



INSIDE CORRECTIONS

November 2013, Volume 19

Indiana Department of Correction Employee Newsletter



From the Commissioner

Bruce C. Lemmon

In the spirit of giving thanks, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your service to the citizens of Indiana. Thank you for continuing to meet challenges head on and moving our agency forward. I am grateful to be surrounded by such a talented group of employees.

The State Employees' Community Campaign has wrapped up another successful year, and Indiana Department of Correction employees should be proud to know that we contributed a large amount to its success. As an agency we raised over \$350,000 to provide help and hope to our neighbors across the state and around the world.

The theme of this year's campaign, "Indiana: The State that Gives," more than reflects the culture of our Department. I am constantly amazed by our staff's generosity and service to others. Whether it's donating to a local food pantry, raising money for Special Olympics athletes across the state or helping one of your fellow employees, IDOC staff are the best in the country.

As the holiday season is now upon us, please take a moment to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for. My wish for you and your family is a holiday season filled with happiness and good health. I look forward to what 2014 has in store as we continue to take the Department from good to great.

Sincerely,



Inside This Issue

Hello? PEN Opens First Call Center	2
Indiana Innovation	3
K-9 Memorial	3
Promoting Positive Correctional Culture...	4
NIC Workgroup	4
Electronic Success...	5
The Bold and the Beautiful	5
What is Your Role...	6
"It's All About Learning"...	8
Wabash Valley Chemo Bags	9
Blind Faith, 5 Years of Success	10
Why CHANGE?	12
Suicide Watch Companions...	13
Problem Solving Class...	12
New Castle Adds Cutting Edge Barbering School	15
Sprouting Success	15
Pendleton Gets Physical...	16
The PCF Forms Partnerships...	17
The Indiana Justice Model...	18
Westville in the Driver's Seat!...	19
IDHS and IDOC Join Forces...	20
Offenders Teach Other Offenders Basics...	21
The Long and Winding Road...	22
Looking Toward Tomorrow...	22
Kids Spend Father's Day in Prison...	24



The Department's Vision & Mission

VISION

As the model of public safety, the Indiana Department of Correction returns productive citizens to our communities and supports a culture of inspiration, collaboration, and achievement.

MISSION

The Indiana Department of Correction advances public safety and successful reentry through dynamic supervision, programming, and partnerships.

Hello? PEN Opens First Call Center

By Becky Deeb, PEN, New Enterprise Development Manager, PIO

The first Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) correctional industry call center opened at the Branchville Correctional Facility (BCF). The call center is a joint venture with PEN and a private sector company. Thirty-four (34) offender workers are making business to business calls qualifying sales leads for outside sales representatives. All calls are recorded and monitored for quality assurance and training.

release employment. Many call center, customer service hubs and warehouse service centers have call center jobs for qualified, skilled communication specialists.

Expansion of the Branchville Call Center is underway to expand the number of positions to nearly sixty (60) offenders. Additional sites at other IDOC adult facilities are also being considered for new call centers. ■

The operation started in late spring with training of offenders and became fully operational in May 2013. On June 12, the Branchville Call Center was featured in a facility tour of IDOC Central Office Executive Staff including Commissioner Bruce Lemmon and Deputy Commissioner Randy Koester.



Commissioner Lemmon and members of Exec Staff listen in during a sales lead call. Call Center 2: Offenders working the Branchville Call Center are the first to participate in such a venture.

The Branchville Call Center is a first for IDOC and PEN. This groundbreaking, new industry was a collaborative effort of the staff at BCF, Indiana Office of Technology (IOT), IDOC Central Office and PEN. The offenders are learning valuable job skills that will aid in finding viable post-

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Indiana Innovation

By Randy Koester, Deputy Commissioner of Reentry

Indiana has become known as a national leader in many areas of government, especially corrections. It can be easy to rest on our laurels, knowing we are doing great things. Yet the question always remains: is there something we can do better?

As part of this proud tradition of Hoosier originality and improvement, Governor Pence has developed the new INnovation Award to recognize state agencies that implement novel programs that save taxpayer dollars, or provide increased or better service. We are confident that IDOC will continue to advance correctional services and will have many great developments to nominate for this exciting award over the coming months. Nominations are accepted continuously, and one or more awards may be handed out by the Governor during any given month.

As your facility or office puts into practice cost-savings measures, please keep this award in mind and submit your nominations to the dedicated address, IAward@idoc.IN.gov.

Legislative Affairs

On May 23, the Indiana Women's Prison had the distinct honor of hosting U.S. Senator Coats' Chief of Staff Mr. Mike McMains and Ms. Ginny Cain the Senator's Central Indiana Regional Director. The idea for a tour came out of a conversation between Ms. Cain, and Central Office staff on what's life like behind the walls, particularly for women and mothers and the various rehabilitative services and re-entry programs IDOC provides to offenders. In November, Ms. Cain's final stop was the Indianapolis Reentry and Education Facility to see first-hand how IDOC prepares offenders for a successful re-entry back into their community.

Making a Difference

Agents and supervisors from the Indianapolis Parole District #3 Office participated in "24-Hours of Booty," a bicycle ride to fight cancer. The ride is in its 10th year and is sponsored by the LIVESTRONG foundation. Participants rode the 3.5-mile "Booty Loop" surrounding the campus of Butler University. A portion of the monies raised will directly benefit the Simon Cancer Center, Indiana University. Each rider in the event raised funds, allowing the team to exceed their goal of \$2,500.



Staff from the Indianapolis Parole District's 24-Hours of Booty Team

Jails Division

We were recently able to enjoy a networking session for Chief Jail Inspectors, hosted by the National Institute of Corrections. Throughout the event, we were able to discuss with other agencies throughout the country some of the difficult issues facing jail inspectors today. Some of the hottest topics discussed were compliance with PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) standards, transport of pregnant offenders, and medical/mental health staffing and treatment availability.

Community Corrections

Three new counties (Noble, Huntington, and Fulton) have joined community corrections, for a grand total of 83 participating counties. Additionally, 10 established community corrections agencies have now agreed to provide work release beds for state offenders, increasing the total number of work release beds by 165. ■

K-9 Memorial

By Neil Potter, Public Information Officer, Pendleton Correctional Facility



Officers from Pendleton Correctional Facility's Honor Guard place a wreath at the K-9 Memorial in Anderson, IN.

Members of the Pendleton Correctional Facility's (PCF) Honor Guard were selected to participate in the dedication of a new K-9 Officer Memorial erected at The Gardens at Willowcrest Park, a division of Loose Funeral Homes and Crematory located in Anderson, Indiana.

During the dedication program conducted on May 18, 2013, PCF employees Walter Peterson, J.C. Jackson, and Yvonne Peckham placed a wreath at the memorial honoring K-9 Officers who lost their lives in the line of duty and those canines that have faithfully served, retired, and passed on. Speakers for the event included Anderson Mayor Kevin Smith and Anderson Police Chief Larry Crenshaw.

"I would like to publicly thank everyone involved in organizing this event for allowing our facility the tremendous honor of being part of this enduring tribute to these canines that have faithfully served with distinction to promote public safety," expressed Superintendent Zatecky. ■

Promoting Positive Correctional Culture...Long Name, Amazing Results!

By Amy Eickmeier, Unit Team Manager, Wabash Valley Correctional Facility

Private sector, public sector...you hear people saying it all the time. "Nobody listens to me." "My ideas just get tossed by the uppity ups." "Morale here is terrible." It doesn't have to be that way. So the Indiana Department of Correction launched the Promoting Positive Corrections Culture (PPCC) program. The goal is a better place for staff to work and for offenders to live. Wabash Valley Correctional Facility (WVCF) Superintendent Richard Brown decided to start from scratch. A new committee made up of staff who routinely display a positive outlook went to work on the objectives of PPCC Executive Directive #12-14.

Superintendent Brown developed vision and mission statements for the facility. The mission is that WVCF promotes a positive correctional culture by having a committee that is dedicated to making all staff feel welcome, making sure all staff voices are heard and boosting staff morale. The vision is that by promoting a positive culture, WVCF will be a place where staff feel safe to come to work, enjoy their jobs and want to remain a WVCF employee. Superintendent Brown also clearly defined the roles of the committee members, training department, superintendent and all other staff in ensuring that PPCC will be meaningful and successful at WVCF. "I have the foundation in place, now we build!"

The PPCC Committee took over from there. First off they set up a suggestion box for staff to submit ideas they would like to have considered that they believe will improve the facility's culture. The ideas started coming in quickly and the committee works to determine what suggestions are feasible and which ones can't be implemented.

