

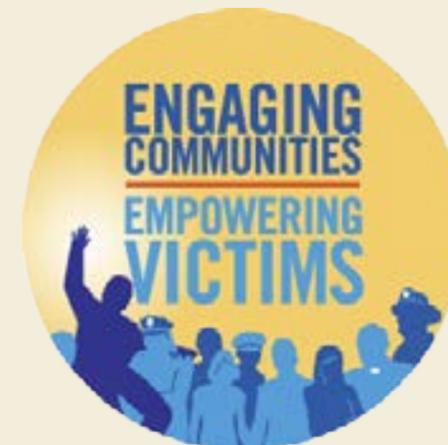


Best Representation of Theme: Nottoway Correctional Center



### Headquarters Hears From a Special Guest

On April 22, VADOC Victim Services presented Victim Offender Dialogue *VOD-A Victims Perspective*. Guest Tiffany Means, shown right with VADOC's Jessica Lee, spoke about her VOD experience with the offender who murdered her sister. The session offers a unique opportunity to learn about the Department's VOD Program. The 2015 National Crime Victims' Rights Week also marked the 20th anniversary of the Virginia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights. The program is sponsored by VINE.



## Offenders Follow Longstanding Virginia Tradition to Become Surveyor Assistants

Vocational students at Green Rock Correctional Center have found something they have in common with some of our nation's Founding Fathers – an aptitude for surveying.

Surveyors have a long and storied history in Virginia, and now offenders at Green Rock are taking steps to successfully reenter society by learning to be surveyor assistants.

The course combines the earliest surveyor tools, such as plum bobs and rods, with computer-aided drafting software, global positioning technology, and tripod total stations that collect critical data. With these tools, students define, measure and map boundaries of land, air and sea while aiding licensed surveyors. Virginia prison officials believe this is the only program of its kind in a prison setting.

The surveyor assistant program is in keeping with the agency's reentry efforts, which promote former offenders' successful reintegration into society. "This is a field that has good job opportunities," said instructor Christopher Golding. "This training coupled with hard work from the offenders will help these men become productive, tax-paying citizens."

The course usually takes less than one year to complete. Mr. Golding's high-achieving students advance to take a nationally-recognized test for survey technicians through the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS). Mr. Golding has graduated 141 students since the program began in 2008.

To gain practical experience, students concentrate their efforts on the facility's grounds. "We work in area behind the class

that is about 250 feet by 200 feet and simulate subdivisions, golf courses, roads and drainage systems," Mr. Golding said.

The class is served by a three-member advisory board that gives technical advice on the curriculum. "This class is a good idea because it allows the students to be productive," said advisory board member John Meise, Sr., who sells survey equipment for James River Laser & Equipment in Salem. "There is a high demand for surveyors and the guys that work in the field."

"In recent years, the profession has become more demanding and now requires a more technically proficient worker," Mr. Meise said. This class aims to meet that need.

Computer technology allows for enhanced mapping and greater survey accuracy. But perhaps more importantly, it allows for efficient information sharing. "It used to take three or four days to share this type of information. Now you can share it almost instantly," Mr. Meise said.

Surveyor assistant jobs around Virginia offer a starting pay of \$15 to \$25 per hour. "The market is coming out of the recession and starting to hit its stride. There is going to be a need for employees with this training," said advisory board member Rich Armstrong of Armstrong Land Surveying, Inc. in Gretna.

The students are following an example set by a pair of Virginia's most famous historical figures, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom began their careers as surveyors.



### Check Out VADOC's Surveyor Assistants' Media Coverage

(click on a masthead below to see a story)



STAR-TRIBUNE





## Dialogue, Learning Teams and Evidence Based Practice – How Do They Fit Together?

The Virginia Department of Corrections is committed to Evidence Based Practice (EBP), in common with many other State Departments of Corrections. Uniquely in Virginia, however, Learning Teams are being established to provide all staff with forums to learn and become adept at using EBP in everyday work situations. Many of these Learning Teams are being set up by using Dialogue skills, so it would probably help to consider how Dialogue, Learning Teams and EBP are related to each other.

Evidence Based Practice has two related meanings – one is more generally applicable, and the other is more specific to work with offenders and the reduction of recidivism. The more general meaning of Evidence Based Practice, that is also in use beyond Corrections, is relevant to all employees in the agency, whatever their role. It applies equally to staff in Atmore, ASD and in the field, whether you are in catering, finance, the Executive Team or work as a Correctional, Probation or Parole Officer. There are two main reasons why poor quality decisions are made in the work-place – habit and assumptions. Decisions that are habitual are the decisions we hardly think about because we are just doing what we always do, without checking whether they work or not, or are still relevant in our changing situations. Decisions that are based on assumptions are the ones we make by leaping to a conclusion without checking the facts with those involved. Poor quality decisions, that are either habitual or based on unchecked assumptions, perpetuate a culture of poor practice and ineffectual activity. You will encounter such decisions every day at work that affect you and others around you.

