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# CORRECTIONS

Newsletter of the New Jersey Department of Corrections

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Sgt. Tiffany Thompson participates in a recruiting event.

Photo by Chris Carden / NJDOC

## **THE ROLE WE ALL PLAY IN RECRUITMENT**

In a time of daunting staff shortages and the challenges they create, effective recruitment has to be a group effort -- it's everyone's job.

"It's a multifaceted issue where you're facing an uphill battle," is how Sgt. Thomas Januszkiewicz describes the challenge.

Even for the people who work in recruitment, like Sgt. Tiffany Thompson, there's an acknowledgment that the job can't be theirs alone: Each member of the Department of Corrections can be part of the effort.

It can be as simple – and as impactful – as sharing a social media post listing open positions, Sgt. Thompson says.

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“That’s today's word of mouth," she said.

Among the many misconceptions people outside the Department have about careers in corrections is the notion that it's only custody officers assigned to prisons, Januskiewicz said. In fact, corrections careers look like many other careers, from food service to education.

"There's a myriad of different roles you can play in this department," Januskiewicz said. "There are a million different things, but it's all about the single focus job of taking care of the people who are in the custody of the Department of Corrections." For Thompson, that moment of realization – that corrections work isn’t just one thing – is a valuable part of recruitment.

And it’s something that can take place in conversations with friends and family as easily as at job fairs and recruitment seminars.

“It's always interesting to see the shock on people's faces when they realize that," Sgt. Thompson said. “You have everything in our department.”

While there are steps we can all take today to make sure the public sees the best of what this Department can be and how a career in corrections can make the difference, there won't be any quick fixes.

"It's going to be a battle of us staying true, and being out in the community what we do and how well we do it, and pushing that message out," Januskiewicz said.

# HERO SPOTLIGHT

K-9 Petey of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) Special Operations Group (SOG) recently crossed the rainbow bridge into eternal rest.

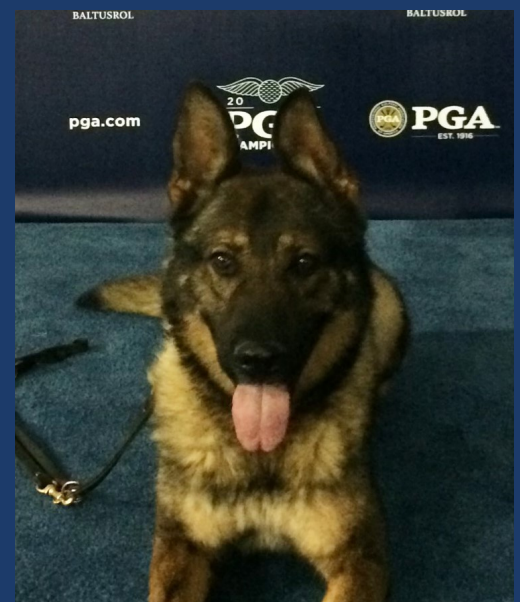
K-9 Petey served as a devoted member of SOG’s K-9 unit alongside his handler, Senior Correctional Police Officer Chmielewski, for over 10 years. Petey was one of the patrol dogs cross-trained in explosive detection, and a part of the Detect and Render Safe Taskforce. He assisted in numerous important assignments, which included POTUS detail, the Pope visit to Philadelphia, the 2014 Super Bowl, Army-Navy Football game, Seaside bomber threats, and various school bomb threats throughout the state.

K-9 Petey displayed unwavering loyalty, service, and dedication to Officer Chmielewski, SOG, and the Department. May he never be forgotten.

NJDOC’s K-9 unit was created in 1987 when an officer was assigned as a K-9 handler to patrol facility grounds with a single dog. As the unit grew over the years, officers that were K-9 handlers were moved to the Special Operations Group unit and trained for numerous tasks.

These tasks included search and rescue, narcotic and explosive detection, and so many other life-saving functions, demonstrating that sometimes heroes have paws.

– Lauren Laggy



## K-9 "Petey"



# JOYFUL NOISE: GSCF's "house band" holds first-ever Winter Concert

It was a real winter jam at Garden State Youth Correctional Facility on Dec. 15, as the facility held a first-ever Winter Concert, filling the auditorium with good music and warm feelings.

Under the direction of Mr. Dante Coluccio, the 11-member band, with some staff pitching in – rocked an appreciative crowd of their peers, along with family and members of the NJDOC community.

Selections ranged from classics like “Stand By Me” to modern hits like “Uptown Funk,” with a heaping helping of Stevie Wonder mixed in, a nod to Dr. Chief Darcella Sessomes’ all-time favorite artist.



Lead singer Ben chose many of the songs and worked on arrangements.

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Members of the band pose with music teacher Mr. Dante Coluccio.

Photos by Lauren Laggy / NJDOC

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Not long ago, GYCF had little more than a piano, now the whole band has instruments to play.

# PIO Wants to Know!

Is your facility holding a special event? Got a program you're proud of? Public Info wants to know! Email your events, news, and interesting items to [pubinfo@doc.nj.gov](mailto:pubinfo@doc.nj.gov)

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While the band onstage soaked up the applause, putting on the concert was a group effort involving members of GSCF's Education and Vocational programs, religious services, the Wellness Committee and members of the Maintenance staff who transformed the oncedingy auditorium into a space for celebration. There were seasonal decorations, a professional light setup, and a newly-built drum riser.

"When I started here we just had a piano on a stage," Mr. Coluccio said, thanking Dr. Sessomes for her support of the program, which now has an array of instruments, rehearsal space, and most importantly, the commitment of its members. "Not only are they learning, but I'm learning."

Up next, the band is working on a jazz album.

COHQ Wellness Sub-Committee

## Winter Coat Drive

...hats and gloves too!!!

**Please Donate**

New or gently used coats, hats, and gloves (in all sizes) to help the less fortunate to keep them warm

**Drop-off Location:**  
Voorhees Building Lobby

**Collecting until 12.23.2022**

**Thank You for Your Donation...**

**For more information:**  
please speak to a wellness committee member



# COVID-19 VACCINE FAQ

## What does it mean to be fully vaccinated?



**Fully vaccinated refers to having completed an initial series of vaccinations, either dose 1 of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine or 2 doses of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. You are considered fully vaccinated even if you did not yet receive a booster vaccine.**

## What does it mean to be up to date?



**Individuals are best protected when they are up to date with COVID-19 vaccines, which includes receiving a bivalent booster when eligible. All adults 18 or older are recommended to receive their bivalent booster vaccine.**

## People who temporarily do not qualify to get a bivalent booster.



**RUTGERS**

**Everyone 18 and over is required to get a bivalent booster to be considered up to date. Those who completed primary vaccines less than 2 months ago and those who recently had COVID-19 within the last 90 days do not qualify to receive a bivalent booster vaccine.**





# MLB GREAT DARRYL STRAWBERRY VISITS

Former New York Mets right fielder Darryl Strawberry visited East Jersey State and Northern State prisons in November, sharing a message of hope, faith and recovery. Strawberry has openly shared his struggles with substance use and incarceration, and his visit was a chance to connect with staff and those in custody.

Photos: Lauren Laggy / NJDOC

