

# INSIDE



# CORRECTIONS

Newsletter of the New Jersey Department of Corrections

## *In This Issue*

### **NJDOC PARTNERS WITH REENTRY PROVIDERS STREAMLINING SERVICES**

The New Jersey Department of Corrections signs an agreement with community-based reentry service providers, creating pathways for incarcerated individuals to successfully reintegrate with wraparound services.

Pg. 1

### **STEVE CARTER TAPPED TO ASSIST WITH FEMALE FACILITY RELOCATION**

The NJDOC enlists world renowned correctional planning consultant Steve Carter of CGL Companies to assist in choosing a new location for female offenders.

Pg. 4

### **HERO SPOTLIGHT**

NJDOC Officer Francis Ferretti utilized his training to assist in resuscitating an individual while off duty.

Pg. 5

### **DANIELS NAMED ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION**

New Assistant Commissioner brings a wealth of correctional and criminal justice experience as the former Assistant Prosecutor of Hunterdon County.

Pg. 6

### **PHOTO GALLERY**

The NJDOC Workforce Wellness Committee held a series of holiday activities as well as toy and coat drives for families in need.

Pg. 7



*The NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn signs an agreement with six community-based reentry service providers.*

## **NJDOC PARTNERS WITH REENTRY PROVIDERS STREAMLINING SERVICES**

BY CHRIS CARDEN

The responsibility for a justice-involved individual under the New Jersey Department Of Corrections' (NJDOC) care rarely ends at the gates of the Department's facilities. Within its institutions, the NJDOC takes on a myriad of roles, including educator, health provider, and employer, but increasingly, and importantly it is focusing its efforts on what comes after that individual is released.

To that end, the NJDOC signed a Memorandum of Understanding, creating agreements with six





community-based reentry service providers for people within 180 days of release.

The community-based partner organizations include Community In Cooperation, New Jersey Community Research Initiative, New Jersey Reentry Corporation, The Petey Greene Program, Volunteers of America Delaware Valley, and Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., with plans to add additional organizations in the near future. The partnerships allow for a continuum of care, removing barriers to housing, employment, and medical access, while aiding the offender's reintegration into society.

"The Department's Division of Programs and Community Services, in tandem with our new community partners, connect the recently incarcerated to critical resources that support successful reintegration into society based on personalized needs," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. "By entering into these agreements, we continue to provide a full suite of services that will truly help give these individuals options of support long after they have served their time with us."

During the unprecedented release of more than 2,000 individuals under the public health emergency credits helping mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our facilities, the Department learned that

many of those released needed assistance with housing. Critically, service providers will offer safe spaces for the recently released to live with funding assistance for first and last month security deposits. The service providers will help continue that process for individuals who could not secure those resources before release due to processing delays or other issues. Equally critical resources for those nearing release include access to government assistance and motor vehicle state identification.

"We know full well what happens when you release an individual back into society without support or resources. It serves neither the individual nor the community to which he or she returns," said NJDOC Assistant Commissioner Dr. Darcella Sessomes, who oversees the Division. "But as the first-line of support preparing individuals for reentry, we in the Division of Programs and Community Services have an acute awareness of the challenges faced and evolving needs of those being released. This awareness combined with the collaboration of our community-based partners allows us to better connect them to partners with the ability to deliver the necessary post-release services."

"Communities In Cooperation, Inc. is truly honored to enter into a formal partnership with DOC, empowering others in this symphonic movement of





human servitude, creating dignity and hope for the justice-involved," said Pamela B. Jones, CEO.

"We are grateful to be here today for the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and hope for many more years of collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Corrections," said Brian McGovern, CEO of New Jersey Community Research Initiative. "Under the guidance and leadership of Acting Commissioner Kuhn, we have seen stronger collaboration and support by the Department. With the continued support of the Department of Corrections, we hope to continue to help this population transition successfully to the community."

"NJRC is gratified to 'get back into the business' of in-person visits in state prisons to link our participants to critically-needed services outside the wall," said Governor Jim McGreevey. "We all have a vested interest in healthy, successful reentry. This MOU is a significant step forward."

"We know from long experience that individualized tutoring is essential in supporting formerly incarcerated learners to achieve their educational goals, and we welcome the opportunity to offer our high-quality tutoring services as part of the wraparound supports this reintegration effort will provide," said

Alison Badgett, Executive Director of The Petey Greene Program.

"The YAP team is honored to have this opportunity using our wraparound model that has served for decades as an alternative to youth incarceration," said

Kelly D. Williams, Chief Communications Officer. "This program is especially valuable because all staff are credible messengers who have lived experiences, having served time in New Jersey prisons. So they are now giving back to their communities."

The initiative complements the Department's New Jersey Locally Empowered, Accountable and Determined (NJ LEAD) \$3M grant, funding reentry services provided by community-based organizations in communities to which the released will return.

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*Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women located in Clinton N.J. will be relocated to a new facility.*

# STEVE CARTER TAPPED WITH FEMALE FACILITY RELOCATION

BY CHRIS CARDEN

When designing an institution, particularly a women's facility for the New Jersey Department of Corrections, details matter, according to correctional planning and design consultant Steve Carter of CGL Companies.

"From an operational and design viewpoint, correctional environments for women must embrace the unique needs of the female population," Carter said.

Carter, an industry leader, is a critical member of the team spearheading the relocation of Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, following Governor Murphy's directive to close the facility located in Clinton, New Jersey.

