

August 2009

## Message from the Chairwoman



*Andrea W. Evans  
Chairwoman & CEO*

Welcome to the first monthly edition of the *Parole Report*. It is our hope that more frequent newsletters will help keep our staff and our community better informed about what is happening inside the Division of Parole.

We have a lot to report on this month and in line with Governor Paterson's

Green Initiative, I am pleased to know that nearly all of our facility staff will now be able to access our newsletter online. Kudos to the staff at OIS for making this happen!

In mid-July, we held our annual ceremony at the Parole Officer's Memorial in Albany. It was a difficult day for the parole family as we added the name of Jeffrey Woolson to the plaque. At the same time it was a day of heartfelt pride for the Division as we celebrated the important work of our officers and those who support them.

I have been spending a great deal of time travelling upstate including stops at the Willard Drug

Treatment Campus and our Buffalo office. It was a pleasure meeting with staff on those visits.

Watch for additional training opportunities statewide that will help us understand the impact of changes in the law with regard to medical parole, shock incarceration and Rockefeller drug law reform. We will also be ramping up technology and supervisory training in the near future.

Next month, I will report on information I learned while attending the American Probation and Parole Institute.

### Facility Rollout

Network access to Lotus Notes and other computing services that were available previously only to central office and field office staff is now almost complete in correctional facilities statewide.

The office of information services made the project a priority last spring and has made exceptional progress to date. By the end of October, 60 facilities are expected to be hooked up with six left to go.

Cheryl Irvin spearheaded the project along with Kim Kohinke, Robyn Bennett,

Victor Gallo, Doreen Watson, Bill Meyer, Vincent Bonafede, Bill Johnson, Coleen Rooney, Steve Huck, Ricky Thompson, Larry Stoffa, Roger Hall, Steve Phillips, Donna St John, Adrian Cummings and Pauline Washington.

Many Help Desk and Staff Development personnel have been travelling all over the state to configure equipment and train facility staff on the new system. A tremendous team effort.



***Our Mission***  
***To promote public safety by preparing inmates for release and supervising parolees to the successful completion of their sentence.***

NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF PAROLE

Parole Report

## Buffalo Pilot



Chairwoman Evans and executive director Manthei along with Pat Fitzmaurice and members of staff development travelled to Buffalo in late July to kick-off the Division's risk and needs assessment pilot program with a training session for parole officers and other staff members.

The New York State Commission on Sentencing Reform recommended that we begin to

integrate evidence based practices into our supervision model to help better protect the public. Development of a risk and needs instrument was determined to be an effective way to integrate professional judgment with successful programming.

Earlier this year a new law was passed that requires the Division of Parole to "consider the implementation of a program of graduated sanctions, including but not limited to a risk and needs assessment that would be administered to all inmates eligible for parole supervision."

After much planning, it was time to start testing the program that was created with the help of our frontline staff of parole officers and managers. The tool, known as COMPAS, will help parole officers better organize what they already do as part of their jobs. It will take the knowledge that officers have gained throughout their careers and establish an accurate

predictor of what a parolee's potential to be successful is.

As part of the pilot, all existing parolees and new releasees will be asked a series of questions and their responses will be entered into a database. The PO will access the questionnaire via an on-line, secured portal that will be set up by DCJS.

Based on the responses to the questions, each individual will be assigned a score that will indicate what level of risk is likely to be involved in supervising that person. Models of risk will be developed based on any arrest, felony arrest, absconding, noncompliance and return to incarceration. Responses will also help



determine what type of program and personal needs that an individual has. Addressing the program needs will help individuals get the kind of assistance that will lead to reduced recidivism levels.

Lines of questioning include criminal history, education, family status and behavioral information. Once the risk level has been established, parole officers will use it as one of the many tools they employ to make supervision decisions.

After approximately a year of testing and tweaking we intend to have an effective tool that can be used across the state that will allow the Division to take some things off of parole officers plates and help new officers get up to speed more quickly. Once the program is operational, it will enhance the agency's ability to protect public safety.



## Queens 3 Is Hooked On Hype

Helping Youth People Excel, or HYPE as it is known around the office at Queens 3 is a 12-week special program developed by staff to help young people on parole for the first time, make sure it's their last time.

Since the beginning of June, eight parolees between the ages of 16 – 23 have met as a group once a week for two hours at the Queens office. They typically have a speaker from outside come in to talk about issues that affect young adults and their ability to make decisions that will prevent them from returning to prison. Many of the speakers are ex-offenders and others come from the community. Topics have included family dynamics,

*“We are learning about ourselves - how to look at things like relationships and make good choices. It's working.”*

criminality, sexual health, decision making and goal-setting skills as well as the broader issue of self-esteem. A number of those who present to the HYPE group have successfully overcome obstacles that are similar to those that the young adults they are talking to

face every day.