The Learning Teams are designed to help to change this. If instead you use Evidence Based Practice, and what you do is based on evidence (rather than assumption or habit) you will think about what you are doing and why. Instead of jumping to a conclusion, you will check things out. This will often include asking people about what they said or did and why, before coming to a conclusion and acting. Or you may need to look for observed or recorded data about the situation before you make a decision. Using data in this way leads you to be more effective. Of course it is your interpretation of the data that informs your decision, so care needs to be taken with the logic you use to interpret what you have heard. This is where Dialogue comes in. The Dialogue skills lead you to engage colleagues, listen to their views, support and challenge their reasoning and reinforce the rigour of good decision-making. This involves the use of Skilful Conversation and Dialogue in the Learning Teams so that as you engage with work colleagues you become more

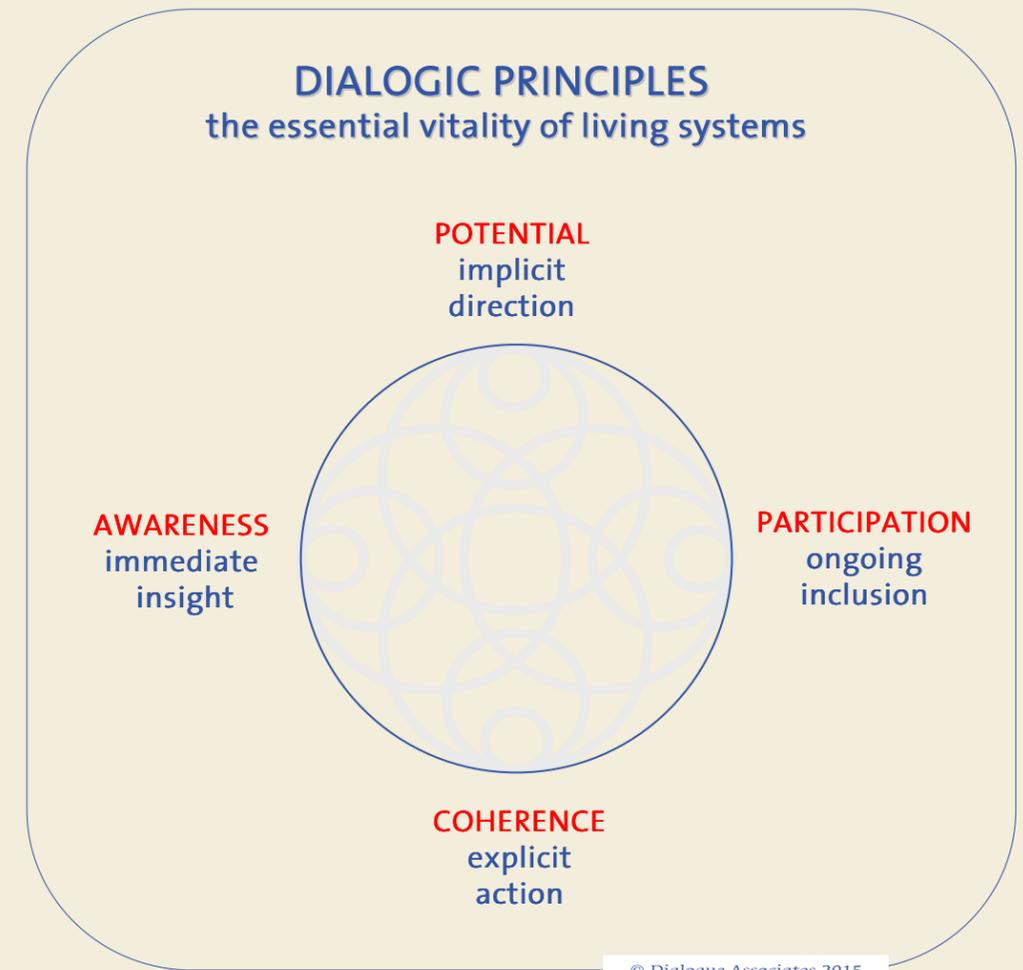
aware of the impact of decisions to act (or not act) in particular ways. This is a structured form of learning – and why they are called Learning Teams.

**Why use unchecked assumptions? Why talk about people behind their backs? If, whenever employees found themselves reacting to what they believe someone else did, they stopped - and asked them what they actually did, and why - the culture of the agency would be transformed overnight. This is an example of the power of EBP.**

The second meaning of EBP refers to the effectiveness of rehabilitative programs in reducing recidivism and is based on specific research data of re-offending rates over an extended period of time and with adequate numbers to be statistically valid. The largest such piece of research, by Dowden and Andrews, was published in the *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* in 2004 under the title 'The Importance of Staff Practice in Delivering Effective Correctional Treatment: A Meta-Analytic Review'. They took the broadest collection of available data, excluded punishment-based programs, and then used the remaining 273 separate sets of research studies in a meta-analysis. Their interest was not so much in the content of rehabilitative programs provided for offenders, but in the best practices and behaviours of staff delivering correctional treatment programs, and they used the Core Correctional Practices as a framework.

