

Hotline

Nov 15-22 is
National Restorative
Justice Week



CORRECTIONS NEWS

The **Minnesota Corrections Association** (MCA) held its fall training institute October 28-29 in St. Cloud. Corrections Commissioner Joan Fabian opened the institute by welcoming attendees from all jurisdictions and encouraging them to continue their joint efforts to address correctional issues. Session topics included victim services, juvenile justice, court testimony, de-escalation skills, and more. The first day closed with an awards ceremony honoring corrections programs and professionals for their work:

– **Andy Doom**, northern regional manager of field services for the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), was named *Corrections Person of the Year*. This award recognizes outstanding contributions in the field of corrections by an individual. Doom has worked in corrections since 1971 and is an expert on community supervision delivery systems and special supervision programs. Because of his knowledge and expertise, Doom is highly sought for committee work across the state. He is looked to by many as a mentor and teacher.

– *Professional Achievement Awards* were presented to two individuals. Facility recipient **Terry “Sully” Sullivan** is a captain at the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-Togo. He was recognized for 27 years of meaningful work with youth as well as his leadership as director of the Challenge Incarceration Program for women at Togo. Sullivan is a driver of new ideas and ways of operating and is respected by staff and offenders alike.

The community recipient, Hennepin County Intensive Supervised Release agent **Bobbie Chevalier-Jones**, supervises offenders with significant mental disabilities or conduct disorders and is able to build rapport with those on her caseload. Her exceptional communication skills, humanity, and caring make her a role model for clients and peers.

– *President’s Awards* are given to programs, resources, or facilities working in the broad field of corrections and criminal justice that demonstrate creativity, resourcefulness, effectiveness, and innovation. **MCF-Faribault’s Anything’s Pawsable** dog training pro-

gram is a partnership between the facility and Hearing & Service Dogs of Minnesota (HSDM). Dogs are trained by offenders in the prison’s minimum-security unit (who have been trained by HSDM). They take great pride in this activity and its contribution toward changing the lives of the disabled people with whom the dogs are matched.

Deb and Gary Forsman, licensed through PATH, were honored for providing quality foster care to more than 350 adolescent boys in the last 30 years. The Forsmans have developed an innovative curriculum that sets them apart as a specialized foster care home. The Forsmans were also instrumental in founding Village Ranch in Cokato, which has served more than 1,250 teens to date.

Brown County Teen Court was recognized for its excellence as the longest-running teen court in the state, operating since 1998. **Mary Ann Wonn**, court restorative justice specialist, was honored for her work that strives to provide fair, just, and appropriate consequences through a “peer jury” model for teens who violate the law.

– **John Manecke**, Hennepin County Community Corrections probation/parole officer, received the *Board of Directors Award* for exemplary service to MCA. Manecke has been an active MCA member since 1970 and has never missed a fall conference (this was his 39th!). He has served on the MCA legislative committee for the past 12 years and monitors criminal justice issues during each state legislative session.

Minnesota Criminal Sentencing Enhancements Highlights has been updated to reflect law changes from the 2009 session. This document is available at www.doc.state.mn.us/publications/documents/10-09Sentencingenhancements.pdf.

Conflict competency is an indispensable component to creating and maintaining a positive work environment. Through the Integrated Conflict Management System (ICMS), DOC staff are offered training on and informal options for managing conflict. October 15 was **National Conflict**



Resolution Day. ICMS teams commemorated the day in unique ways. The MCF-Faribault offered staff thank-you cards and displayed a banner; Rush City organized a “pay it forward” concept, asking staff to demonstrate random acts of kindness; Red Wing designated a cornerstone employee of the week; Stillwater displayed a large candy message board for staff as well as literature and posters; Lino Lakes hung posters and created a flyer with tips for a positive workplace; central office hung posters; Togo sponsored a poetry contest; and Willow River/Moose Lake posted a message for employees about the significance of staff to each other.

The DOC has been awarded a **National Institute of Corrections grant** as part of its Transition from Prison to the Community initiative. The grant will provide technical assistance to analyze offender reentry efforts over three years. The DOC is working to integrate case management and reentry efforts using evidence-based best practices. Minnesota was one of just six states to receive the grant. More information about the initiative is available at www.nicic.gov/TPCRound2.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services was recently awarded a **Federal Housing and Human Services grant** in partnership with the DOC. Grant funding is 95 percent federal; none is from nongovernmental sources. The grant focuses on improving parent identification, child support identification/enforcement, and improving automated family demographic information-sharing between the two agencies and county child support offices. This one-year grant, with the possibility of renewal, targets selected offenders released from the MCF-Faribault to Hennepin and Ramsey Counties.

The DOC’s reentry services unit has compiled a new **Offender Housing Handbook** for 2009. It provides a directory of housing options available to offenders reentering the community. To view the directory, visit www.doc.state.mn.us/publications/documents/HousingDirectory-October2009.pdf.

The **waste reduction project** at the MCF-Rush City has gained attention from other state agencies. The DOC’s green belt team, consisting of Flore Allen (Oak Park Heights), Steve Forrest (Rush City), Kelly Hagen (Moose Lake), Terri Hamernick (Shakopee), and Julie Schmidt (MINNCOR Industries) piloted the program in February 2008. At the 18-month mark, solid waste had been reduced by 30.6 percent. The group was asked to present its findings to legislative staff and at the annual state managers conference.

Jennifer Johnson has been appointed to the Minnesota State Government **Geospatial Advisory Council**. Johnson is a senior research analyst specialist in DOC field services. The new council, authorized by legislation passed this year, advises the Minnesota Geospatial Information office (MnGeo) about issues, policies, priorities, and investments needed to improve state government services through the use of geospatial technology. MnGeo was established in May 2009 as the first state agency with legislatively-defined responsibility for coordinating geographic information systems.

STAFF CHANGES

Mark Thielen has been appointed warden of MCF-Faribault. Thielen began his corrections career in 1978 as a corrections counselor. He moved through the ranks and in 1996 was named associate warden of operations at the MCF-Stillwater. In 2000, he was named to the same position at Oak Park Heights. In 2008, he became the co-project manager of an initiative to increase American Indian cultural programming within Minnesota correctional facilities. In June of 2009, he returned to Stillwater as associate warden of operations. Thielen’s appointment is effective November 13. He succeeds Connie Roehrich who is retiring after 35 years of service.

Greg Smith has been named associate warden of operations at the MCF-Rush City. Smith began his corrections career in 1986 as a corrections officer at Oak Park Heights. He was promoted to corrections security caseworker in 1992 and to career caseworker in 1999. That same year, Smith transferred to the Rush City facility as the discipline unit supervisor. In 2003, he was promoted to corrections program director. In 2006, Smith was named associate warden of administration. He succeeds Bruce Reiser who was recently named warden at Rush City.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Minnesota Community Corrections Association’s (MCCA) **Pioneers in Corrections: Looking Back (and Forward) at Our History** will be held November 20 from 9 a.m.-noon at the DOC’s central office in St. Paul. Training is free for MCCA members or \$30 for non-members. For registration information, visit www.mnmcca.com/Default.aspx?pageId=200731&eventId=93635&EventViewMode=2&CalendarViewType=0&SelectedDate=10/21/2009.