Those ideas are sent out to every staff member at WVCF by email and they are also printed and posted in a special information bulletin board that hangs in the Administration Building. One suggestion that has been successfully implemented; allowing staff to bring in larger-sized sealed drinks so they can take advantage of sales on the larger-sized bottles and have enough to drink for long shifts. If an idea won't work an explanation is included.

Another way that the PPCC committee stays in touch with all facility employees is through the use of a monthly newsletter that is prepared and distributed to provide information to staff about PPCC events, topics such as Good to Great or leadership skills, inspirational quotes, encouraging articles from our administrators, and to welcome new staff and recognize older staff by their WVCF anniversary dates. The newsletter was the result of brainstorming by the PPCC Committee on how they could keep staff involved in changing WVCF's culture and a desire to have a place to recognize staff accomplishments and projects.

The Committee knows staff have to "buy in" and that includes line staff, supervisors and our contractual providers like Aramark and Corizon. So elections were held at the facility and two team members per shift and two per contractual provider were selected. Pretty "democracy" like right? These outreach members provide a voice by assisting in PPCC events and activities. They help out in a big way welcoming new staff, providing tours and positive informal training within the correctional environment. The PPCC Committee also joined forces with the WVCF Employee Appreciation



The WVCF PPCC committee addresses facility staff during a recall meeting.

Committee and assisted with the annual Employee Appreciation Week activities. Teresa Littlejohn, who has worked in custody and now in administration, has been the driving force behind all that the PPCC Committee has accomplished. Her unending enthusiasm and hard work helps keep the committee motivated to keep making positive changes that will benefit all WVCF staff. Between Superintendent Brown's support of his staff, their ideas and how they feel and the dedicated PPCC team, Positive Corrections Culture is not just an idea, it is a reality. ■

National Institute of Corrections Workgroup

Becky Deeb, PEN, New Enterprise Development Manager, PIO

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) has assembled a workgroup to develop an employer driven model for connecting offenders to meaningful work upon release. The workgroup includes the perspective of probation, law enforcement, workforce development, NIC program development and correctional industries. PEN's Operation and Job Placement Manager Doug Evans is a member of the NIC workgroup. The results of their work will be presented at the National Correctional Industries Association (NCIA) national training conference in April 2014. ■

Electronic Success-Hitting all the Right Buttons

By Shannon Bowling, Program Review/Audit Division

As of January 1, 2012 the Indiana Department of Correction became the first state in the nation to present its American Correctional Association (ACA) standards in a completely electronic format. This meant several things for the Department, facilities, ACA managers, and ACA Auditors. The constant for everyone was CHANGE. We know in corrections this is sometimes a hard pill to swallow but we also know that it is inevitable in this business, especially when we constantly strive for Best Practices.

One of the biggest changes for the Department was the money that has been saved over the last eighteen months. Due to the electronic process, the Program Review/Audit Division no longer has to travel to each facility every year, costing the Department funds for hotels, per diem, gas, and wear and tear on state vehicles. We, along with our subject matter expert collaterals, are able to review the standards from Central Office. Each facility saved money as well. There wasn't a need to purchase classification folders to place the documentation in, paper for the documentation, highlighters, bullets, tabs, etc. for use on paper files. The use of our electronic format allowed the state to develop consistency between all facilities in practice. The format, for those that are not familiar, is based on PowerPoint but utilizes Adobe X Pro.



The Program Review/Audit Division solicited assistance from our subject matter experts within IDOC to

develop a template of Best Practice documentation for use by all ACA Managers. Also, since every facility has their PowerPoint presentation saved to our share drive they are able to review the presentation from any facility they wish. This allows for a true team effort when preparing for an ACA Audit.

Throughout the last eighteen months, nine facilities and our Parole Division have completed Re-Accreditation

Audits, all of which have been recommended for Re-Accreditation. The reactions from our visiting committees have been predominantly very positive. Kenya Golden, ACA Standards and Accreditation Specialist, stated, "Auditors have been raving about the electronic format in Indiana." If you would like to know more about the ACA process or our electronic proves, please, feel free to contact the Program Review/Audit Division. ■

The Bold and the Beautiful

By Rich Larsen, Wabash Valley Correctional Facility, PIO

The Wabash Valley Correctional Facility has concrete proof of the power of recycling! Say you had a pile of ugly broken up concrete, lots and lots of it? Wabash Valley, in the course of refurbishing walk ways around the facility had quite a debris pile. Physical Plant Director Roger Dagley's Maintenance and Grounds Keeping team came up with a plan to not only get rid of the pile but do something unique, useful AND ethically pleasing with the concrete.



Before

The project started with water seepage in an area near the facility Maintenance Building. A broken field drain tile produced standing water near a drainage ditch. The combination of the two problems led to the overhaul of the drainage ditch into a concrete work of art! The field tile was fixed and the ditch was widened to more efficiently carry the water out for drainage.



After

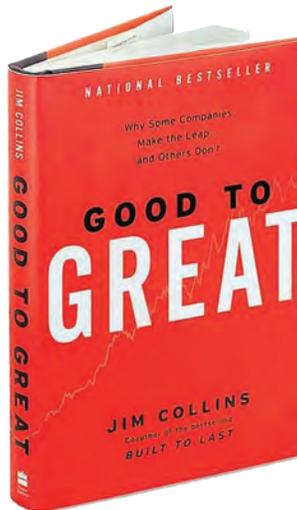
The old concrete was then shaped and used to line the drainage ditch. This helps control the flow of water during heavy rains and large snows. Without the concrete lining, the walls and floor of the ditch would erode away. The concrete was shaped like something found in a landscapers show room and the finished product is a sight to behold! Deputy

Commissioner of Operations, Jim Basinger called it "truly remarkable!" Areas at the entrance to the facility also received the royal treatment. Dagley says as long as the discarded concrete supply holds out more drainage areas around the facility will be re-worked into works of art! ■

What is Your Role in Being "Good To Great" ?

By Chaun Meagher, Training Officer, Logansport Juvenile Correctional Facility

In most cases, someone, somewhere within the Department of Correction or another state agency has invited you to a different way of thinking. The book "Good To Great" written by Jim Collins has been feverishly pitched through the chain of command and with "Great" reason. Like a teenager being asked how their day was and answering with a modest "good", many of us have said the same about our jobs. Our jobs are



good, our departments we work in are good, the Department of Correction seems... well, yes, good. This book is the gauntlet being thrown down. Why would we want to settle for just good? In fact "good is the enemy of great". Good is comfortable and can be easy. Good is the symbol of "ya that will do". The coined phrase often used is "that's good enough for me". No one ever says "that is great enough for me". So where do we go from here to break out of this "good" rut we are in?

For those of you who have read this manual on how to go from "Good To Great", many concepts have been gathered that have proven to be successful: Level 5 Leadership, getting the right people on the bus and making sure they are in the right place on the bus, confronting the brutal facts of our current reality, the infamous Hedgehog Concept, "stop doing" lists are more important than "to do" lists, and "crawl walk run" to name a few. These theories are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to innovative thoughts from this book. Reading and understanding how these ideas worked in the writing's respective situations is one thing, but the biggest step for some may be how this book will apply to their own work environments? This is one of the biggest questions that has

been brought to my attention so far: "I'm just an officer, how can I make this book work for me?" This question can be scary and if not answered may lead to our inability to grow from the knowledge attained. To help out with this inquiry I have asked a variety of people from different departments and facilities to assist me in providing their own perspective on how

they will implement these approaches into their work environments. Check them out.

"First stop on the 'Good to Great' road will be to start aiming for the Level 5 leadership and that is starting with putting the DOC first and the self second. Next will be to identify a hedgehog concept for my area that I supervise, particularly the MCF 'I bracket'. Being a custody shift supervisor, the natural concept for what we are best at and motivated for is security. We will focus the shift's effort to maintaining and testing physical security. "

**- D. Reagle,
Correctional Captain,
Miami Correctional Facility**

"There are many applications that I could implement personally and professionally for the rest of my life from the book Good to Great. Here are a few things that I would like to implement within the Education Division of IDOC. The hedgehog concept seems very applicable for both businesses and individuals. Questions posed in this concept were:

- What am I passionate about?
- What can I become great at?