What they discovered about staff characteristics is that the largest single impact on reducing recidivism results from what they termed *Relationship Factors*. Programs delivered by staff without them on average reduced the rate of re-offending by 11%, but when the Relationship Factors were present this improved to an impressive reduction of 34%. The researchers found further factors of importance are effective modelling and reinforcement in a structured learning environment, and they point out that these “are relevant to both front-line correctional officers and correctional treatment providers alike”.

Relationship Factors refer to the interpersonal influence exerted by the correctional staff member. The relevant characteristics possessed by program staff were as follows: *warm, genuine, humorous, enthusiastic, self-confident, empathic, respectful, flexible, committed to helping the client, engaging, mature and intelligent*. When you stop to think about it, these are the typical qualities encountered in many good Dialogue sessions. Why? Because in the Dialogue Skills Trainings (DSTs) and the Learning Plans there are



## DIALOGUE, LEARNING TEAMS AND EBP (CONTINUED)

deliberate engagement skills (check-in, modes and check-out) that lead participants to be warm and enthusiastic. There are skills to enable the conversation to be purposeful and constructive (Dialogic Actions – move, follow, oppose, bystand) that lead to self-confidence and flexibility. Being genuine, empathic, respectful and mature are firmly anchored in the Dialogue skills (dialogic practices of voice, listening, respect) and the remaining Practice (suspension) leads to greater self-awareness, humour and intelligence. This is what the Dialogue skills are all about. This is why they dovetail so well with other EBP programs.

**Are people in your learning team warm, genuine, humorous, enthusiastic, self-confident, empathic, respectful, flexible, committed to helping offenders, engaging, mature and intelligent? If so there is evidence you are making good use of Dialogue. If not, instead of paying lip service, why not put the Dialogue skills into practice?**

Of course EBP takes many different forms. From a Dialogue Practitioner's stand point, the evidence they are seeking, on which to base their read of the effectiveness of any core practice is found by using Dialogic Principles as a framework. These Dialogic Principles refer to the live situation encountered, as against the policies, role definitions or the official line. They are the distillation of the other Dialogue skills into a measure of 'vitality'. They apply to a society or culture just as much as to an organisation, a team or any individual (including yourself). Here are examples of the kind of questions you might pose to gather evidence for systemic vitality, and therefore where to intervene to improve effectiveness:

**POTENTIAL** *How fully are you realising the potential inherent in your current situation?* The quality of your moves, voice and visionary energy are implicit in the answer.

**COHERENCE** *How aligned are your thoughts, words and actions, and do you do what you say you will do?* The quality of your opposes, respect and performance energy are implicit in the answer.

**PARTICIPATION** *How fully are you including others in realising their potential in the situation?* The quality of your follows, listening and citizen energy are implicit in the answer.

**AWARENESS** *How aware are you of what is happening in the moment, and therefore what is most relevant?* The quality of your bystands, suspension and wisdom energy are implicit in the answer.

**To gather some of your own evidence, why not raise these questions in your next team meeting and ask participants to consider the questions personally, and for the team as a whole?**

**Submitted by Peter Garrett**

## Dialogue: Building Trust at Work

*Below are some suggestions designed to promote dialogue and build trust.*

*What topics or issues would you like to suggest for an upcoming newsletter? Let us hear from you!*

### Improving What We Do

#### Dialogue Topics:

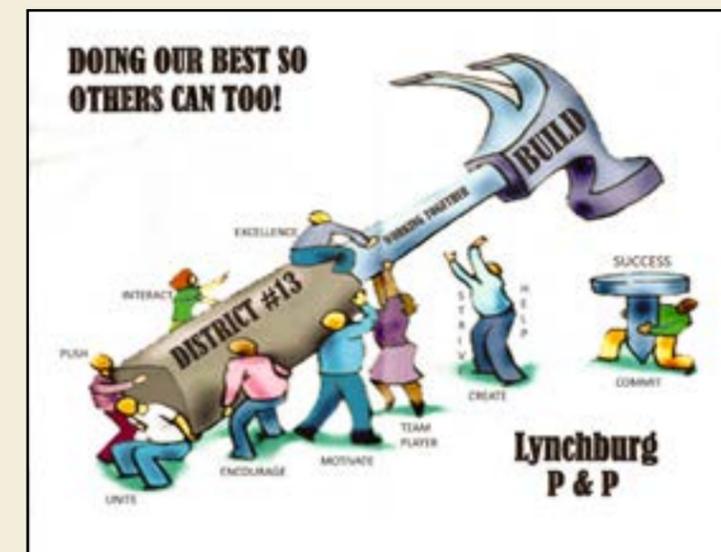
How can we fill the gap between where we are and where we could be? What small steps can you take to advance in that direction?