Senior parole officer Candace Benjamin leads the group along with parole officers Tanya Johnson, Anita Williams, Jeffrey Fernandez and Brenda Bryant. The idea to develop the program was a grassroots effort starting with the parole officers who wanted to do something to stop the cycle of crime they see all too often.

“Our area supervisor Michael Falk is very open to new ideas and trying things that work towards reducing crime, so he really helped us get the ball rolling in designing the program,” senior parole officer Benjamin said. “That kind of support and encouragement made it much easier to get HYPE off the ground.”

HYPE is supposed to run from 5 – 7 p.m., however many weeks everyone is still talking and working together until well past 8 p.m. Parole officers chip in to make sure dinner is provided during the meetings because it helps the group understand how seriously the parole officers want them to succeed. There is already a waiting list for the next class.

Nineteen year-old Dimitrious, who has been in the program since it started, said “Here, we aren't just criminals on parole, we are learning from each other. We are learning about ourselves - how to look at things like relationships and make good choices. It's working.”

The parole officers who run the HYPE program are not necessarily the parole officers assigned to the case of the young adult. So the HYPE parole officers work with each individual's day-to-day parole officer to help identify issues before they become problems and keep people on track and out of trouble.

The results of the HYPE program are promising. More than half of the participants have gone back to school, with some who have already completed high school applying to college.

“This is a forum for them to meet people like them who have overcome the odds and become successful,” Benjamin continued. “It helps them feel special, that someone is finally listening to them.”

“The highlight of all this is that every week, these kids are doing more self-exploration and recognizing their own strengths and weaknesses. They are growing from this,” Benjamin concluded. “They are hearing things about accomplishment and overcoming challenges that they may not hear anywhere else. They are learning that they can take the negative aspect of their criminal experience and turn it into a strength that can become a positive force in their lives.”



### Officers Honored

PEF and EAP gave a small luncheon at the Queens Area Office, honoring those POs/SPO involved in the shooting incident at the Queens Office. Plaques were presented honoring PO Delree Williams, PO Davis, PO Ames, PO Turner, SPO Parker.

## International Visitors To Parole

On August 3, 2009 parole staff including; Angela Jimenez, Janet Reeves, Sherry Frohman, Laurie George and Mary Osborne hosted an international guest through the International Visitor Leadership Program. The program, which is under the auspices of the Department of State brought Ms. Margaret Gwyneth Sampson-Browne, acting senior superintendent in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Force to the United States. In her home country, Ms. Sampson-Browne is responsible for the recruitment and training of new police officers and for all the development and implementation in the police force.

Ms. Sampson-Browne traveled to the United to learn about leadership and management strategies of law enforcement practitioners at the national, state, and local levels here. Her areas of focus were youth, domestic violence,



prevention, re-entry, and community cooperation. Currently, Trinidad/Tobago does not have a parole system but is in the planning stage of developing one.

While visiting our offices, we discussed current practices in Trinidad and Tobago. It was interesting to learn that the recidivism rate of sex offenders was less than 1%. However, if the sex offense was committed against a child, the perpetrator was likely to receive a life sentence without parole. We also learned that prisons there provide programs to teach marketable skills such as farming, tailoring and food service. Funding is also put into services that include chemical dependency programs.

## Treatment Behind Walls at Willard

On July 2, a new prison-based drug treatment program to provide “treatment behind the walls” to parolees under Rockefeller Drug Law Reform was announced at the Willard Drug Treatment Campus in a collaboration among three state agencies.

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) Commissioner Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo, Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) Commissioner Brian Fischer, and Board of Parole Chairwoman and Division of Parole (DOP) CEO Andrea Evans joined



with Denise E. O'Donnell, Deputy Secretary for Public Safety and Commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), in announcing the Willard Drug Treatment Campus as the “blueprint

for the future” in providing quality treatment services to parolees.



and Correctional Alternatives, New York State Police, Department of Correctional Services and Jeffrey Woolson's family filed into the Parole Officers Memorial site on the Empire State Plaza. A thoughtful invocation was offered by Reverend W. Lynn Hamilton, who is also a parole officer.



**Parole Week 2009**

Governor David A. Paterson proclaimed July 19-25, 2009 as Probation, Parole, and Community Supervision Week in New York State, recognizing corrections professionals as "champions of community justice."

The recognition week began with a somber ceremony at the Parole Officer's Memorial in Albany. Parole Officer Jeffrey Woolson, who lost his life in a vehicle accident while on duty in March 2009, had his name added to the Memorial as parole and probation officers statewide honored their fallen colleagues.

Parole officer Dan Tobin played the bagpipes as dignitaries from the Division of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Probation

Timothy O'Brien, statewide director of facilities and PVU served as master of ceremonies. Remarks were given by Deputy Secretary Denise O'Donnell, Director Robert Maccarone, and Chairwoman Andrea W. Evans.