I think that as I grow as a leader I can help others identify what they

are passionate about and what they can become truly great at. This would have a positive impact on me as a leader because I wouldn't have to worry about micromanaging. After I have grown in applying this concept on an individual level, I can see the benefits of it being applied for a group or division. The same questions would be asked but now it would be applied in a team dynamic. When the right people are on the bus then the direction and vision can be mapped out.

- What are we passionate about?
- What can we be the best at nationally?

Great leaders must have a ferocious resolve to make their company the absolute best and to detest mediocrity. I want Adult Education within IDOC to lead the way statewide with the highest performance outcomes because I know we are capable of it. If we are capable of being the best Adult Education program in the state, then we should be."

**- Josh Spear,
Program Coordinator/
Education Department (Adult),
Central Office**

"So I ask myself "Why Greatness?" What makes me feel compelled to try and create greatness? Why should I try and make it great? Isn't success enough? If it is, then I am probably in the wrong line of work. It isn't enough for me but when asking these questions to coworkers of mine, I got a lot of different answers. When reviewing all the answers, I found that it results back to good being the evil of great. Most are OK with being just good enough at what they do. Does that mean they are the wrong people on the bus? Hard to say. Maybe they are just in the wrong seat on the bus. Firing bad employees is harder to do in DOC because of the training that

What is Your Role in Being "Good To Great?"

Article continued from page 6

has to take place to replace them and other factors. That isn't something that I have control or help with. I have to take responsibility to make great what I can in my area. My mini bus. :) I will be leading by example starting with getting help from mentors, making a personal Hedgehog Concept by reflecting on myself, and showing others by doing. I will work on inspiring standards, not personality. I will point to results in the great things of my Hedgehog Concept. I believe this will help others motivate themselves and hope that they want to develop their own Hedgehog Concept."

**- Elizabeth Donnelly,
Youth Developmental Specialist
(Officer), Logansport Juvenile
Correctional Facility**

"Primary immediate application from "Good to Great" for my application of the concepts is first getting the wrong people off the bus and the right people on the bus. Parole is not for everyone. I am currently in the process of making sure everyone is in the right seat before moving anyone off of the bus. Second, since "good is the enemy of great", I have implemented stretch goals and reward systems for measurable outcomes, i.e. drug screens and placements to "encourage" parole agents to stretch and grow as opposed to becoming stagnant. The last key application is the Hedgehog Concept. While we may not have an Economic Engine in Corrections, we can foster passion and we can focus on what we are best at, which is supervising sex offenders. We are refining this to not be a competence, but honestly to be the best supervisors of sex offenders anywhere! "

**- Victor Guarisco,
Assistant District Supervisor,
Parole District 7
New Castle**

"While I would like to think I could apply all the principals of the Good

to Great concept in my daily work life, I realize that the process takes a large amount of time. I have, however, chosen a few chapters that are the current focus of my plan to implement "Good to Great" in my practices. Without a doubt, the "Hedgehog Concept" is the main focal point for me right now. While I don't feel the 3 circle concept applies in my current position, the overall idea of the concept is what I focus on. Simply put, the concept leans toward the idea of being the best at a particular thing/ task/skill etc. I plan to implement this by not only understanding what I am passionate about and what I know I am good at but also by applying this for the people whom I supervise as well as the other staff members I have the privilege of influencing. I focus continually on the concept that living a Hedgehog Concept is not about trying to be the best at anything but understanding what I am the best at and exploiting that to the best of my ability. Succeeding in the thing I can be the best at and letting that drive my success through practicing many of the other characteristics outlined in the Good to Great concept like: practicing Level 5 leadership, confronting the brutal truths, understanding the benefits and down falls of technology accelerators and the concept of the "doom loop" to mention a few. Managing the benefit/curse of being a charismatic leader as well as a leader who wants to "lead with answers versus leading with questions" are all things that are challenges I face in developing myself into a "great" leader and my department into a "great" department."

**- Chuck Williams,
Training Coordinator III,
Miami Correctional Facility**

"Personally, I'd like to help bridge the gap between fiscal and operations. Collins speaks to understanding what you can (and cannot) be the best at, and I think that no matter

what the IDOC strives to be the best at, both sides must first understand why decisions are made and the impact of those decisions. When I was young, I would cringe when my mom's answer to why I couldn't do something was, "Because I said so." If she had explained her reasoning, I probably still wouldn't have liked her answer any better, but may have respected the decision a little more. If I have to deny a request, I want to be able to give reasons that people will understand (maybe not like, but understand). In turn, I've made an effort to get out into facilities and meet the people my decisions impact, and gain an understanding of why their requests are important to them. I will work hard to develop and maintain relationships with people in the field to ensure we are on the same page as we work towards a common agency goal."

**- Christina Emberson,
Financial Analyst,
Central Office**

What I saw in all of these keen resolutions was movement toward improvement and the cultivation not only in themselves but the need to enrich their surroundings also. I also saw the desire to support the people around them and help to facilitate greatness through their own interpretations of going from "Good To Great". They took a moment to look into the proverbial mirror and ask themselves the tough questions which would help them to reach these outcomes. These are only a few people out of our vast department. Just think, if we were able to continue our communication of this proven design where might we be in another 6 months from now? But, maybe the biggest question to be asked is are you happy with being just good or do you seek what you know you are capable of? ■

"It's All About Learning" at the Garden of Peace at Pendleton Juvenile

By Natalie Walker, Public Information Officer, Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility

“What is this?” “Is this weed or a plant?” “Is it ready to pick?” Venture Scout students at Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility (PNJ) frequently ask those questions as they survey their garden. “It’s all about learning” says Mr. Tony Mudrack, Science Teacher at Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility. The Garden of Peace was planted for the first time in the spring of 2013. Pendleton Juvenile Venture Scouting Program and Peace Learning Center partnered to develop the gardening project and create a Garden of Peace on facility grounds. Peace Learning Center and the Venture Scouts Crew #1888 collaborated with the PNJ educational department to make it a true team effort. Most of the Scouts have never been associated with the planning of or caring for a garden. PNJ Horticulture instructor Gary Ray has provided his expertise towards the project and says, “There is a lot of planning and work to a garden which the students are just beginning to find out.”

The Scouts began discussing the Garden of Peace project in January 2013. Mr. Ray and Peace Learning facilitators taught the students how to plan and care for a garden. Seed catalogs were distributed as the students had to plan their garden. Peace Learning Center Facilitator James “JT” Taylor implemented the focus on peace, conflict resolution, coping skills and environmental awareness. As the Scouts measured out the garden plot area, the seeds were planted and placed in the facility’s greenhouse. The students decided the Garden of Peace would include potatoes, strawberries, watermelon, beans, corn, beets, radishes, carrots, onions and cabbages. In the spring, students tilled up the land and planted the starters in the garden.



Venture Scouts at Pendleton Juvenile

The Peace Learning Center, based out of Indianapolis, Indiana, incorporates conflict resolution, cultural diversity and coping skills programs at PNJ. Group facilitators educate, inspire and empower people to live peacefully with the goal of healthy learning, workplace and community environments. At the facility, they promote programs which emphasize personal responsibility and life skills to be productive and successful. “The Horticulture program allows the students to discover personal peace through positive outdoor activities such as gardening,” says Peace Learning Center Facilitator Darren Bunton. Focusing on personal responsibility, problem solving, diversity appreciation, and environmental awareness, the Intervention Program is a holistic approach to positive change.

The Venture Scouts Unit at Pendleton Juvenile was established in 2010. The program was the Indiana Criminal Justice Association Warren W. Martin Program of the Year 2012. The Venturing program brings meaningful and creative activities enhancing leadership qualities and life skills to each Venture Scout. The program is a therapeutic program teaching the benefits of prosocial activities and life skills to heighten self-esteem and social growth. The Venture Scout program provides citizenship training,

character development and healthy living. Gardening is the main focus for Crew #1888 this summer. As a result, Scouts have earned a Gardening Scout Merit Badge. The Scouting Program at the facility continues to strive for new creative programming to create positive opportunities and life skills for the students. The program instills good character and morals the Scouts can use after they re-enter back into the community.

Superintendent Linda Commons remarked, “I have been impressed by the total team effort of the scouts and the staff at PNJ along with the Peace Learning Center to make the Garden of Peace a reality.” Regarding the Garden of Peace project, Mrs. Commons stated, “It reminds us all that it is truly wonderful to see the youth learning and working to give back to others.”



