

Message from the Chairwoman



*Andrea W. Evans
Chairwoman & CEO*

remarks at the conference, requested by some of our staff, are on page four of this newsletter.

Our pilot program to determine how the use of graduated sanctions for releasees will best fit into our supervision model is progressing in Buffalo. Our officers are currently tracking approximately 1000 cases under the model and will be reviewing the outcomes over a number of months. We are getting feedback from officers and aligning our technology and caseloads. Looking forward, we will analyze the data and begin to roll-out the program statewide.

After the success of our ride-along project in which the executive team and Board members spent a day with parole officers we have decided to expand the program in a new direction. In March, we will host our first ever "Shadow Day" project for parole officers and senior parole officers statewide. Officers will spend a day with the people who operate the Division behind-the-scenes including upper level

management, department heads and administrators who support the vital work that PO's do, day in and day out. This kind of program is an excellent way to begin training our frontline staff to grow into leadership roles within the agency.

Based on current projections it appears that we will have another challenging year financially, however I am confident that we will be able to continue our work successfully and with the same dedication to excellence that we have always provided to the people of New York State.

The work you perform each day as a representative of the New York State Division of Parole is such a vital component of public/community safety.

All things considered, your own safety is of the utmost importance. Please remain vigilant in the course of your day, no matter how routine things may appear to be to you.

Stay safe!

Andrea W. Evans

Happy New Year! The last few months have been busy ones as the Division began to put a number of projects into motion that will ultimately lead to more focused supervision and safer communities.

In December, a number of staff attended and participated in an intensive 3-day event focused on "Community Safety Through Successful Transition from Prison to the Community" in Saratoga. This joint effort between DCJS, DOCS, and DOP is the result of a successful application to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. They provided support for the event, as part of a national project to assist states on reentry issues. A copy of my opening

Parole Board Rides Along

During October and November, managers and Board members participated in ride-alongs with parole officers.



Parole Officer Nick Pezdek and Board member G. Kevin Ludlow as they commenced their field visits in the City of Utica.

The goal was for them to get an understanding of what happens to individuals who leave prison and how the conditions imposed by the Board affect supervision. In early November the Board also attended a full day training session in Albany to update the Board on agency-wide initiatives currently underway including graduated sanctions as well as discuss recent changes to laws effecting parole supervision.



Parole officer Dean Decker gave Board member Tom Grant a look at parole from the other side during an October ride-along.





Inside Parole

By Executive Director Mark Manthei

The Policy and Procedure Manual is the backbone of the agency and the set of guidelines that keeps our operations consistent. Currently, a

number of manual items have been assigned to each Region for review and possible revision. Once submitted, final comments and recommendations will be incorporated and we anticipate release early in 2010.

Shortly after the first of the year, the Division will debut its new intranet. This secure internal website can only be accessed by Division staff and initially will be utilized for filling out timesheets, accessing time and attendance rules and the Policy and Procedures manual. We will gradually be adding more information, HR/personnel items, expense forms as well as localized information for regions and departments.

MCJ FORUM

Deputy regional director Gayle Walthall and Vanda Seward, director of statewide re-entry services, both took an active role in the New York State Minorities in Criminal Justice Training Symposium held in Nanuet November 4 – 6.

Ms. Walthall participated in a panel discussion on Division activities along with Brian Fischer, commissioner of the Department of Correctional Services; Harry Corbitt, superintendent of the State Police and Robert Maccarone, director of Probation and Correctional Alternatives.

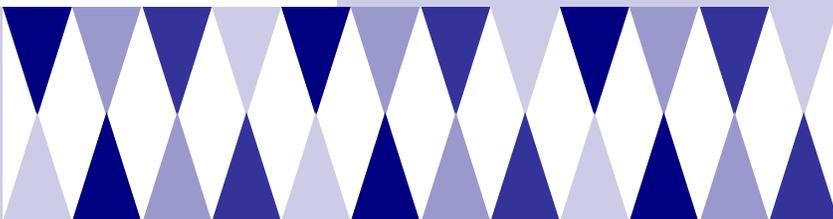
Ms. Seward conducted a workshop titled “Community Engagement in Prisoner Re-Entry/Reintegration.”