Following the remarks, a memorial roll call of fallen officers was read as well as a list of parole staffers who recently passed away.

Chairwoman Evans presented the Woolson family with a flag that was flown over the United States Capitol and

PEF president Manuelita Clemente gave the family a commemorative plaque.

Chairwoman Evans and H. Susan Jeffords, president of the Parole Officers Association placed wreaths at the Memorial to conclude the services.

Area offices statewide also conducted Parole Week activities that included reading the Governor's proclamation and remarks from the chairwoman.



Many thanks to the regional coordinators who included Mary Smith, Mike Burdi, Pat Rojas, Tanya Thompson, Shannon Craig and Rita Spaulding.

(continued on pages 6 & 7)





productive member of society and the other side of the law?

The eight young people who ranged in age from 18 – 22 , came from the 75th and 73rd precinct areas and were a part of New York City’s summer



**Parole Week Region 1**

Staff held a short service early on the week to thank parole officers and staff for their hard work and dedication to the protection of the community.



youth employment program. The focus of the conference was to teach them about how parole works and what parole officers do, with a special focus on life’s lessons to hopefully keep them from being on the wrong side of the glass.

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, they held their second annual community softball game at the Pelham Bay Park. Festivities included a barbeque and a proclama-



The daylong conference was part lecture and part role playing with an emphasis on open dialogue and feedback. Topics addressed in the seminar included an overview of parole, sexual harassment training, dressing for success, recognizing domestic violence and choosing friends wisely. The program was a big hit and several of the participants expressed an interest in parole as a career path!

The conference was accomplished with the assistance of area supervisors Harold Townsend, William McCartney and Martin Arroyo; senior parole officer George Blackett; parole officers Ronald Stewart, Lisa Brown and Arronnious

tion delivered by the Bronx borough president, Ruben Diaz Jr.

**Parole Week Region 2**

On Friday, July 24, Yvette Turner-Collins and Dorian De Younge-Brown hosted a summer youth conference in Brooklyn themed “The Other Side of the Glass.” The conference, held in conjunction with Parole/Probation Week, posed the question: How thick or thin is the line between being a



Graves; manager of re-entry services, Daniel Faison; and secretary 1’s Florence Toussaint, Janice Craig and Deirdre Moncrease. Acting regional director Mary Smith and deputy regional director William Hogan also supported the program along with mental health therapist, Jason Villodas from Franklin K. Lane High School, who works as the Division’s summer youth site monitor.

**Parole Week Region 3**

Region 3 was very busy throughout Parole Week. In addition to the reading the Governor’s proclamation, other activities took place region-wide. In New Rochelle they held their annual picnic at Playland in New Rye. In Peekskill, C. Scott Vanderhoaf, the Rockland County executive presented the agency with a special proclamation recognizing parole as a “Force for Positive Change.” In Central Long Island, Bureau Chief Davies and senior parole officers treated PO’s and staff to



a special luncheon honoring their achievements and dedication.

**Parole Week Region 4**

Region 4 honored parole officers on two separate days. Because some of





### Green Initiative Training

Governor Paterson is vigorously approaching global warming and sustainability issues with an executive order that has allowed Division employees to offer training on the subjects of recycling, sustainability, and reducing our carbon imprint on the world.

On August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009, over 30 employees at 97 Central Avenue and 145 Central Avenue attended a special presentation given by Dr. Steven A. Leibo and parole coordinators Carol Smith and Shawna Morgan. Dr. Leibo is the District Manager for upstate New York and Vermont's, "The Climate Project". He was personally trained by former Vice President Al Gore to provide an updated version of the material originally presented in the movie "An Inconvenient Truth". In the upcoming months, training will be offered in all Parole regions.

Ms. Smith and Ms. Morgan provided information on the Governor's Orders and what employees are required to do to comply. Executive Order 4 calls for all State Agencies to reduce their energy use 15% by the year 2015, use recycled materials when available, reduce the generation of materials that cannot be recycled, and recycle when possible. Accordingly, recycling is being instituted in most Parole locations.

In fact, paper recycling at 97 Central Avenue in Albany alone between March 2008 and February 2009 has resulted in savings that amount to:

- 4,938 gallons of oil
- 74,655 gallons of water
- 640 pounds of air pollution
- 32 cubic yards of landfill space
- 43,727 kw hours of energy
- 181 trees
- 9,065 pounds of CO2

*Shawna Morgan and Dr. Steven Leibo*



their offices are located in the Albany area, many staff members attended the event at the Empire State Plaza. Staff members were able to meet the new



chairwoman and observe the regal annual ceremony at the Albany Memorial.