Gardening Merit Badge

The Garden of Peace project allows Scouts to learn important life lessons including where food comes from and how service helps others. “Through the nurturing of these plants, they may learn how to nurture those around them as they prepare to re-enter their communities upon release from the correctional system,” says Nat

Article continued on page 9

Wabash Valley Chemo Bags

By Josh Collins, Caseworker, Wabash Valley Correctional Facility PLUS Program

Many unpleasant thoughts and images occur when someone is told that chemotherapy or radiation therapy is needed; however, there are many good reasons to be optimistic as the journey towards surviving cancer begins. Medicine and medical research have made great strides in treating cancer and in making it more tolerable, both physically and emotionally. The Wabash Valley Correctional Facility PLUS unit is now doing its part to help cancer patients by creating beautiful yet functional individual works of art to comfort those battling this dreadful disease.

Since 1993, the compassionate team at Oncology Hematology Associates has provided unsurpassed care to Tri-State cancer patients. Their skilled physicians, nurses and other health care professionals work closely with patients and their families to develop treatment plans specifically designed to meet each patient's unique needs. The PLUS unit became aware of the great strides by Oncology Hematology

Associates through Dan Ashby, a PLUS unit volunteer. The PLUS unit offenders wanted to get involved by making and donating custom lap quilts to the patients. The PLUS unit has been creating quilts for years through donations of materials and fabric from communities and organizations nationwide. Material donated to the PLUS unit also lead to Offender Hector Ortiz designing a mock up tote bag, as a proposal to give to cancer patients.

The PLUS unit decided to call these special tote bags, "Chemo-bags." The PLUS unit donates the "Chemo-bags" to the cancer center and patients are given a Chemo-bag on their first visit for chemotherapy or radiation. Inside the tote bag patients also find a quilted lap blanket. The PLUS unit has so far donated 30 "chemo-bags" to the cancer center.

When most people imagine offenders in a prison, they probably see surly, unmotivated folks who don't want to



Offenders in the WVCF PLUS unit are making bags and lap quilts for cancer patients.

be there and may even be frightening. This couldn't be farther from the truth in the PLUS unit. They assist with everything from drawing the design and cutting the material to sewing the pieces together. PLUS Unit offenders are highly motivated and want to give back to the community. They are excited when they hear how their work is making a positive effect on others. "The quilts and totes I make in here make me feel more connected to the world outside of prison," stated Offender Michael Sims. ■

"It's All About Learning" at the Garden of Piece at Pendleton Juvenile

Article continued from page 8

Baker, Eastern Section Field Director, Crossroads of America, Boy Scouts of America. One Scout added, "It shows us how to plant, build character and make good decisions. It also provides us with skills we need for everyday life and things we can take with us and put in use when we return home."

When harvest time came for the Garden of Peace the Scouts donated the food to the Homeless Initiative located in downtown Indianapolis. The Homeless Initiative provides temporary and permanent housing for homeless individuals. One Scout commented that, "it is a good feeling that the vegetables which are being

grown are donated to help others." Helping others is one of the building blocks the Scouts emphasize towards building character. Another Scout comments, "that it's good to be outside and to work together as a team and do something good for the community."

Community projects are an emphasis of the Scouting program. Scouts collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House, conduct food drives at the facility for local food banks and a pet food drive for the Madison Humane Society. The Scouts made cupcakes for the local nursing home on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Other students at PNJ, not involved in the garden project, often ask how the garden is progressing. Several students ask to be part of the Garden of Peace project. The plan is to expand the garden plot, thereby involving more students in the project. The discussion and planning has already begun on the seeds and materials needed to increase the size of the garden. The planning and hard work is worth the smiles and the heightened self-esteem the garden contributes. Recently one Scout excitedly told his mother that he was allowed to taste a beet out of the garden and how delicious and sweet it tasted. He had never tried one before, but it is "All about learning!" ■

Blind Faith, 5 Years of Success!

By Ann Hubbard, Public Information Officer, Miami Correctional Facility

It may be one of the youngest programs out of the 37 throughout the nation, but it is probably one of the most recognized and celebrated," Jim Durst, Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ISBVI) Superintendent said at Miami Correctional Facility's Miami Accessible Media Project's (MAMP) 5-year celebration.

The facility celebrated the program's five-year existence with party subs from Subway and cake for the offenders and staff working in the program.



Staff from PEN Products, Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Indiana Department of Correction were present at the celebration.

The program was the brain-child of Jim and Leslie Durst. Leslie is the Indiana Educational Resource Center (IERC) Director at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Both agreed they had a vision, but that the present program has far exceeded anything they could have hoped for. It also has evolved from its original vision.

"That speaks to the guys who work in the program, the support of the administration from the Indiana Department of Correction, PEN Products, and the IERC," Jim said. They were willing to think outside of the box to help move the program along. "Superintendent Mark Sevier has been instrumental to the success of the program. Many other prison Braille programs have not had the benefit

of a superintendent who is willing to go above and beyond to provide opportunities for offenders through innovative programs." Because of this, what was thought to take nine months to a year, took four months when it came to getting some of the men certified to transcribe books.

"When we first came in this building it was empty," Leslie said of touring the facilities for the first time prior to opening. "It started with just 20 men and now look where we are – everyone working together to make this program successful."

The program currently has 52 offenders working in its different shops: Braille, Accessible/Digital File; large print; and tactile graphics departments. Of those, 33 have received their Library of Congress, National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Literary Braille Certification, eight have received their NLS Nemeth Braille Certification for Math and Science and one has received his NLS Music Braille Certification. Seventeen are also in the U. S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Certification for Computer Operator and Office Management program.

MAMP began in 2008 as a collaborative effort between the Indiana Department of Correction, Industries Division PEN Products, the Indiana Department of Education, Center for Exceptional Learners and the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

MAMP actually started out as the Miami Braille Project (MBP) but was quickly renamed because of the additions of all the other programs. Those changes were adopted as a response to the market and the movement of technology, according to Robert Eutz, MAMP's Program Director. The program has always

tried to be proactive instead of reactive, following the trends of technology and education. But none could envision the speed at which it took us to get here, he added. "There are Braille programs that have been in place since the 1960s that have remained Braille programs only and have not expanded into the other types of production we have."

Eutz has been with the program since the beginning. "We've got a great program, a great bunch of guys."

The growth has also seen the addition of another employee, Deb Krise. She works with the new students, and does a lot of the paperwork, freeing Eutz up to work with the offenders who are further along in the program.

The program may have evolved and changed, but the goals have not. The program's goal is to provide low-cost, quality accessible instructional materials to school-aged children who are blind or have low vision, in a timely and efficient manner, while providing a skill to offenders, thus reducing recidivism.

During the 2011-2012 school year, MAMP provided 105,093 Braille pages, 16,753 graphics pages, 1,254 volumes and a total of 136 books; 49,527 pages of accessible digital files (including PDF, EPUB and HTML) and 91 total books; and 584,514 pages of large print, 2,571 volumes with 873 large print books. These were provided to the Indiana Department of Education plus 37 agencies throughout the United States - thus saving the state of Indiana an estimated \$500,000. The numbers for this current school year are looking even better.

But it's not about the money or the savings to the state that has the offenders in the program hooked.

Article continued on page 11

Blind Faith, 5 Years of Success!

Article continued from page 10



(L to R) William Carpenter, Gordon Northrup, Donald Jones, Curtis Nimme, and James Manley, with MAMP who have been there since it started.

There are five men left of the original 20 who started in the program: William Carpenter whose is certified in tactile graphics, literary, and Nemeth (math & science transcription); Curtis Nimme, who is certified in Music transcription, graphics and literary; Donald Jones, who is text book and Nemeth certified; Gordon Northrup, who is certified in literary, tactile graphics and working on his Nemeth certification; and James Manley who is certified in Nemeth.

Eutz said that ideally most of the workers will be cross-trained to do everything in the shop, but they are hired for specific jobs. Once they find their niche they can move into that job. "Everyone has their own strengths. The more certifications you get the better," he added.

"These are marketable skills we are learning," Jones said. "I came in with a certain amount of skills, but it's gone far beyond that. I'm looking towards the probability of guaranteed employment when I'm released. This is a skill-set that is highly recognized."

But besides the skills he's learned, Jones said "We have a purpose."

"It's given me a sense of self-worth," Northrup said of his new vocation. "It's taken me from hopeless to hopeful.

I've been a welder all my life and there's not a lot of gratification in that job, except maybe seeing the end product. This is the most gratifying work I've ever done in my life."

Eutz said the offenders in the program have to "buy into it." They have to know they are making an important contribution to the lives of those for whom they are producing the educational materials. It's easy to see who does and who doesn't have belief in the program. You either love it or you don't. Those that love it will do well."