October Fight Against Recidivism Tour

On October 31st, Optimum Capital Management hosted the New Beginnings Economic Resource Rally at St. Paul’s Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn New York.

The event served as a culmination to the October Fight Against Recidivism Tour that was created to fight recidivism through economic empowerment. Ryan Mack, president of Optimum and other company employees conducted thirteen free workshops at correctional facilities, juvenile detention centers, substance abuse programs and troubled youth groups.

The event included a panel discussion on re-entry moderated by Vanda Seward, director of statewide re-entry services at the Division and a resource fair that included representatives from America Works, Brooklyn Public Library, CEO and the Italian American League just to name a few. Inspirational stories from members of the Stable 24 program; which provides support to releasees who have been successful on parole for at least two years; were also presented.



Rochester Parole Serves Up Support For Special Olympics

Parole officers in Rochester helped raise money for the Special Olympics by working in the restaurant business at an Applebees for an evening. During this one-night event, parole officers helped greet customers, assisted the wait staff with refills and bussing tables, and educated patrons on Special Olympics New York.

Caption: Kristie Ames, Heather Clements, Dave Galbo, Duane Johnson, Bruce Yancey, Jen Pollman, Kim Smith, Doug Rusinko, Bill Fortune



Staff Development

On October 22 and 23 the human resource staff convened for training with regional administrative assistants.

In addition to a wide variety of administrative support duties, regional administrative assistants play an important role in supporting the efforts of the Division's Human Resource Management Office. They play an integral role in the administration of employee benefits including worker's compensation and leave.

They also play an important role in the administration of personnel transactions

insuring that employee work locations are accurately maintained and assisting agency managers in making important staffing decisions.

The regional administrative assistants received training on the Division's reassignment and transfer policy, hazardous duty pay, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the electronic list maintenance system, medical documentation requirements, workers compensation, and employee relations.

Additionally, they received training on the human

resource information system. The use of this system will eliminate the need for a great deal of paper work, and will expedite the processing of personnel transactions.

By coming together, the administrative assistants were able to share helpful ideas on how their respective regions address various personnel related issues that affect them all. The occasion was a learning experience for everyone involved and it is anticipated that these sessions can become an annual event.

Fall Outing for Parole & Probation

On Friday, September 18, Region 3 held the second annual Oneida County Parole/Probation Picnic. Over 50 staff from the Utica parole office, Oneida County probation office and the four facility parole offices in Oneida County attended the event which was held for the second straight year at the "12 North Sports Bar" in Deerfield, New York. Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente proclaimed the week "Probation/Parole Week" in Oneida County and the proclamation was read to the assembled multitude. A great time was had by all.

Region 1 & 2 Medicaid Pilot

Accessing social services is an on-going concern for those transitioning from prison to the community. To begin removing those barriers to treatment services, the NYC Medicaid Eligibility office provided a one-day Medicaid training in Region 1. All Parole Access staff and Reentry Service Unit managers in the Downstate region participated in the training. The goal of the training is to establish a one stop referral process that would encompass completion of Medicaid applications at the local parole office at the same time a referral is being generated for treatment. The on-site Medicaid application pilot is scheduled to roll out this December.

Learning to Save

In an effort to address the difficulties releasees have establishing bank accounts due to high fees associated with accounts that have low balances, Region 2 has begun a collaborative effort with a local bank.

Senior parole officer Darryl Stevenson brought Amalgamated Bank to the table and established a program that would allow the formerly incarcerated to open a no fee checking and/or savings account.

leaving prison and once they are released, they have an established bank account and a debit card, easing transition back into the community.