Think of an example of cooperation you witnessed recently. How can we work together in a more cooperative manner?

What are you doing to serve others? Stepping outside yourself to focus on others promotes your health as well as that of others.

Discuss ways to deal with stress and maintain a reliable response.

What are the issues that impact the work place? Focus on the issues and solutions rather than the personalities.



Lynchburg P&P recently unveiled a new Healing Environment initiative "Doing Our Best So Others Can Too!" A creative graphic illustrates the effort.

## VADOC Opens New Milking Center in Powhatan

A happy group gathered at the James River Dairy in Powhatan in early May to celebrate the Department of Corrections' new milking center which opened April 14. Construction on the center began in 2012.

The VADOC herd consists of approximately 170 cows and 190 replace-

ment dairy heifers. In 2014, the cows milked approximately 495,000 gallons of milk. The cows averaged approximately 8 lbs. (9.2 gallons) of milk per day in 2014. VADOC processes all milk for its herd and a herd of similar size owned by Virginia Tech.



**Cutting the Ribbon:** from left to right: Gene Schaeffer – Dairy/Farm Supervisor, Ed Ranck – Dairy/Farm Supervisor, Mark Engelke – DOC Food Service Director, Jeff Dillman – Warden State Farm Correctional Complex, Frank Baber – Director James River Agribusiness, Guy Neese - Dairy/Farm Supervisor, William Spott – VDACS, Ron Sopher – DOC A&E Services, John K. Raiford – DOC Agribusiness Director, Cookie Scott – Deputy Director of Administration, Mary Wilkerson - Central Region, Charlene Davis – Central Region, Arden Davis – VDACS, Robert Trimmer – VDACS



## Virginia Department of Corrections Celebrates Recycling Efforts on Earth Day

As Virginians around the Commonwealth celebrated Earth Day, the Virginia Department of Corrections continued to position itself as a statewide leader in recycling efforts. In 2014, the Department collected 1,100 tons of cardboard, paper, plastic, aluminum, tin and stretch film.

“As a public safety agency, we strive to improve the quality of life in the Commonwealth, and one simple but effective way to contribute is by recycling,” said Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) Director Harold Clarke. “We strive to be innovative and progressive in every area we touch, relying on evidence-based practices and current research. Recycling is a natural extension of what we do.”

Among the Department’s shining stars in 2014’s recycling efforts was Central Virginia Unit #13 in Chesterfield. The correctional unit stepped up its recycling efforts in earnest about two years ago. In 2012, the facility recycled 14.96 tons. The next year, that number increased to 16 tons, and last year, Unit #13 managed to recycle nearly 20 tons of material.

### Greenville Holds Resource Fair

On April 28, Greenville Correctional Center held a job resource fair. Returning citizens met and talked with a variety of community partners including potential employers from around Virginia. During this event, returning citizens gained skills that will enable them secure and sustain gainful employment.

More than 45 community partners and approximately 150 returning citizens attended the event. The workshops and resource-career fair were coordinated by the Offender Workforce Development Specialist Leo Akujuobi.

In preparation for the resource-career fair, returning citizens participated in a more issue-oriented and intense “employment and money management” workshops that took place on April 7 and April 14, respectively, featuring experts from Goodwill Industries and

“The key to Central Virginia Unit #13’s success is the hard working employees that have developed, implemented, and sustained an effective recycling program. Unit #13 is a small unit, and its success shows what a few determined people can do,” said Courtney Cotton, VADOC’s Recycling and Sustainability Coordinator.

Among the Department’s other outstanding efforts in 2014 are those of Bland Correctional Center, which went from collecting only a little more than one-tenth of a ton in 2012 to more than 19 tons in 2013 and a whopping 34.7 tons in 2014.

Sussex I and Sussex II state prisons, among the first prisons in Virginia to establish recycling programs, have continued their leading roles as well. “They have consistently since 2010 recycled 54-66 tons of recyclables per institution per year,” said Cotton. “We have learned from our experiences at the Sussex facilities. Many of our recycling efforts around the state are based on successes and lessons learned from Sussex I and II,” Cotton said.

Wells Fargo. “These events offered our returning citizens great opportunities to learn and prepare for the challenges that await them when they return to their communities,” Mr. Akujuobi said.



## Appalachian Detention Center Gives Back



Submitted by Lisa B. Hubbard

On Saturday, April 11 in Bluefield, it was a day of new beginnings.

Habitat for Humanity along with the family Taylor, and Appalachian Detention Center’s Greg Stoots, Mike Stoots, Rodney Whited and the ADC detainees made a new beginning possible for the Taylors: Mike, his wife Nancy and their 20 year old son Joseph.

