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John Powell, former Administrator of South Woods State Prison, accepted the NCCHC R. Scott Chavez Facility of the Year Award on behalf of the Department.

SOUTH WOODS STATE PRISON NAMED FACILITY OF THE YEAR

BY LIZ VELEZ

The National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) has named South Woods State Prison as its R. Scott Chavez Facility of the Year for the delivery of efficient and effective health care services.

The prison, based in Bridgeton and operated by the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC), was selected from 500 correctional facilities accredited by NCCHC.

“South Woods State Prison has been accredited by NCCHC for decades, and during its most recent survey was found to be in full compliance with 100 percent of the NCCHC standards,” said Deborah Ross,





NCCHC Chief Executive Officer. “Surveyors found South Woods State Prison to be a model for all other facilities to emulate. We are thrilled to be able to acknowledge their commitment to quality health care with this award.”

“This award is a national honor that validates the hard work and collaboration of the NJDOC and Rutgers University Correctional Health Care (RUCHC) in protecting the safety and health of those in the state's custody during the most challenging year yet,” said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. “We appreciate the recognition of the Department's efforts to fulfill its mission of operating safe and humane facilities with a commitment to the well-being of those in the state's custody.”

“RUCHC is honored to have provided quality comprehensive health care services to the NJDOC since 2008. In doing so, we have served members of our community who are most adversely affected by social determinants of health,” said Julie M. White, Chief Operating Officer. “RUCHC is committed as leaders in the delivery of effective, compassionate, and accessible care within correctional environments, and we are grateful for this recognition by NCCHC. We are equally appreciative of our multidisciplinary health care team and the NJDOC leadership at South

Woods State Prison for their steadfast efforts to provide nationally-recognized care during these challenging times.”

Each of the compounds on the campus has a spacious medical clinic which includes exam rooms, dental offices, and mental health consultation rooms with privacy like that found in the private sector. Health care services also include a two-story, extended-care facility for patients who require total care, another unit for those who need assistance with activities of daily living, a 10-bed dialysis unit, and a hospice unit that pairs those facing the end of life with incarcerated companions.

South Woods State Prison is the largest and one of the newest facilities managed by the NJDOC, with a capacity of more than 3,000 incarcerated individuals, including some of the most critically ill in the state system. Despite its size, NCCHC surveyors noted that close collaboration between custody, health care, and mental health care creates a positive culture focused on high-quality, personalized care provided by RUCHC in partnership with the NJDOC.





Participants of the Police Unity Tour attended a sendoff ceremony at the Department's Central Office Headquarters in Trenton, N.J.

A Ride of Honor

BY LIZ VELEZ

During a routine morning drive some 14 years ago, New Jersey State Prison Administrator Raymond Royce recalls seeing a brigade of bicyclists cycling in memory of fallen police officers as part of the Police Unity Tour, an annual movement where officers trek by bicycle to the nation's capital to memorialize the badges of the fallen at the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, D.C. With a desire to raise awareness of the initiative and honor the fallen of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC), Royce recruited the inaugural team of NJDOC Police Unity Tour cyclists, including Sergeant Tara Kelly, Officer Michael Drybread, and the support of Officer John Salerno.

Since then, he's watched the team grow, with over 15 NJDOC representatives participating in the 2021 ride. "The tenet of the Police Unity Tour is we ride for those who cannot," said Administrator Royce. "Riders make a personal sacrifice to take on this emotionally and physically grueling challenge to honor the fallen, carrying on their legacy with each rotation, with pride and integrity, while raising awareness of this important cause."

Participation in the Police Unity Tour is voluntary. It requires meeting the tour's physical qualifications to ensure individuals can handle the 400-mile journey, including a rotation per minute requirement and challenges, such as

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inclement weather. Participants join the tour for personal reasons, donating their time and funding the experience, including the bicycle, related equipment, and accommodations.

Sergeant Anna Miglio of Bayside State Prison participated in the 2021 ride cycling in honor of her father, who served on the Wildwood Crest Police Department, and fallen colleague NJDOC Officer Fred Baker, also of Bayside. Additional heroes honored with their badges memorialized in D.C. include NJDOC's Senior Correctional Police Officers Maria Gibbs and Nelson Perdomo.

NJDOC 2021 Police Unity Tour representatives trained and led by NJDOC Officer Mike Drybread and Matt Kissane include: Correctional

Police Lieutenant James Hunsicker, Correctional Police Sergeants Anna Miglio, and Phillip Woolson, Senior Correctional Police Officers Richard Carlson III, Michael Gallagher, Walter Hughes, Paul Leidy, Cyrus Manahan, Antonio Perez, Fred Schalek, Brett Schmidt, and Kevin Endicott, and Assistant Superintendent James Russo Jr.

The Department hosted a sendoff with well wishes for a safe journey that included a bench dedication at Central Office Headquarters honoring the NJDOC lives lost during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bench is intended to serve as a reminder of the profound impact these individuals made within our Department, while maintaining the legacy of the dearly departed who selflessly gave their lives in service to the state of New Jersey.

HERO SPOTLIGHT

NJDOC's Special Operations Group (SOG) Officers McCoy and Jackson, with the support of their K9 Wentz, tracked the scent of a missing child in Burlington County, leading to a safe recovery.