Amalgamated Bank has agreed to provide those on parole in Brooklyn no fee checking and savings accounts, as well as ATM/Debit cards, direct deposit and other banking services. This will help releasees establish credit, encourage them to save and ease access to other financial services.

This innovative program is modeled after a similar one at the Plainfield Re-Entry Educational Facility, run by the Indiana Department of Corrections. Inmates there open an account before



Chairwoman Evans

Addresses Conference

During the opening presentation at the Community Safety Through Successful Transition From Prison To The Community Conference, Andrea W. Evans, Parole chairwoman and CEO delivered the following remarks on December 14, 2009:

I can't tell you how pleased I am to see such a large gathering of criminal justice and community program professionals here today. It is an encouraging sign of the things that we can accomplish when we take a collaborative approach to public safety and assisting releasees transition from prison back to their communities. By coordinating our efforts we have the opportunity to succeed in ways that we never thought possible in the past.

Congratulations to everyone who had a hand in organizing this conference. Their commitment to making this a meaningful and constructive three days of work is evident.

I would like to echo my gratitude to the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Center for Effective Public Policy for making this conference possible. It was something we had talked about wanting to do for a long time, but did not have the means to make it happen.

The Division of Criminal Justice Services, under the leadership of Denise E. O'Donnell, deputy secretary for public safety should be commended for their effort to bring this training conference together.

A special thanks to Angela Jimenez, director of operations for the Division; who coordinated the agency's role here. Also to all of our staff who will be participating in workshops and panels including John Lowrey, Pat Fitzmaurice, Janet Reeves, Grant Scriven, Chuck Bour, Molly LaMora, Elizabeth Wilk, Steve Miller and Jose Burgos. I am also very

pleased that Tom Grant, a member of the Parole Board is participating – the Parole Board plays an integral role in the transition from prison to community.

But most importantly I would like to acknowledge and recognize all of the Division staff that are here, many of whom who have travelled a great distance to get involved. Our Parole staff will take what they learn back to the field and help incorporate the work done here into best practices and new policies.

Commissioner Fischer, who you will hear from next, is a valued member of this collaborative team. The success of this effort depends on the continued cooperation between the two agencies. We are very pleased that the cooperation between our two agencies has only grown stronger as we work together to move New York State into the Transition from Prison to Community model.

Executive Law states that parole officers are selected in part, based on their ability to provide a balanced approach to influencing human behavior and their ability to use judgment in the enforcement of Parole's rules and regulations. Another requirement is that they are people who are likely to exercise strong and helpful influence upon the people they supervise with the goal of protecting public safety.

These qualities and the goals of our mission statement are exactly why we are here in Saratoga. We are here to remind staff that we need to come back to the basic, balanced approach and authority that the Executive Law bestows on every parole officer.

What we are doing now - is taking the body of knowledge and experience on what works in supervision - the standards that the Division has always operated from - and incorporating them into evidence-based practices that will bring the agency together as one. One agency, working as one, doing business as one, and sharing in

our successes as one.

We are formalizing the case management model that our officers have always practiced intuitively and developing initiatives and tools that will assist the State in continuing its efforts to ensure public safety by helping releasees be more successful.

For Parole, developing a risk and needs tool applied to all releasees prior to their leaving prison, allows field staff the ability to focus limited resources on those releasees who pose a higher risk of recidivism. Returning to the basics of supervision will energize all members of the Division of Parole to work together towards ensuring public safety and assisting releasees to the successful completion of their sentence.

Today, our community partners become more important than ever before if we are to fulfill our mission. Knowing that we can rely on their experience and expertise in assisting us with services that we are unable to provide; will guarantee that our joint effort will prevent returns to prison and more positive outcomes for our releasees.

In the past, we have taken steps to engage the community-at-large in assisting us. These endeavors were successful, but done in silos or on small scales. We quickly learned that officers, who on their own developed these relationships with the community, had the best outcomes with their parolees.

So this is why you are all here today. You are here to turn your knowledge and experiences into evidence-based practices and recommendations that will help all of our agencies to work smarter.