Bob White, the building contractor for Habitat for Humanity, stated they “can’t build without the Appalachian Detention Center detainees.” Mr. White stated the detainees were fantastic and had good working skills, and he could not say enough in appreciation of the detainees and the dedication of the Appalachian Detention Center staff.

The detainees of Appalachian Detention Center all stated that it was a learning experience, and many

gained new skills in flooring, plumbing and applying vinyl siding. These are skills they can take with them when returning to society. Many of the detainees with existing skills used those skills to teach their fellow workers. This was the first time in their lives any of the detainees had ever participated in any community service and all the detainees stated they felt good helping others in need ,and if given the opportunity they would like to do so again.

Following the home commencement, Mike and Nancy had a recommitment ceremony as well. It was a day of happiness, thankfulness and overwhelming joy in the home and a hope for a new future. This is a wonderful example of working together and the Healing Environment initiative at Appalachian Detention Center: “All Together Let’s Go.”



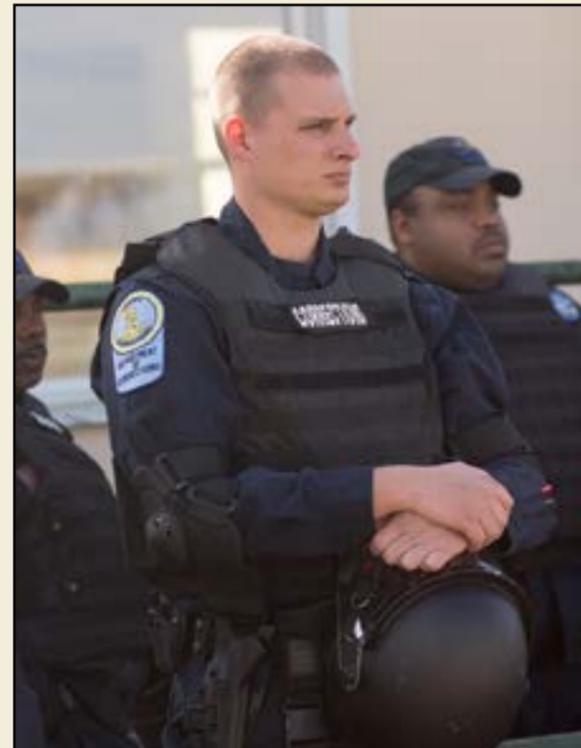


## Practice Makes Perfect

On April 16, VADOC held a quarterly training at James River Correctional Center. Activities during the day-long event included: marshaling area operations, baton training, using restraints, riot formations, perimeter set up, hostage negotiations, and tactical team tactics.

As part of the activities, selected participants were exposed to a short burst of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC), a substance used to quell disturbances.

Drill participants defused a large, full-scale scenario consisting of a riot that then ended in a hostage scenario which they successfully negotiated by applying VADOC tactics, policies and procedures. Special thanks to all, including many food service staff who assisted in making this a successful event.





## ACC Team Shows Oneness During Medical Emergency

Submitted by: **Oliva Woodson**

On March 17, staff from Augusta Correctional Center demonstrated exceptional teamwork and oneness to save an offender's life.

The offender collapsed on the recreation field; he had no pulse and his breathing was irregular. Security staff immediately started CPR until medical staff arrived with the defibrillator. Different staff performed CPR, switching out as needed.

The offender was transported to the hospital via helicopter. He was revived as a result of the quick response and treatment by security and medical staff.

Augusta Correctional Center staff continues to rise above.

Special thanks to: Sgt. Chantel Lucio, Sgt. David Redman, Sgt. Drayton Tuttle, C/O Jeremy Diaz, Steve Nuffer, Misty Skelding, Wendy Gibson, Karen Fujiwara, Faith Simmons, Chelsea Lockard, Virginia Damen, Shannon Thomas, and all the staff that provided assistance.



## P&P Districts Promote Oneness With Correctional Center Tour

Submitted by: **Cassandra McKoy**

On April 28, Probation and Parole Officers from District 35, 11, and 25 took a tour of Coffeewood Correctional Center.

Reentry SPO Cassandra McKoy of District 35 and SPO Brandon Daisy of District 11 arranged for the tour to happen and Reentry Counselors Darrell Estes and Jason Frazier of Coffeewood led the tour of the facility.

District 11 was represented SPO Brandon Daisy, POs Angie Swanson and Michele Getz.

District 25 was represented by SPO Kristin Hauswirth, PO Kimberly Hobson, OSA Dorothy Reed, and a volunteer with their district Sabrina Allsbury.

District 35 was represented by SPO Cassandra McKoy, POs Louis Nokes, Essica Holcomb, David Marzalek, Pau-

lette Shoope, Sean McAuliffe, William Burley, Sharnee Eure, and OSS Judy Bauer.

The tour consisted of attending the two morning Cognitive Community meetings (AMD) followed by a tour of the facility. We ended the day with a dialogue session between all participants about each other's responsibilities and how we can best support each other in our job duties. We focused on understanding how our roles impact the continuum of services in the Reentry Initiative. We started at 8 a.m. and finished around 12:30 p.m.