Opened in 1913 as the State Reformatory for Women at Clinton and later renamed for its iconic superintendent, Edna Mahan, who's perception of criminal justice for women was inspired by England's moral crusade of women's prison reformers. Modernizing that perception and tailoring it to the needs of today's justice-involved women is a Herculean task that takes into consideration several factors including a shared vision for a purpose-driven facility, environmental and programming needs, ensuring a central location for visiting families; determining if the NJDOC can retrofit existing prison facilities or partner with the New Jersey Department of Treasury to identify alternative vacant facilities;

*cont'd p.5*



and gathering opinions and strategies from legislators, advocacy groups, and current and formerly incarcerated people and impacted communities.

"We'll be looking at existing correctional facilities and initially examine our ability to adapt and potentially expand selected prisons to accommodate these needs with an eye towards a purpose-built women's correctional center," said Carter.

With more than 40 years of expertise improving the value of justice facilities through increased efficiency, sanitation, security, and best practices, CGL Companies works with local, state, national, and international communities to create

efficient systems and facilities that improve and strengthen the communities served.

"We are excited to be working with Steve Carter, who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience creating thoughtful infrastructure designs for our female population," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. "His work speaks for itself, and this process represents a transformative step forward that allows us to take into account the evolving needs of this generation of incarcerated women."

## HERO SPOTLIGHT

While traveling on Route 9, Senior Correctional Police Officer Francis Ferretti noticed an unconscious man lying in the left lane and immediately sprang to action utilizing his training to resuscitate the individual until the EMT arrived. We salute NJDOC Officer Ferretti for his selfless actions to save this individual.



*Pictured above is Senior Correctional Police Officer Francis Ferretti receiving an award for his heroic act.*



# DANIELS NAMED ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

BY LAUREN LAGGY



*Kelly Daniels is the appointed Assistant Commissioner of the Special Investigations Division*

In the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) continuous effort to shape their overall mission and facilitate departmental change, the NJDOC hired highly regarded former Assistant Prosecutor of the Hunderton County prosecutor's office, Kelly Daniels, Esq., to the newly created position of Assistant Commissioner of the Special Investigations Division (SID).

Ms. Daniels' correctional and criminal justice background and experience includes assisting in the investigations into the recent abuse crimes at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, as well as investigating crimes against the institutionalized, child and sexual abuse crimes, making her an excellent selection for this role. In her capacity, Daniels will oversee the Departments' Special Investigations Division which conducts investigations in conjunction with federal, state, county, and

municipal law enforcement agencies as well as overseeing several units to ensure the safety of the Departments' facilities.

In addition to her oversight, Daniels will help build a mission-critical Special Victims Unit (SVU) designed to investigate allegations of sexual harassment, domestic abuse, and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).

"My previous experience has allowed me to undertake joint investigations with the Special Investigations Division for many years. I am excited to use my knowledge to enhance the division by working diligently to establish a Special Victims Unit," said Daniels. "It is an honor to have the opportunity to now be a part of the New Jersey Department of Corrections."





# PHOTO GALLERY: NJDOC WORKFORCE WELLNESS COMMITTEES SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER WITH EVENTS FOR STAFF AND COMMUNITY DRIVES

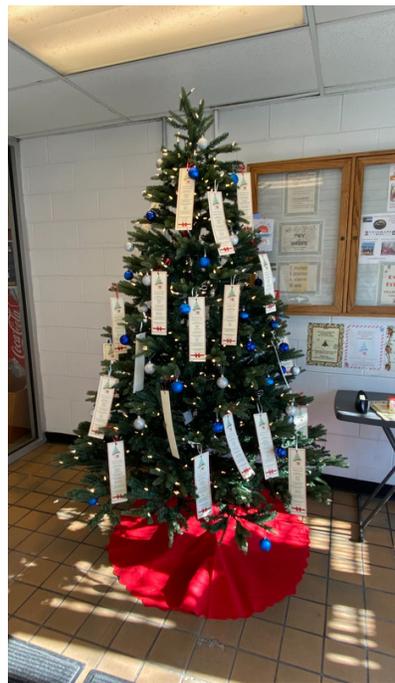
NJDOC's Workforce Wellness Committees hosted a series of state-wide employee holiday events as well as toy and coat drives to collect items for families in need during the holiday season.



*NJDOC Central Office Headquarters staff held a toy drive for children to receive gifts during the holiday season.*



*Staff at Central Office participated in the holiday sweater contest.*



*Staff from Mid-State Correctional Facility selected names off of the angel tree hung with gift requests from families in need.*



*Toys were donated by staff for the holiday toy drive at Mid-State Correctional Facility.*



*William H. Fauver Youth Correctional Facility staff participated in the holiday sweater contest. Pictured above is Officer Norcia.*





**Southern State Correctional Facility Staff gathered toys donated by the employees to donate to a non-profit.**



**Staff at Bayside State Prison collected toys, hats, and gloves to donate.**



**Members of the Special Operations Group (SOG) joined in on the holiday festivities at Central Office Headquarters.**



**Acting Commissioner Kuhn selected the holiday sweater contest winner from Central Office Headquarters.**



**Central Office Staff decorated the outside of the facility buildings to spread holiday cheer.**



**The winner of the holiday sweater contest was Mr. Frank Vangeli from Mid-State Correctional Facility.**