The second celebration was to honor the current staff members in the Albany/Northeast office on Russell Road. Staff members chipped in and held a special barbecue that featured hamburgers, hot dogs, salads, and some home-cooked dishes. Area supervisor Laurie George thanked the whole staff and SPO Shannon Craig honored the parole officers currently serving and those that lost their lives while on duty. Morale was very high at the barbecue with photos from the past memorial events on display. The spirit of the parole professional family embodied the

phrase 'Brotherhood of Parole'. Festivities were both joyous and reflective of the dignity and giving qualities of our staff.

### **Parole Week Region 5**

The majority of Region V offices held a memorial service on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> reading Governor Paterson's



proclamation and comments by Chairwoman Evans. Additionally, Region 5 offices awarded commendations to select parole officers for exceptional work completed in the last few months. Rochester Metro, Rochester Belt, Elmira and Binghamton offices grilled hot dogs and hamburgers and held picnics with all the trimmings. Buffalo Metro, Niagara Frontier and the Southern Tier Sub-Area offices had pizza, munchies and soda. Regional director Russi had blue and gold pens engraved with "New York State Parole, Supervising for Success" which were given to all staff in Region V in appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

## Hudson Community Forum

The Capital District Community Re-entry Forum was held on Thursday, July 30 at the Schuyler Inn in Menands. The purpose of the forum was to provide an overview of the Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TOPIC) and the role of Albany, Rensselaer and the proposed Schenectady County Re-entry Task Forces.

Well attended by community organizations, the forum presented them with opportunities for their involvement in the re-entry unit at Hudson Correctional Facility that houses incarcerated persons who are returning to Albany, Rensselaer,

Schenectady and Columbia Counties.

Community participation is a critical piece for formerly incarcerated individuals who successfully return to society. Local organizations can help provide family reunification counseling, vocational training, mentoring and coaching and other life skills that can be the difference in someone returning to prison or not.



## Bayview Correctional Facility Opens Re-entry Unit for Female Offenders

In mid-July, the New York State Department of Correctional Services (DOCS), in conjunction with the Division of Parole and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), opened a specialized "re-entry" unit at Bayview Correctional Facility in Manhattan for female inmates due to be released to the greater New York City metropolitan area to help prepare them for their transition back to the community.

The Bayview unit is the fourth specialized re-entry unit and the first for women. It follows similar units for male offenders that opened at Orleans Correctional Facility in Western New York in August 2007 and October 2008 for Erie (Buffalo) and Monroe (Rochester) County releases,

respectively, and at Hudson Correctional Facility in Columbia County in March 2009 for Capital District (Albany-area) releases.

The 40-bed unit at the women's medium security Bayview Correctional opened on June 29, 2009 with 30 participants.

Division of Parole Chairwoman and CEO Andrea W. Evans said: "The re-entry program at Bayview is another example of collaboration between state agencies developed to reduce recidivism by working to ease the challenges associated with the transition from prison to society. The program at Bayview will address the needs of women including employment, education, health care, substance abuse and family reunification. This early intervention will offer the helping hand that can keep families together and make our communities safer."

DOCS is transferring eligible inmates who are within six months of release from prison for eventual return back to New York City, Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk counties), and Westchester and Rockland counties and who will benefit from specialized services to help them prepare for successful reintegration to society. In-person visits by community providers to participating Bayview inmates is crucial in this transition.

The offenders will meet in person with the parole officers, case workers, potential employers and others who will form their key support network after release. Preparation for the transition back to society plays a critical role in ex-offenders' success in obtaining employment and readjusting to their families and communities.

## Jeffrey Woolson Memorial Tournament



On July 31, 2009, the Syracuse Parole Officers Benevolent Association sponsored the First Annual Jeff Woolson Memorial Golf Tournament at Silver Creek Golf Course in Waterloo, NY. Jeff was a parole officer assigned to the Syracuse Area Office.

On the morning of March 19, 2009, he was killed in an automobile accident on his way to a home visit. Prior to working in Syracuse, Jeff was assigned to the Rochester 1 Area Office.



Tournament committee members were SPO Phil Siracusa, PO Lew Hrycko, PO John Walters, PO Teresa Eisenhauer, PO Paul Rigby, SPO Terry Moore, PO Jason Jasniewski, PO Lyn Fox and PO Kelly Reilly.

A total of 28 teams hit the links with players from Syracuse, Utica, Rochester, Buffalo, Elmira/Binghamton, Albany, and the facilities. Jeff's brother Dane and several of his friends also participated in the captain and crew format that was followed by a steak dinner, raffles and prizes.

The tournament was a huge success, exceeding original expectations. The Syracuse POBA has set up a Jeff Woolson Scholarship Fund with Pulaski High School and will be presenting a graduating senior pursuing a career in law enforcement with a scholarship check for \$1000 in Jeff's name. Next year's tournament is already scheduled for July 30, 2010.



New York State Division of Parole

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Chairwoman and CEO*

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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, 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!