**Scenes from the
Community Safety Through Successful
Transition From Prison
To The Community Conference**



Former Parole Officer and Council Member Honored At Opening of New Elmira Parole Office



Parole officially opened their new office on November 18, 2009 in Elmira by dedicating the conference room to Theodore Clark, an Elmira parole officer who lost his life in the line-of-duty in 1993. The new offices are located at 100 West Chemung Place. Parole was previously located at 362 East Fifth Street. The Elmira bureau of the Division of Parole, which employs 19 people is responsible for the supervision of more than 500 releasees in six counties; Chemung, Stueben, Yates, Schuyler, Tompkins and Tioga.



Mr. Clark was well known and respected throughout Chemung County as a parole officer, teacher and Elmira councilman. Clark joined the Division in 1972 and was assigned to the Elmira Area Office as a parole officer. Prior to Parole, Clark was a Chemung County probation officer, a teacher in the Canisteo School District and was an Elmira City Councilman for six years. Clark had a reputation as being a firm but fair parole officer and was known by nearly every law enforcement agency in Chemung County.

While on duty April 22, 1993 Clark died from his injuries after his vehicle was struck head-on by another driver who had lost control of her vehicle. Ted was not only an exemplary family man, but also a person who worked to maintain a high quality of life for his community through his efforts as a parole officer as well as his efforts on the Elmira City Council.

New York City Child Support Program: Creating a Culture of Cooperation

Unpaid child support has been identified as a major obstacle for parolees that are attempting to become tax paying citizens. In an attempt to assist NYC parolees in becoming responsible non-custodial parents, NYS Division of Parole partnered with the Kings County District Attorney's ComALERT program and NYC HRA Office of Child Support Enforcement Unit to host informational sessions with community program administrators that provide services to the formerly incarcerated. The workshop gave an overview of child support programs offered by the City Of New York Human Resource Administration, dispelled common child support myths and stressed the importance of regular child support payments. The forum attracted over twenty agencies that provide an array of transitional services including housing, employment, drug treatment and mentoring.

The goal is to align non – custodial parent's income with an attempt to prevent/reduce the accumulation of unpaid child support. Helping individuals on parole address their child support challenges can prevent releasees from obtaining underground employment, assist them in becoming more responsible parents and perhaps reduce the number of children living in poverty.

Queens 2 Food Drive



PO Marcus Conyers, Queens 2, turning over a donation to Ms. Barbara Jerido, Admin. Asst. to Victoria Williams, Executive Director of Elmor.

Under the direction of Area Supervisor John Barnett, the Queens 2 area office in Metro 2, has organized an ongoing food drive which involves staff and releasees bringing in canned goods, powdered milk and other non perishable food items to benefit the food bank at the Elmcors Youth and Adult program in Queens, New York.

Valentine Honored



Grant Valentine, a senior parole officer in the New Rochelle office was honored by the Grand Council of Guardians for his service to the Division and his community. The awards ceremony included the presentation of a citation from Governor David A. Paterson.

Parole Memorial Service

The Actor's Chapel at the Church of St. Malachy in New York City was the site of the Division's annual memorial service. It was standing room only as hundreds of parole staff, retirees and their families gathered to remember those who passed away since the 2008 event. Organized by H. Susan Jeffords and Stuart Jay Levine, the service offered a time of peaceful reflection for the parole family.



Albany area staff from Northeast, Albany area office and central office joined in to help PEF make Christmas special for local releasee families.

Selected families received a special delivery that included decorations, gifts and food.

Faces of Parole – Mike Burdi



Born and raised in the Bronx, Mike Burdi, Parole's regional

director for Region IV, has always wanted to work in the field of law. His path to the Division of Parole was an interesting one.

As a student at Samuel Gompers Vocational High School, Burdi was recruited by RCA Institutes and given a scholarship to become an electronics technician. After graduation, he worked in the electronics field for 12 years, but the lure of a career in law enforcement continued to tug at him.