All who participated stated that the tour was worthwhile and that they would recommend other POs and District staff attend a tour. This was an excellent example of the "We Are One" motto and the need to continue to make connections.

## ServSafe Now Taught at Headquarters



In late March, VADOC expanded its reentry training efforts to offer ServSafe classes for offenders working in the Almost Home Café at VADOC Headquarters in Richmond.

ServSafe is a comprehensive food safety training program that offers a five-year certification sponsored by the National Restaurant Association. ServSafe covers nine main areas of the flow of food: proper purchasing, receiving, storing, preparing, cooking, holding, cooling, reheating and serving food items while promoting excellence and professionalism. “This expands our offering of ServSafe training and, in turn, helps our students become more employable upon release,” said Food Services Director Matthew Partridge, shown above.

Five students are completing a five-week course studying with Mr. Partridge and Food Service Supervisor and Instructor Freda Booker, shown left.

## Sussex Community Gets Cutting-Edge Radio System

On April 9, Sussex I and Sussex II state prisons, with representatives from the County of Sussex, the City of Petersburg, VITA, and other VADOC staff joined with Harris Communications for a ceremony celebrating the new radio communication system.

The new approach involves community collaboration with multiple stakeholders establishing a cutting-edge approach with interoperability that enhances public safety. “This system was initially a VADOC project, but it will be shared with the surrounding community and enhance safety operations for the entire area,” said B&G Director for Sussex I & II Steve White.



**From left to right:** Rory Gledhill – Harris Corporation –Program Manager, RJ Campbell – DOC – Atmore, David Warner – VITA - Spectrum Management Public Safety Communications, Chuck Spruill – Harris Corporation Sales Rep., Andre Jones – Major-Sussex II, Keith Davis – Warden-Sussex I State Prison, Anthony Price – B & G Superintendent Sussex II, Eric Ward – Harris Corporation – Systems Engineer, Joycetine Boone – Assistant Warden Sussex I, Steve White – B & G Director, Sussex I and Sussex II (received special recognition for superior service to the radio project), Wendall Pixley – Warden - Sussex II State Prison, Eddie Vick – Public Safety Officer – Sussex County, David Robinson – Chief of Corrections Operations, Mark Milazzo – Division Chief Deputy Emergency Coordinator – City Of Petersburg, James Thurston – DOC – Atmore – Land Acquisition and Property Management Agent, Bruce Bowles - B & G Superintendent Sussex I, George Hinkle – Regional Operations Chief

## Wellness Program Aims to Help Virginia Offenders Improve Health

*State faces aging prison population with chronic medical conditions*

A wellness program initially targeted to older Virginians is helping offenders at five Virginia correctional facilities learn to manage their chronic diseases and improve their well-being.

Since late 2012, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of Corrections have collaborated with local area agencies on aging to offer wellness programs to nearly 300 adult offenders at the Bland, Coffeewood, Deep Meadow, Powhatan (now closed), and Pocahontas correctional facilities.

On April 17, April Holmes, DARS' coordinator of prevention programs; Elisabeth M. Thornton of the Virginia Department of Corrections; and Joan S. Welch of Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging, will discuss the program at the [Southern Gerontological Society's](#) annual meeting in Williamsburg.

Virginia's offenders are older, sicker and remain incarcerated longer than ever. About one-third have at least one chronic health condition. Between fiscal year 2010-2011, offsite, non-prescription health care expenses for Virginia's offenders rose \$8.7 million. Corrections officials are searching for innovative ways to respond to this issue.

"The wellness information the participants learned and the problem-solving techniques they shared are valuable not only while they serve their sentences but for when they re-enter society," said DARS Commissioner Jim Rothrock. "As one offender told us, 'the lessons you all have taught me will last a lifetime.'"

The Commonwealth's collaboration is an outgrowth of "[You Can! Live Well, Virginia!](#)," DARS' chronic disease self-management education program, which in a five-year partnership with area agencies on aging has helped more than 8,000 Virginians learn to better manage their health issues.

"Offenders often come into prison with long-standing health problems that need to be addressed," said Virginia Department of Corrections Director Harold Clarke. "This program helps offenders with chronic conditions take charge of their own well-being, contributing to better health outcomes while they're incarcerated and successful re-entry into their communities when they're released."

The federally funded "You Can! Live Well, Virginia!" program consists of weekly 2 1/2 hour sessions held by trained leaders. Over a six-week period, adults with chronic illnesses such as asthma, arthritis, diabetes and heart disease learn to better manage their conditions. Offenders, for example, were asked to identify specific health concerns and the problems they can cause. Participants learning about healthy eating kept a diary of their diet and then discussed what they learned about the food choices they make while in prison.