MAMP PDF workers

Jones said "I like the fact that when I leave here I don't have to go for interviews. If you establish yourself as a transcriber and your name is out there as someone who is proficient and dependable, you'll have work right away. We've done that. We are getting the work done correctly and on time. That's what everyone cares about in this industry."

"When I was first interviewed (five years ago), they asked me why I wanted to be a part of the program," Manley said. He told them about not being able to help his children with their homework and that the job would give him the opportunity to help someone better their education. "I've learned that I don't have to be out there to help someone else. I help people around the country. I

may never know their names but I've touched them in some way. And in the process I've learned a lot about computers and gained new skills."

Carpenter said he found out he had produced some graphics for a college student who was studying to be an ear, nose and throat specialist. "I'm helping to educate that student and if I don't do it right she will suffer."

"And Robert (Eutz) is very adamant about that," Manley said of the push to be accurate in their transcriptions. "He has stressed from the beginning the importance of quality. We have set high standards here and are held accountable for that. Recipients of our work have come to know that our shop produces a good quality product."

"We've been ahead of the curve all along," Carpenter said of their contribution to the market. "I'm extremely proud to say I'm with the Braille Program.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity," Manley added.

The motivation for many of the guys is not just the goal that is posted around the building, but the letters and thank-you's they receive from the recipients of their work. One such letter came from a fifth grader. Tacked on the bulletin board in her youthful penmanship it read (as written):

"Thank you for making my digital files for my iPad. I like it better than my large print books because it fits in my backpack and I get to sit with other people. I get to sit at a regular desk, the PDF files I can make it as big as I want; and I am no longer frustrated with huge books, and small print. Thank you for my Braille books too, butt honestly I like my iPad with your PDF files. :)."

Signed "Your almost 5th grade student, Amy." ■

Why CHANGE?

By Suzanne Laker, Program Coordinator, DeKalb County Community Corrections

The DeKalb CHANGE Academy is for at risk secondary youth, kids who face expulsion from the four school corporations within DeKalb County. An integral program within the juvenile component, DeKalb County Community Corrections calls it a key program, vital to the youngsters' future success.

CHANGE Academy uses evidence-based practices to identify risk factors, assess criminogenic needs, provide interventions, and secure wraparound services for program participants. An online, standards-based curriculum is used to address academic proficiency and to assist with credit recovery. Clearly, the many benefits of the intervention justify the program's implementation from both short and long-term perspectives as it not only seeks to reduce immediate spending on juvenile out-of-county placement, but it is designed to promote even greater reductions in potential spending through a delivery of services aimed at minimizing future criminal activity in the teens years and beyond.

Reducing recidivism among DeKalb County juvenile offenders is one of the most important goals of the intervention and is accomplished by a curricular designed to improve proficiency in the five core competency domains that include Pro-Social Skills, Moral Reasoning Skills, Academics, Workforce Development, and Independent Living Skills. Evidence-based programs that incorporate the Eight Principles of Effective Intervention as recommended by the IDOC are utilized at the CHANGE Academy. Additionally, wraparound services are secured in efforts to meet the unique individual and criminogenic needs of program participants—the communities' most at risk youth and a previously underserved population in DeKalb County.

The program strives to meet the unique needs of the county's at risk juvenile population. However, the benefits of the CHANGE Academy extend beyond the participants and families served. All four school districts in DeKalb County benefit from the program. A product of the collaborative efforts of the four local school districts and DeKalb County Community Corrections, the CHANGE Academy's primary purpose is to provide academic support to the at risk students. Recently launched in Auburn, this innovative, year-round program serves to minimize the number of expelled students which allows local schools to reflect lowered expulsion rates than would be incurred if the program did not exist. In addition, the CHANGE Academy enables students to not only continue earning high school credits, but provides them with the opportunity for credit recovery. Due, in part, to the academic support provided, students are less likely to drop out of high school. With

have been assigned placement to report and remain at the facility every day of program operations. Hence, participants must report to the Academy each day instead of perhaps engaging in further delinquency during the day hours when most youth are in school.

The CHANGE Academy serves as a viable option in efforts to reduce local government spending on costs of out-of-county juvenile placements. Out-of-county juvenile detention is expensive and, as an intensive supervision probation program, the CHANGE Academy assists in efforts to keep local at risk youth in their homes by providing a place where they are supervised each day. With the focus on the prevention of reoffending, the program aims to reduce future spending on incarceration by minimizing the likelihood of future criminality for these offenders as they age to adulthood.

The CHANGE Academy is a "win-win" situation for all—and most of all the juveniles in DeKalb County in need of services. Ultimately, all stakeholders of the county benefit from the CHANGE Academy. As staff strive to create the



the program's emphasis on literacy and education, CHANGE Academy staff strives to improve the literacy and graduation rates in DeKalb County.

The DeKalb County juvenile justice system benefits from the program too by offering a sentencing option previously unavailable to the DeKalb Circuit Court Juvenile Division. Moreover, the program serves as an intensive supervision probation program requiring juveniles who

necessary CHANGE in its participants, the program is creating a positive CHANGE for its community and enhancing the quality of life for all residents in DeKalb County.

CHANGE Academy is administered in accordance with the requirements of the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) for state funding and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) for standards-based curriculum. ■

Suicide Watch Companions Take the Road Less Traveled

By John Harvil, Program Director, Westville Correctional Facility

The Suicide Watch Companion Program began on November 30, 2006, via Executive Directive #06-51. The goal of this program is “to enhance the Department’s Suicide Prevention Plan.”

Criteria for becoming a Suicide Watch Companion are to be a resident or graduate of the PLUS(Purposeful Living Units Serve) Program, maintain a conduct record clear of Class A or Class B violations for one year, be certified by a qualified mental health professional as being mentally stable, and have volunteered for program participation. Offenders who meet these criteria are required to attend an initial training class and to attend a refresher class every six months, while serving as a Suicide Watch Companion.

In a recent in-house article written by Tom Patterson, WCC Caseworker, Mr. Patterson wrote, “Some might be surprised to see an offender in service to another. In this case it is one who



Westville's Suicide Companions



Westville's Suicide Companions

watches over another offender who has threatened suicide.”

The offender sat at a table outside a cell in the infirmary unit and, while maintaining constant and direct visual observation, would occasionally stand to check on another offender that had been placed in a locked cell beside him.

It was the first time for Offender Ron Tiede and he spoke of the service he had volunteered to do. Yes, he was required to put in 320 hours to meet the PLUS community service criteria but he had something to say about the direction of his life. Convicted on a “meth” charge, he has six more years to serve but the demand of being a suicide companion—the rigor of the training and the opportunity to serve—seemed to have elevated belief in himself.

“There’s no sense in living a negative life,” Tiede said. “You’ve got to change and I am not coming back here. This PLUS program has given me one of the best chances yet with one of the lowest recidivism rates around.”

He applied for the select group who train for the job and have good conduct. He will essentially sit for four hour stretches outside a cell attentive and alert to another offender who is at risk of suicide. He must know the nature of suicide, the reasons behind

it, the risk factors and the signs and symptoms when suicide is imminent. He must know how to listen, maintain confidentiality and anticipate the actions of his charge.

Program Director John Harvil said, “The suicide companion position is like no other at the prison. They must agree to take on accountability, update their training every six months and give the job priority over all other activity.” Harvil said offenders must be willing to report on another offender, maintain a log, be vigilant, non-intrusive and respectful. “The companion must pledge to do the job and understand the importance of it,” Harvil stipulated.

It’s a job that attracts some 60 offenders upon each training session, according to the administrator. It is one where offenders are motivated, ask questions and share experiences. “I know, it sounds like a disaster waiting to happen, but offenders can be responsible to one another.”

During the companion’s shift he must limit verbal exchanges. He doesn’t attempt to counsel or offer any item, even water. He cannot eat during his shift, read or bring a watch but is allowed periodic breaks by staff on the unit. Even so for Tiede the rigors of the job offer an opportunity to make himself better. He said that repetition is a key. “You just have to keep trying to do the right thing over and over until it becomes natural.” “Change is hard,” the offender said. “It is easy to stay the way you are. You have to step out of your comfort zone and it is a constant battle every day.”