So in 1976 Burdi started night school at John Jay College, earning a bachelor's degree in security management. This led to a position in the inspector general's office at the New York City Fire Department. He completed his master's in public administration at John Jay in 1988 and joined the NYC Sheriff's Department as a sergeant in 1992. Working his way through the ranks, Burdi was made a captain in 1996.

In January of 1997, Burdi returned to the old neighborhood when he started at the NYS Division of Parole as the deputy regional director of the Bronx Metro Region. In 2000, Burdi was

named regional director of Region 3 and in October of 2009, he became regional director of Region 4.

"I learned parole in the Bronx," Burdi said. "I wanted the respect of people at the Division and worked hard to earn it those first few years. I tried to do things that would make our supervision more effective."

Those early years were busy times for the Bronx and Burdi. In the late 90's the bureau affectionately known as "Team

Bronx", averaged 57 special operations a year and Operation Gun-slinger got started to help get guns off the streets of New York City. In 1998, Burdi brought the first instant drug test kits into the Division.

After taking the helm in Region 3, Burdi focused on the outdated infrastructure of the offices there. "We needed to start from the ground up," Burdi said. "For awhile there, my office was literally a car. But by working together, all five field offices have been updated."

Burdi also focused on increasing

training opportunities in the Region, introducing Operation Impact and improving relationships with local law enforcement.

Burdi is especially proud of the work his staff has created to help those under supervision become successful. "Senior parole officer Clarinda Wilkins-Grant and the Region 3 SPO Team came up with the idea for RAFT, which stands for Re-Entry and Families Together," said Burdi. "Our officers understand the challenges families of the formerly incarcerated face when they leave prison. So they started a program just for them. This is the kind of innovation that moves the needle in the right direction for releasees to be successful."

Now that he has begun to work with



Parole officer Rollins with Westchester County DA Janet DiFiore



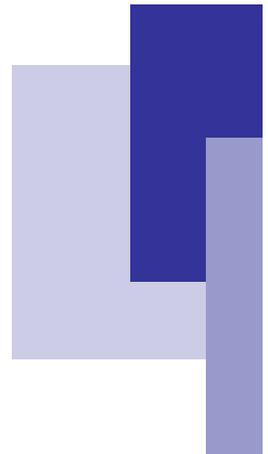
Parole officer Rollins with releasee family.

staff in Region 4, Burdi brings his can-do attitude a little further upstate can't wait to get to know the staff there to learn more about their ideas and operation.



Staten Island Helps Food Pantry

Area supervisor Tom Kratz presents a check to Diane Arneth, executive director of Community Health Action of Staten Island. Donations were made by staff assigned to the Staten Island office to benefit the Community Action food pantry.



Operation Halloween 2009

"Operation Halloween", Parole's annual event that monitors sex offenders on Halloween was a great success. Parole officers statewide



fanned out and made more than 1,800 home visits to make sure that the sex offenders under parole supervision were following the special restrictions imposed on them during the Halloween celebration. Their efforts help protect New York's children and the community.

"Protecting our children from sex offenders is something that concerns parents every day. On Halloween in particular, children are going door-to-door and people are more difficult to recognize," said Governor David A. Paterson. "Knowing that sex offenders have been given additional Halloween restrictions and that parole officers across New York State will be making unannounced visits to their residences to ensure they are not opening their doors to trick-or-treaters or handing out candy, can help ease parents' concerns." "Trick-or-treating is an American tradition, but as parents we really have

to consider the potential risks and be on the alert," said Denise E. O'Donnell, deputy secretary for public safety. "The Sex Offender Registry is an important tool that parents can use to find out if there are sex offenders in their neighborhood, but it is only one tool. Most new sex offenses are committed by people who are not yet in the registry or under parole or probation supervision, and most sex offenses against children are committed by someone the child knows – not by a stranger. My advice to parents is to examine the Sex Offender Registry, but to also take the additional precaution of accompanying their children and restricting visits to homes of people they know and trust."