The wellness program saw 283 offenders attend at least one workshop, while 222 offenders, or 78 percent, attended at least four – roughly the same percentage among participants in Virginia's general public, according to DARS' Holmes.

"You Can! Live Well, Virginia!" is the statewide name for several disease self-management programs developed by [Stanford University](#). DARS plans to apply this spring for a new federal grant to study whether the workshop lowers the rates at which participants who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid use local emergency rooms.

Virginia's initial success led to several popular spinoffs such as workshops specifically for older adults with diabetes and versions offered in Spanish, Korean and other languages. Programs for cancer survivors and for chronic pain self-management will be offered in some areas. Young adults and staff at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, which provides vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities, participate in workshops held at the campus in Augusta County.

Click [here](#) to watch a video of Joshua Richardson, a cognitive counselor at Bland Correctional Center, talk about the program and its success for the offenders with whom he worked.



Elisabeth Thornton

## Sussex II Cognitive Community Graduation

On Friday, April 11, Sussex II State Prison held a cognitive community commencement celebration to recognize those returning citizens who are preparing to transition from incarceration to freedom.



State Senator Rosalyn Dance served as the keynote speaker offering words of encouragement and sharing her journey to success. During the celebration the returning citizens wore neckties to signify their upcoming transition to society, and many program participants shared poems and elaborated on their appreciation for the program.

Family members of the returning citizens were present to share in the day's events.

Also, many staff members were present such as Assistant Warden Mack Bailey, Major Andre Jones, Chief of Housing and Programs Robyn Wallace, as well as Cognitive Program Manager Jessica Lee and Reentry's Carolyn LeCroy.

Sussex II State Prison is the highest security level (level four) cognitive community

program that exists in the Department. The program follows the cognitive community model and offers programming and structure as the returning citizens prepare for release.

During the ceremony, Officer Travis Coleman was pinned as treatment officer for the phase I (pre cognitive community). Treatment Officer Coleman has completed all requirements for the post assignment such as cognitive community staff training, facilitating staff and offender groups/programs, Thinking for A Change and additional curriculum trainings. Treatment Officer Coleman was pinned by Major Jones and Cognitive Program Manager Lee.



Left to right: Treatment Officer Nataya Leach, Senator Rosalyn Dance, Assistant Warden Mack Bailey, Cognitive Program Manager Jessica Lee, Chief of Housing and Programs Robyn Wallace and Major Andre Jones

# Scenes from Kates Day 2015

*Annual Event Held May 6th at Virginia Correctional Center for Women Remains Popular*



## VADOC Educators Shine at National Conference in Denver

### *Presentation Focuses on Servant Leadership in a Correctional Setting*

Two VADOC educators received an enthusiastic response to their presentation at a national adult conference held April 22-24 in Denver.

Dr. Alana Simmons and Latosha Branch focused on servant leadership in their presentation during the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference 2015.

Dr. Simmons and Ms. Branch, VADOC Educational Testers from the western and eastern regions, respectively, presented "I Care and Am Willing to Serve: Uncovering Servant Leadership in Virginia's Correctional Education Classroom."

Their presentation followed the publication of a related article in the [Journal of Prison Education and ReEntry](#).

"There are many texts on the subject of servant leadership with respect to the business community and religion. However, this leadership model has yet to be thoroughly explored in the adult correctional education system. Our marginalized student population exemplifies the need to further explore the phenomenon of servant leadership," Dr. Simmons said.

Dr. Simmons and Ms. Branch were pleased with the feedback they received at the conference.

"All of our attendees reported that our presentation should have been offered on the first day of the conference and that the presentation should have been made available to ALL attendees at the conference (as an opening session). Several attendees suggested that we continue our research on servant leadership in correctional education via a multi-state, empirical study," Dr. Simmons said. "Other than our article that was recently published in the [Journal of Prison Education and ReEntry](#), there has been NO other correlation between servant leadership and correctional education in the literature."