Pictured above is Officer Terry McCoy and Bloodhound Wentz





NJDOC Social Services staff meet with individuals to determine post-release needs and provide linkages to community resources.

NJDOC Launches \$3M Grant Program to Support Reentry

BY LAUREN LAGGY

When an individual enters the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC), the process for ensuring they have the tools they need to reintegrate into society commences. Reintegration resources serve as a critical lifeline for individuals navigating life post-incarceration, helping support various needs from mental and physical health, housing, employment, and other basic needs. Not only do reintegration services help individuals start their journey on the right foot, but it's also proven to reduce an individual's likelihood to re-offend, further supporting public safety and local economies.

To further enhance these efforts, the

NJDOC launched a \$3M grant program that supports the enhancement and development of these programs by community-based organizations in communities for which individuals will return. The New Jersey Locally Empowered, Accountability and Determined (NJLEAD) grant further diversifies the pool of reentry service providers partnering with the Department and increases service offerings. The grant is now open and includes three funding categories:

Reintegration Service Coordination in Urban Communities

This category supports a Municipal Reintegration Service Coordinator, who



will serve as the lead convener of the interagency interdisciplinary service coordination for the Mayor's Office and the Chief Liaison to the New Jersey Department of Corrections, Office of Community Engagement and Reentry Initiatives.

Reentry Supportive Services in Urban Communities

This category will support nonprofit community-based corporations or associations for the provision of comprehensive post-release case management and wraparound supportive services for people returning home from incarceration.

Innovative Reentry Career and Entrepreneurial Initiatives in New Jersey

This category will support nonprofit community-based corporations or associations for the provision of innovative reentry initiatives that will increase and improve the ability of the formerly incarcerated to achieve economic stability.

"Community partnerships are essential to establishing successful reintegration for people exiting the NJDOC system," said NJDOC Acting Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn, Esq. "The ultimate goal is to ensure a smooth and successful transition out of prison. We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to launch the NJLEAD program to bridge the robust services provided within the NJDOC with the valiant work of our community partners."

"There is no one-size-fits-all model for reentry," said Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Programs, Dr. Darcella Sessomes, who is leading the initiative for the Department. "Successful reintegration occurs when someone leaves our facilities after having taken advantage of the opportunities provided inside the prison and can continue their transformation once they return to their community. Reintegration requires a concerted effort between the Department, public agencies, local reentry organizations, and private citizens. The Department is proud to offer funding to support local community agencies to enhance and expand critical post-release reentry services to ensure everyone has an opportunity for a second chance."

The grant application period for all categories is now open with Notices of Grant Opportunities (NGOs) posted on the New Jersey Department of Corrections website <https://www.nj.gov/corrections/pages/grants.html>.





PHOTO GALLERY: NJDOC WELLNESS COMMITTEES RAISE AWARENESS ON IMPORTANT CAUSES

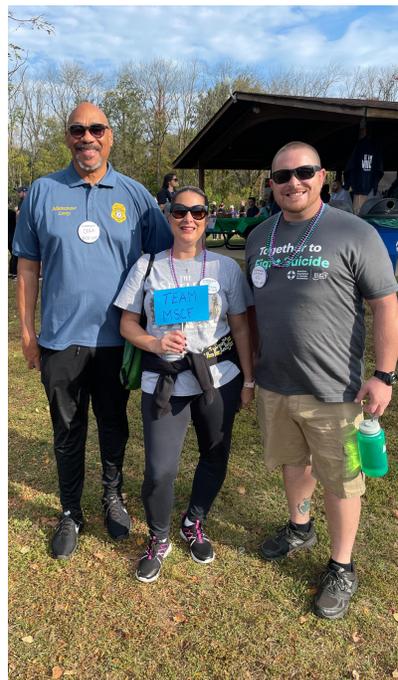
NJDOC's Wellness Committees hosted a series of state-wide employee events raising awareness on the topics of suicide prevention, domestic violence, and breast cancer. The following is a recap of those activities.



NJDOC Central Office Headquarters staff held a suicide awareness walk on grounds with a table set up providing suicide awareness information.



Staff gathered for a picture at the suicide awareness walk held at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women.



Team Mid-State Correctional Facility helped bring awareness to the cause by participating in a suicide awareness walk.



Garden State Youth Correctional Facility Staff poses for a picture while holding social media hashtag signs to raise awareness for suicide prevention.



Staff from New Jersey State Prison who participated in the suicide prevention walk in Hamilton, N.J. are pictured above.





NJDOC Officers stopped by events at Central Office Headquarters to extend their support for Breast Cancer Awareness.



Staff at Garden State Youth Correctional Facility showed their support for Domestic Violence Awareness.



Members of the Central Office Workforce Wellness Committee distributed resources to not only raise awareness, but to provide valuable information to victims.



Members of the Workforce Wellness Committee provided information and handed out purple items such as pens and face masks to help bring awareness to domestic violence.



Garden State Youth Correctional Facility staff set up tables providing Breast Cancer Awareness resources for staff.



Officers joined in on some of the activities at the day's event.