"The Division of Parole is responsible for the supervision of nearly 1,800 sex offenders statewide. We understand that the community and especially parents count on us to help keep their children safe from the sex offenders that are under our supervision. This is why our officers impose special conditions, conduct surveillance, and make unannounced home visits and curfew checks at sex offender's residences on Halloween. Their efforts provide an extra level of security that helps parents protect their children," Andrea W. Evans, New York State Division of Parole chairwoman and

CEO said.

Beginning in the early afternoon on Halloween, or immediately following dismissal from work or other approved community programs, all sex offender parolees were instructed to remain in their residence until the following morning. Parolees were not to participate in any Halloween activity; not permitted to wear any costume, mask or other disguise; and could not open the door to any minors who were out trick-or-treating.

The news media was extremely helpful in getting the message out from Nassau County all the way to Buffalo. More than 20 different media outlets rode along with our parole teams to get a first hand look at our operation.

"Trick-or-treating puts lots of kids into situations where they are interacting with strangers, but the prospect of someone preying on a child is not the kind of frightening Halloween experience parents should have to worry about. Everyone at the Division of Parole is committed to public safety, and the work of our officers on October 31 is just one example of the important work that they do keeping our communities safer all year round." Chairwoman Evans concluded.

Nora Easterling – A Success Story

A mother of four, Nora Easterling started parole supervision in August of 2008 and has thrived since her release. She is now working at the Community Action Partnership in Rockland County helping displaced women get their lives back on track.

"If it wasn't for Ana Enright, who I met through Family Connections and the people at Family Connections in Rockland who supported me, I would not be where I am today," Easterling said.

Enright, a re-entry services coordinator for the Division says "I was able to help her identify some resources and offered words that spoke positively about her self-worth

and achievements. It was her personal hard work that made her succeed."

Of her first parole officer, Faith Watson, Easterling says, "She understood my position and the situation I was in. She helped me get a job and was there when I needed to talk."

"She turned out to be impressive, she knew what she wanted," Officer Watson said. "I worked with her to get her high school diploma because in this financial climate you need at least that to get a job."

"She was working hard, doing the right things. I told her each year to try to be better than the year before," Watson continued. "It makes me feel good that I was able to make a difference in how she is living her life today."

Prior to her incarceration Easterling worked in the construction trade and the

hospitality industry. When she came back to the community she found a world where she created her own happiness. "I love interacting with people, reaching out," Easterling said. "I smile because I'm free, I smile because my children still love me, I smile because I'm excelling."

Because of her experiences, Easterling was able to help one of her children get his GED and now he is in college. "People understand I am not the person I used to be," said Easterling. "I do it for my children."

Easterling, who has a four-year old son, lost custody of him while she was in prison. But through her hard work, she has earned visitation rights every other weekend and is enjoying every minute of it. Her young son is her regular partner at church on Sundays.

Agency Awards

Division employees were honored statewide throughout November and December for their outstanding contributions to the agency as well as their length of service.



New York State Division of Parole

**Governor
David A. Paterson**

*Andrea W. Evans
Chairwoman and CEO*

Executive Staff

**Mark Manthei
Executive Director**

**Terrence Tracy
Chief Counsel**

**Jeffrey Nesich
Director of Administration**

**Angela Jimenez
Statewide Director of Operations**

**Tim O'Brien
Statewide Director of Facilities and PVU**

**Vanda Seward
Director of Statewide Re-Entry Services**

**Michael Buckman
Director of Policy Analysis**

**Jose Burgos
Director of Human Resources Management**

**Heather Groll
Director of Media Relations**

Have A Story to Share?

The Parole Report is always looking for items of interest to people at the Division. We are interested in innovative re-entry programs, law enforcement stories, community activities and other special stories. We especially love digital photos.

If you have an idea, let your supervisor know so that they can pass it along for you!