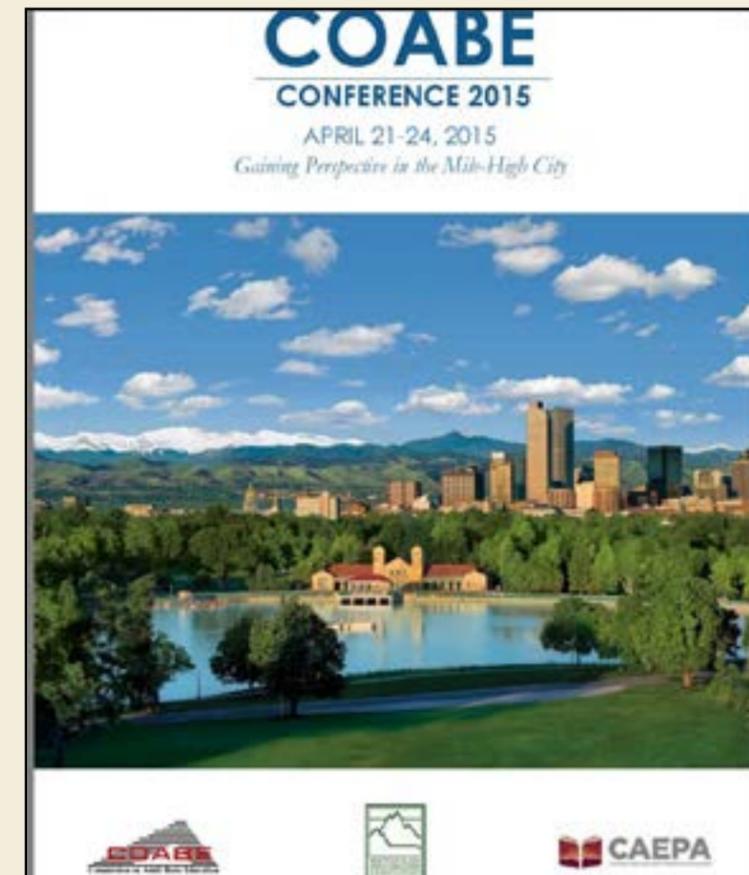
Dr. Simmons said she and Ms. Branch are extremely grateful for the encouragement they have received in their study of servant leadership. "We would especially like to thank Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Anita Prince, who has been very supportive of our research endeavors. We are grateful to have the support of the Department as we move forward with this project." The pair is working on a research proposal for a multi-state, empirical study that will measure the relationship between servant leadership and correctional education. Also they are seeking to publish their article in another professional journal.



**Latosha Branch**



**Dr. Alana Simmons**



## Horses Bring Hope to Offenders

The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF) at James River welcomed the public to its annual Open Barn event on Sunday, April 26 at James River Work Center. Current program participants told guests that they had found, in the words of one offender who spoke, “hope to become suc-

cessful.” Guests included four program graduates, shown lower left, who are now living in their communities and Peter Farrell, Virginia House of Delegates, 56<sup>th</sup> District, in the upper right photo, center, with framed proclamation.





## St. Brides Holds Cognitive Community Graduation

On April 17, St. Brides Correctional Center celebrated the Cognitive Community's members who were to release the following week and in the near future. Pictured from left to right are: SBCC Reentry staff Cognitive Counselors Christopher Walton, Michelle Jackson, Matrix Counselor Dawn Garcia, CMC SR LaWana Johnson, Unit Manager Clark Carpino, Chief of Operations David Robinson, Cognitive Manager Jessica Lee, Director Harold Clarke, SBCC CMC Kenneth Austin, Assistant Warden Rick White, CMC LeWanda Johnson, CMC SR Breanna Matthews (General Population) and Matrix Counselor Laverne Bruce.

## Employees Appreciated: Ice Cream Social



To celebrate Employee Appreciation Week, May 3-9, Headquarters held an ice cream social on May 6, featuring scooped sorbet and ice cream served up by, among others, Human Resources' Paul Broughton and Kathy Lassiter. To all who work for the Department of Corrections, we offer a big THANK YOU!

## VADOC CommonHealth Efforts Recognized



Virginia's Secretary of Administration Nancy Rodrigues, left, stopped by the Virginia Department of Corrections Headquarters on May 7 to praise the efforts of VADOC's CommonHealth Coordinators, Pat Waskey, third from left, and James Schrecengost, fifth from left. From left are, Secretary Rodrigues, Ms. Waskey's supervisor Felicia Stretcher, Ms. Waskey, CommonHealth Regional Coordinator Craig Hicken, Mr. Schrecengost, and his supervisor Tom Young.



Catch VADOC in the News!



**Offenders Bounce Back Thanks to Survey Program:** Point of Beginnings, a national magazine for surveyors, interviewed VADOC Surveying Instructor Chris Golding.



**Following a Virginia Tradition:** The American Surveyor took note of the Surveyor Assistants program at Green Rock Correctional Center.



**Giving Back:** Doris Buffett, sister of financial guru Warren Buffett, made a generous donation to Germanna Community College, a school noted for helping inmates at nearby Coffeewood Correctional Center.



**Victims' Rights Week:** Read about the Department's efforts as noted by CorrectionsOne.com.



**Recycling Efforts:** VADOC continues to position itself as a statewide leader in recycling. Correctional News noted the Department's efforts to promote best practices system-wide.



**Putting the Best Foot Forward:** The Department's recycling efforts are successfully reducing VADOC's carbon footprint. WVIR NBC 29 picked up on the story.



**Horses and Offenders Get a Second Chance:** Thoroughbred horses put out to pasture get a new lease on life and offer offenders the same. Read about it in The Richmond Times-Dispatch.



**VADOC Celebrates Correctional Officers' Week:** Readers across Virginia's media landscape and beyond learned about Correctional Officers' Week following the distribution of an Associated Press story. Read it in The Chicago Tribune.



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.