

Hotline

NEWS IN CORRECTIONS

A recent report by the **Pew Center on the States** revealed that one in 100 adults in the United States is behind bars. The report also examined the impact of rising prison populations on state budgets. According to the report, Minnesota spends 2.7 percent of the state's general fund budget on corrections, far less than the national average of 6.8 percent. In fact, only Alabama spends less.

The Pew report also stated that the rate of increase for prison costs was six times greater than for higher education spending. Minnesota spends just 17 cents on prisons for every \$1 spent on higher education, the least of any state. Vermont spends the most at \$1.37 for prisons for every \$1 for higher education. The full report is available at www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/One%20in%20100.pdf.

Randy Feldsien, a special teacher at the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Shakopee, has been named the **2008 Minnesota Teacher of the Year** by the Corrections Education Association. Feldsien teaches GED classes and has developed a math class for students who have earned their GED but need to improve their skills to participate in vocational or college programs. He has worked as a teacher at Shakopee since 2001 where he previously served as a correctional officer. Feldsien will now compete for the regional teacher of the year award, to be decided in April.

The **Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan** (MCORP) is a pilot project of the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) that uses evidence-based practices to develop case plans for offenders. These plans are used to guide case management both inside the institution and once the offender is released into the community. In January, case managers at Minnesota prisons and supervising agents in three pilot counties began working with a select group of offenders to develop individualized plans. By working collaboratively to address barriers to successful reentry, such as employment, housing or family reunification, the project aims to create a seamless transition for the offender to rejoin the community and reduce the likelihood that the offender will return to prison. For additional informa-

tion about MCORP, visit www.forums.doc.state.mn.us/mcorp/default.aspx.

Many state correctional facilities held **graduation ceremonies** in January and February to recognize inmate educational achievements. Educational programming is part of the DOC's effort to provide offenders with opportunities to make changes in their lives that can help them successfully reenter the community, thereby reducing recidivism. This winter, more than 200 offenders received their GED or high school diploma. Vocational certificates in cabinetmaking, welding, barbering and other programs were also awarded to more than 225 offenders.

Updated adult **inmate profile information** is now available on the DOC website. The profile includes statistics about the number of offenders in each facility, admissions and releases, offense type, education level and average age. The department updates this information bi-annually. A profile of juvenile offenders at the MCF-Red Wing is also available. To view the profiles, visit www.doc.state.mn.us/aboutdoc/stats/Default.htm.

More than 500 people attended a **job fair** at the MCF-Faribault on March 13. People came from as far away as Hinckley to learn about career opportunities at the facility in human resources, health services, education, behavioral health, security and maintenance. The job fair was held to fill approximately 200 new positions created by an ongoing expansion project at the facility.

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) now offers **podcasts** on its website. A podcast is a pre-recorded program broadcast over the internet for playback on a computer or portable media player. Current programs include an interview with a representative of the Maryland State Department of Education Reentry Mobile Unit and a program on the activities of the National Correctional Industries Association. NIC podcasts can be downloaded at www.nicic.org/owdpodcasts.



Volunteers of America of Minnesota has produced *Prostitution: Beyond the Myths*, a documentary that follows three women who have lived and successfully gotten out of the lifestyle. The film features an approach by a recovery program to help women get out of prostitution. The documentary recently won two regional awards and is available online at www.amazon.com.

DOC STAFF CHANGES

At the MCF-Oak Park Heights, Associate Warden/Operations **Mark Thielen** has accepted a one-year mobility to work on American Indian programming for the DOC. **Kent Grandlienard**, associate warden/administration, is on mobility to the associate warden/operations position.

OPENINGS

U.S. Pretrial Services has an opening for a full-time, permanent **Systems Technology Administrator**. Candidates must have a B.A. and a minimum of three years computer-related experience. The position also requires extensive knowledge of computer hardware and software, network administration, database design and virtual private networks. To apply, submit a cover letter and resume to Administrative Manager, U.S. Courthouse, Suite 516, 220 South 4th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415 or by e-mail to hr-usps@mnpt.uscourts.gov. Contact Marina Contreras Mentzos at 612/664-5440 with questions. The position is open until filled.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The MCF-Red Wing will host the 26th annual **Field Services conference** *Hurt, Damaged, Broken: Working with Youth in Corrections* on May 8-9, 2008. The two-day event will include sessions such as Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement, Traumatic Brain Injury, MySpace and Technology of Today, and Self-Protection and Personal Safety. The deadline for early registration is April 25. For more information, contact Judi Mickelson at 651/267-3672.

Unlock the Mystery: Managing Mental Health from Corrections to Community, the **National Mental Health Conference**, will be held June 23-25, 2008, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Presented by the Indiana DOC, the conference will spotlight solutions for managing the growing number of mentally ill, substance abuse and

sex offender populations within the adult male, adult female and juvenile populations in jails and prisons. Additional information about registration and conference details is available at www.in.gov/indcorrection/unlockingthemystery/index.htm.

The **2008 National Institute of Justice Conference** will be held in Arlington, Virginia July 21-23. The conference brings together criminal justice scholars and practitioners at the local, state and federal levels to share the most recent findings from research and technology. Registration for this event is free. Visit www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/events/nij_conference/welcome.htm or contact Maria Young at 301/650-8660 ext. 136 for more information.

The **Minnesota Community Corrections Association** will host a motorcycle ride and poker run on Saturday, May 17. Riders will begin at the DOC Central Office and travel to the MCF-Lino Lakes, MCF-Rush City, MCF-Stillwater and end at the MCF-Oak Park Heights. At each stop, riders can pay \$1 to receive a playing card. The rider with the best poker hand at the end of the ride will receive \$100. Registration is \$35 and includes lunch and a *Reentry Ride for Freedom* t-shirt. For more information, contact Dan Cain, RS Eden, at 612/287-1611.