A religious man, Tiede is a pipe fitter by trade and a licensed plumber. He is a high school graduate and

Problem Solving Class / The Path to Reentry at WCC

By Tom Patterson, Westville Correctional, Case Worker

Bill Cosby, the famous comedian and more recently spokesman on parenting, has written a book with information used by WCC's Problem Solving class. Cosby is critical of inadequate parenting in general that leads eventually to prison. It is a book that lays the facts out about lack of discipline, poverty, drugs, broken and dysfunctional families. The book puts offenders on the line and allows no excuses.

On this day, they sat in their second class with eight offenders around a table. They knew that they would be confronted about their views. It is a three hour class and five sessions long. Offenders are expected to participate, do the homework and produce essays and test results that show they have mastered the material. Both GED teachers David McLiver from the PLUS unit and Randy Radke from Grace College guide the class through the book and exercises. Those who can raise their grade level to a literacy requirement of eighth grade and complete the problem solving are given a time cut.

The class is part of Literacy and Basic Life Skills, is oriented towards reentry and graduates must show basic literacy mastery proven by a recent Adult Basic Education test (TABE).

The offenders come in ready to "rock and roll," the mood is quiet—almost somber, but the facilitators give it some levity to smooth the way for the all too important concepts being put forth. The class takes offenders through some soul searching and self examination and if taken with enough determination will develop for them a personal plan for successful and positive reentry.

Using a multifaceted approach McLiver pushes each offender to

participate. He sees it as helping each as an individual as well as teaching the group as a whole and likens it to a man walking the beach throwing starfish back into the sea, a seemingly insurmountable task. But when asked by an observer what difference it made, he picked up a starfish and threw it in. "It made a difference to that one," said the beach walker.

Offenders are continually questioned about how they will act in certain situations on the outside, how they will survive, how they will avoid violating the agreement of their release.

At one point McLiver digressed from the subject at hand to speak of a fast changing world, a world that has changed in a year or two or many. "How many know what an iPhone is?" he asked. All, of course, knew. None realize it had advanced through five versions in just four years to its present model. "Things are changing fast. How are you going to react? How are you going to prepare?"

He asked about their expectations and their well being. "Where will you live? How will you drive? How will you work? You need a plan." One answer was "brainstorming," a process of considering a lot of facts, items, methods, paths all at once. A process where nothing is set aside and all are considered. The object was to think outside of the box. He said, "Give me all the other uses for a paper clip." And the offenders started giving answers—anything was OK—this was brain storming. Lists of uses for the paper clip were drawn up. All were read aloud. It was an exercise that could have many responses, some improbable, but like the problems that they would encounter these could be narrowed down to one—one good,

Article continued on page 16

Suicide Watch Companions Take the Road Less Traveled

Article continued from page 13

attended Ivy Tech but now finds himself in prison on the drug charge, something over which he just shakes his head in sheer vexation.

Sandra Sharp—former Program Director of the PLUS unit, where offenders must spend 16 months to qualify for a time cut—is pleased with the success of the suicide companion program. The hours of community service demanded of PLUS offenders is a tall order but she says, "Who can relate better to an offender than another offender? It is a matter of trust. Just because they are offenders doesn't mean they can't empathize."

Current Program Director, Jessica Rain has high praise for the program and has witnessed the positive, character building changes that occur when these men step up to serve in another's hour of need. Past Director of Psychological Services, Thomas Allen recognized the importance and value of the service these men provide and gave them high marks for quality and compassion. He would often use information from the companions to initiate conversation and treatment with those on suicide watch.

On June 19, 2013, the Suicide Companion Training class was presented to 20 new trainees and as the required refresher course for 27 current Suicide Companions. Soon they will be on the front lines, potentially making the difference between life and death. They certainly have our trust, admiration, and gratitude. ■

New Castle Adds Cutting Edge Barbering School

By Andrea Latimore, Instructor, New Castle Correctional Facility

Andrea Latimore has high hopes for her “students” who make the final cut in the New Castle Correctional Facility Barbering Program. Ms. Latimore has worked in the industry for over 22 years and wants to be a vessel in training her students to become licensed professionals by creating endless opportunities for students to transition from behind the wall and work as productive barbers and/or become distributors of barber supplies. Ultimately, she wants the students to be able to own barber shops and become platform artists or maybe even go back to school to become instructors so when the students return to society they return as productive citizens.

Launching the program was not easy. Barber Instructor Latimore worked diligently with the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency to get the program established and up and running with the strong support of Assistant Superintendent Jennifer French and Education Director Michael Thomblenson.



Barber Instructor Andrea Latimore has worked in the industry for over 22 years.

Ms. Latimore specializes in seven different areas. They are Barbering, Cosmetology, Barber Instructor, Cosmetology Instructor, Massage Therapy, Esthetic, and a Work Place Specialty License.

The first group of students started late last summer and their work was cut out for them. They needed to have at least two years and one month remaining on their sentence and be conduct report free to fit the criteria for enrollment in the barbering program. The program is a 1500 clocked hour program that offers participants the chance to become a licensed professional after a written and practical test with a 75 % passing rate to display the skills learned while in the program. While in this program Ms. Latimore asks that the students maintain an 80% academic average in the written and practical areas of the program. Collectively her students have an academic average of a 94%. Ms. Latimore has found that students behind the wall are better focused and will have more experience in practical work because the facility has a population of about 3,100 plus clients (offenders) to work on. The ten students in her class cut about 80 to 100 clients a day to meet the needs of the facility.

Students study from a curriculum that teaches them about infection control and safe work practices, sanitation, tools, implements and equipment, treatment of the hair and scalp, facial massage, shaving, men and women hair cutting and styling, hair replacement, chemicals texture services (such as perms, relaxers and color), and manicuring.

The New Castle Correctional Facility is the only licensed Barbering School in a prison in the state of Indiana that gives students the opportunity to become licensed professionals. Making the grade gives these students the opportunity to be productive citizens upon their release and work as licensed professionals, giving Andrea Latimore “shear” satisfaction! ■

Sprouting Success

By Wilma Willard, Horticulture and Landscape Design Instructor, Westville Correctional Facility



The class plants their greenhouse plants in the outdoor gardens

Education within correctional facilities has proven to be a very worthwhile investment, lowering recidivism rates and preparing men for life outside the prison walls. It’s about setting up offenders with knowledge and skills for success in a future job.

The Horticulture and Landscape Design program, offered by Grace Community Education, Inc. allows offenders to be challenged both mentally and physically, creative, nurturing, and goal-oriented all at the same time. The class has a yearly competition to see who can grow the biggest pumpkin. Pumpkins have weighed in at 42 pounds with a circumference of 51 inches.

However, it’s the nurturing that has surprised everyone the most. Students are anxious on Monday to see how their seeds, seedlings, and plants are doing in the greenhouse and gardens. There is excitement when a seed sprouts out of the soil as well as when a tomato has turned red. On the other hand, there is sadness when a disease or pest takes advantage of the time away from a watchful eye. The plants mean more to the students

Article continued on page 18

Pendleton Gets Physical with New Staff Fitness Center

By Neil Potter, Public Information Officer, Pendleton Correctional Facility

What do you do with a warehouse that is located behind the facility and not being used for anything other than storing junk and outdated records? Pendleton's Captain Mike Conyers and Mr. Jack Binion proposed turning it into a Staff Fitness Center. The current Fitness Center only had weight equipment. It was in the basement of the Training Center, where it was damp and flooding occurred during rainstorms, causing potential health and safety risks to staff.

With the approval of the Superintendent and the blessing of Central Office, the planning began but we knew our work was cut out for us. The warehouse had been a 'catch all' for anything and everything. It contained rows of metal shelving, old records and just all over clutter that had accumulated over the years. And we should note here that Mr. Binion had quite a hay day with all that the 'junk' and 'outdated records' contributed to the facility's recycling efforts.

After weeks of cleaning out the warehouse, the process of converting it into an indoor Staff Fitness Center began. Donald LeBlanc was recruited to spearhead the project. Mr. LeBlanc has 24 years of experience in recreation and was definitely the man for the job. Officer Michael Guffey, a nine year employee and the facility's Outside Tool Control Officer, also volunteered to help out with this project. Mr. LeBlanc and Officer Guffey, with the help of offenders from the outside dorm took apart the weight equipment from the basement of the Training Center and moved it to the new Fitness Center. Once it arrived it wasn't just a simple "put it all back together." A lot of the weight benches and equipment needed to be painted and repaired. Enter Officer Michael Eden, a 38 year staffer who at one time worked as a Welding Foreman



The weight equipment from the old Fitness Center was painted and repaired.

Maintenance. Officer Eden fabricated and made four basketball goals. These goals were made from raw material, with no pre-manufactured parts, other than the back boards and rims.

After the basketball goals were installed, Mr. LeBlanc again showed his expertise. He, with help from outside dorm offenders, painted out two basketball courts. In addition, a walking/running track was painted around the walls of the warehouse and a volleyball court was also created. Mr. LeBlanc and Officer Guffey also

oversaw the painting of the walls of the warehouse.

It is our hope to add new weight and recreational equipment in the future. Any new equipment will come strictly from staff donations and/or fundraisers. The facility held a golf tournament in July, with the proceeds going towards purchasing cardio machines, which we are currently lacking as part of the workout equipment. With staff raising the money and donating equipment, we believe it gives us "ownership" into the facility. It is our hope that staff will take the opportunity to utilize this Fitness Center, to stay active and healthy and to have an exercise regimen.

The Pendleton Complex Staff Fitness Center Grand Opening took place on May 8, 2013. It is available to all Pendleton Complex Staff, their spouses and children. Please join us in helping to promote healthy lifestyles! ■

Problem Solving Class/The Path to Reentry at WCC

Article continued from page 16

positive, constructive solution. Brainstorming was one of many methods that might be used to find the right course of action to survive in a world fraught with barriers at every turn.

"There were also other things to be considered," said McLiver after class. Offenders have to learn to be humble, to give in, to start at the bottom and take criticism.

Offender Robert Wine seemed determined to get it and sincere in his efforts to succeed on the

outside. He hoped the class would provide a way to help him make better choices. He was "down" on a confinement charge brought on by addiction to alcohol and believes the first step was a change of attitude. He looks forward to advancing his education in prison, getting a GED like most of the others in the class. Wine said he understood that there would be difficulties that somehow must be overcome in a societally approved manner. "There is no one to take care of me following prison," he said. "I'm on my own. I must do what I can." ■

The Pendleton Correctional Facility Forms Partnerships Help Prevent Child Abuse

By Neil Potter, Public Information Officer, Pendleton Correctional Facility



Staff and offenders planted at Pendleton more than 1,000 sparkling blue and silver pinwheels.

The entrance to the Pendleton Correctional Facility (PCF) took on a dramatically different appearance during the month of April. Staff and offenders planted a dazzling display of 1,100 sparkling blue and silver pinwheels. It was an impressive visual demonstration of a collaboration between the Prevent Child Abuse America Organization, Prevent Child Abuse Indiana (A Division of the Villages), and the Pendleton Correctional Facility. The concept of the pinwheels was created by Prevent Child Abuse America “as an uplifting reminder of childhood and the bright futures all children deserve.”

PCF partnered with these agencies in conjunction with Child Abuse Prevention Month to help raise money and conduct activities to promote education and awareness of the organizations’ mission. Fund raising efforts were tremendously successful to the tune of \$4,044.03 that was evenly distributed between the two organizations.

The donations came from the facility’s PLUS Program (Purposeful Living Units Serve), PCF offender American

Legion Post #608, the Superintendent’s Community Involvement Fund, offenders affiliated with the facility’s Moorish Science Temple of America Program, as well as donations from individual offenders and staff members.

The joint project culminated with a celebration and check presentation

conducted at PCF on April 19, 2013. Guests attending the event included Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) Commissioner Bruce Lemmon, IDOC Chief of Staff and Deputy Commissioner of Administration Amanda Copeland, IDOC Chief Financial Officer Andrew Prichard, IDOC Deputy Director of Religious and Volunteer Services David Liebel, IDOC Executive Director of Programs Jerry Vance, IDOC Director of Mental Health Craig Hanks, Executive Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Jeff Cardwell, Jackie Cissell who serves as Special Assistant to Governor Pence, Villages President and CEO Sharon Pierce, and President and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America James Hmurovich.

Commissioner Lemmon congratulated the offender organizations that played a big role in the fund raising activities and recognized them for

their willingness to give back to the community. PLUS Graduate offender Mark Thacker along with American Legion Member offender William Baxter provided eloquent and inspirational remarks in support of the project on behalf of the organizations they represent.

IDOC Deputy Director of Religious Services David Liebel expressed to the offenders that through their story of redemption and giving back that they were changing people’s view of incarceration.

Speaking on behalf of Prevent Child Abuse Indiana and the Villages, Sharon Pierce described the offenders’ willingness to support this cause as “a phenomenal show of your compassion and your heart and we can’t thank you enough.”

James Hmurovich of Prevent Child Abuse America emphasized to the offenders that even though they are in different circumstances as the result of their incarceration it doesn’t stop them from loving and caring about children and playing an important role in their lives.



The facility raised over \$4,000 for Prevent Child Abuse American and Prevent Child Abuse Indiana.

The program concluded with everyone involved in the project pledging to continue this outstanding partnership and to work together to identify future opportunities to address the goal of eliminating the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children. ■



The Indiana Justice Model: A Cornerstone of the IDOC

By Nick and Jamie Zellers, Case Work Managers, Branchville Correctional Facility

Staff Development & Training established the Indiana Justice Model (IJM) as a cornerstone to educate and promote awareness, professionalism, and mutual respect for correctional staff, offenders, and other stakeholders. The model goes hand in hand with the Department's mission, vision, and values.

So how does it work? The model is divided into eight sections: Indiana Risk Factor Assessment & Case Plan, Staff/Offender Interactions, Programs, Community Supervision & Parole, Victim Services, Performance Based Standards, Indiana Justice Model's Focus on Juvenile Offenders, and Restorative Justice. Each part spotlights specific knowledge, evidenced-based practices or intervention techniques to facilitate a smooth and successful re-entry process of offenders back to the community.

A major ingredient for success is the Calming the Storm curriculum. Calming the Storm uses an adaptive, flexible and gentle communication style focusing on empathy, active listening and redirection of behavior. How effective is it? The implementation of Calming the Storm reflected a reduction in assaults on staff and use of force incidents within the first 90 days!

Another integral element of the Indiana Justice Model is Motivational Interviewing. Motivational Interviewing is a collaborative, person-centered form of guiding an interview (conversation) to elicit and strengthen motivation for change. This approach hinges on accessing a person's internal motivation for change versus external pressure.

The implementation of the Indiana Justice Model occurs in four strategic phases. Phase One focuses on the training of new employees in the pre-

service training environment. Phase Two expands curriculum surrounding facility based training. Phase Three revolves around regional training, while Phase Four targets in-service training curriculum.

Staff Development and Training is building on the success of Calming the Storm by adding Calming the Storm 2 to the 2013 Curriculum Development Plan. This training has added training and outcome value by expanding on established principles through practical use of the principles.

Staff Development and Training continues efforts to improve the IDOC's culture via developing a Motivational Interviewing for Supervisors Program. This program is intended for supervisory staff to facilitate the principles of Motivational Interviewing while performing daily activities.

Another element of the 2013 Curriculum Development Plan is the development of the Joint Understanding Cooperation Program. This program is designed to improve the level of mutual respect between staff and offender/student populations. The purpose of the program is to reinforce the 3 R's of the Indiana Justice Model: Role models for offenders, Reinforcing positive behavior, and Redirecting inappropriate behavior.

'Indiana Justice Model 102' is a component of Phase Four of the Indiana Justice Model. This module focuses on in-service training which requires staff to participate in exercises that demonstrate and utilize skills learned in other modules of their training.

The Indiana Justice Model, part of the Department's strategic plan, demonstrates a bold and strategic approach to training curriculum which will positively impact the Department's

culture, public safety, and the successful reentry of offenders into Indiana's ninety-two counties. The model is supportive of a culture of inspiration, collaboration and achievement. The ultimate goal of the Indiana Justice Model is to facilitate the IDOC's mission to advance public safety and successful reentry through dynamic supervision, programming and partnerships. ■

Sprouting Success

Article continued from page 15

than a lesson on photosynthesis or principles of design. Gardening brings out the nurturing side of the men and fosters fatherhood skills.

Each student is responsible for a 10' double shelf full of plants in the greenhouse as well as a 20' x 14' outdoor garden in season. The class has collected a good assortment of cacti, houseplants, exotics, annual and perennial flowers, flowering shrubs, ornamental trees, fruit trees, and vegetables for educational purposes. Over the past two and a half years, many of these have either been propagated by the class or they are donations from partnering businesses, friends of the program, or the staff.

"I intend to plant a garden for my mother every year and take care of her flower beds so she can enjoy sitting on her deck in her retirement years and enjoy her yard," comments one student.

Another student writes, "Using what I've learned in class, I'm going to set up a small garden in my backyard so my children, nieces and nephews can partake in gardening with me. I want to build a legacy that can be passed down through my family." ■

Westville in the Driver's Seat! Builds BMV Conference Table

By John Schrader, Public Information Officer, Westville Correctional Facility



(L to R) BMV Commissioner Scott Waddell, IDOC Director of Construction Services Kevin Orme and IDOC Commissioner Bruce Lemmon

Westville Correctional Facility (WCC) offenders and staff completed construction on a new conference table for the Commissioner of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) using mostly recycled wood from the facility.

Over a year ago, BMV Commissioner R. Scott Waddell met with then Governor Mitch Daniels in the Governor's Office. He couldn't help but admire the massive conference table, measuring six feet by sixteen feet, in the room that commanded his attention.

The table had three foot diameter carved wooden medallions of the Indiana State Seal and the emblem of the state flag on either end. The center was dominated by a map of Indiana, with each county's shape made of a different type of wood.

Governor Daniels explained that the table had been created by inmates and staff at the Westville Correctional Facility. The wood came from trees that had to be cut down inside the facility to improve lines of sight within the prison, and much of the labor was done by the inmates at minimal

cost to the taxpayers. It is a reminder of what recycling can achieve.

A few days later, Indiana Department of Correction Commissioner Bruce Lemmon asked WCC Superintendent Mark Levenhagen if the facility could design a similar table for the BMV.

WCC constructed a seven foot by seventeen foot table made of recycled spalted maple, black walnut, white pine and curly cherry. It sits on a four leg pedestal base, with a hand carved five foot center medallion of the seal of the BMV.

"We spent a great deal of time leveling and sanding the finish coats, since even the slightest flaw would show," according to Maintenance Supervisor Alex McEathron, WCC's carpenter who designed and supervised the project. "We had to make our own special 12 inch by 36 inch sanding blocks to finish the surface properly."

Thirty four times a spot coat was applied and sanded out, then 28 more were added to obtain a thick lasting finish, and finally three more coats were buffed out to create a glass finish.

McEathron has worked in the carpentry shop for some 20 years. The offenders assigned to help had to be tough and patient. They worked hard to create a flawless work product day after day, month after month. Such an enduring project meant multiple offenders would come and go and needed to be trained or retrained. The lessons learned became a form of rehabilitation and treatment for them and a significant part of their incarceration. "They

developed a sense of pride in demanding perfection of themselves and their work," according to Westville Superintendent Mark Levenhagen, "as well as recognizing that the work they completed would last far beyond the years they served in prison."



The five foot center medallion of the seal of the BMV was hand carved.



The table measures seven feet by seventeen feet and is made of recycled spalted maple, black walnut, white pine and curly cherry.

In February, the half ton table was delivered to the BMV's office in Indianapolis. At seventeen feet in length, the table had to be designed to be broken down into a number of smaller parts so it would fit into the building's elevators. Reassembly took about two hours for the masterpiece.

"It is always a pleasure to help fellow state agencies, using the talents and skills of our staff and inmates to create something the state would otherwise never be able to afford," said DOC Commissioner Lemmon. ■

IDHS and IDOC Join Forces for First Ever Fire Training for Inmates

By Pamela James, Public Information Officer, Indiana State Prison

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) and the Indiana Department of Correction collaborated to provide fire training to inmates of the Indiana State Prison in Michigan City, Indiana. The training took place Monday, July 22 through Friday, July 26.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2003. FEMA's continuing mission with the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates training first responders.



The Indiana State Prison Fire Brigade with staff from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

FEMA's U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) serves as the agency fire protection and emergency response community expert. The mission of the USFA is to save lives and reduce economic losses due to fire and related emergencies through research and training, public educations and coordination with other federal agencies and fire protection and emergency service personnel. The Indiana State Prison historically has had an established offender fire department. However this was the first time that certified fire training has been conducted inside a correctional facility housing maximum security

offenders. Upon graduating the inmates we're certified as structural firefighters. This would typically be engaging in suppression operations in residences, commercial buildings and institutions, and other related emergency operations.

The Indiana State Prison had eleven firefighters participate in the training. They received 48 hours of training, 16 hours were in the class room and the remaining 32 were in live scenarios. The training provided entry level knowledge for participants to meet performance requirements and perform basic tasks. In the class, participants received classroom and hands-on lessons in topics such as fire behavior, forcible entry and ventilation.

Chip Dudley, Deputy State Fire Marshal, who was the lead instructor stated, "The men are well prepared and eager to learn and appreciative of the training they received. They know the book, now they have the practical experience. This was the first level of certification for firefighters".



Indiana State Fire Marshal Jim Greeson speaks to an offender at the prison's Firehouse.

Kevin Orme, Executive Director of Construction Services for the Indiana Department of Correction stated, "It was fortunate to bring this type of training to the Indiana Department of Correction. This was the first time this type of training was conducted inside a walled compound inside a maximum



The training provides entry level knowledge for participants to meet performance requirements and perform basic tasks.

security prison. The students were very dedicated to the training."

One of the training exercises was putting out a propane fire. Ed Read, Operations Manager from Ferrellgas acknowledged he was very excited to take part in this excellent opportunity. He wished more fire departments though out the state took part in this type of training. There is not enough propane training for fire departments. The more training firefighters get, the better prepared they will be to fight fires."

William K. Wilson, Superintendent of the Indiana State Prison stated, "This certification will benefit the offender firefighters when they return to their communities and will allow them to give back to the community".

A trainer from Pendleton Juvenile and a firefighter himself, Nakuma Stone, was very impressed with the firefighters. He stated, "I have not seen a group this dedicated. I am proud to be a part of the program because it gives the guys a sense of purpose".

Chris Pitcock, an offender firefighter, shared, "It is great to have this sense of pride even being incarcerated, it is an opportunity to do my duty as a public servant from behind the wall."

Offenders Teach Other Offenders Basics in Getting a GED

By Tom Patterson, Case Worker, Westville Correctional Facility

Offenders are teaching other offenders at the Educational Complex and it is fair to say they are making the grade. It takes some motivation to work through the months or years it requires to get a diploma. Some have the incentive but lack the fundamentals, others have learning disabilities and need extra help. Now offenders with some expertise are instructing others and bringing them up to a point where they can participate in the regular GED class process.

The effort is showing results and four tutored offenders have already moved into GED class settings. Of the eleven remaining a typical example is Jerry Mayfield who has been in and out of prison and who has tried for ten years to get a GED. A semi-truck operator by trade, he could get along without the degree but realized what he had been missing. He admits to a memory problem or a learning obstacle of some sort, but then so does the rest of the class in one way or another.

Offender Dion Wise was given the job as tutor to help Mayfield and the others who started in February. With the success of the four who have benefited from tutoring, he is encouraged with his abilities and confidence in the program, according to Education Complex Administrative Secretary Alvester Walker. "The big difference is offenders are helping other offenders," Walker said. Some have failed previously for one reason or another, but the extra help from their peers seems to be the answer."

The program is for offenders with very low Adult Basic Education Test (TABE) scores, according to Steve Klosowski, Director of Westville education. "The offenders need to bring up their scores to gain a seat in the regular GED classes," he said. Three tutors were hired like Wise initially and the director would like more—all in an effort to raise literacy skills.

Part of the motivation came directly from Grace College, now in charge of education at Westville, who are pushing staff to produce greater numbers of GED graduates. It seems to be working with the Westville staff having a good rate of completion. Last year that meant 187 offenders.

Offenders will need more help than ever, too, as the state stiffens requirements next year. The test will be given solely on the computer so offenders will also need those skills. Math and writing concepts are slated to change, too. How that will influence the development is unknown but offenders tend to have more problems in both these areas. Still, Klosowski sees the GED as strongly pursued and one of the most popular aspects at the complex. "It is a very positive



Offender Dion Wise was given the job as tutor to help offenders who started in February and has had favorable results.

accomplishment and offenders understand it opens employment doors that previously had been closed," he said.

In the meantime offender Wise is on the job each day to help those in need of overcoming academic barriers. He is given enough latitude to use his own style to steer his charges through the scholarly maze and provide them with confidence to carry on. Wise has a year

of college and guides the offenders through TABE practice materials as they work at their own pace. He has other skills particularly in arts and crafts. "That's my passion," he said. He was surprised to be given the tutor job but pleased because he likes the job. "I'm glad they selected me," he said. ■

IDHS and IDOC Join Forces for First Ever Fire Training for Inmates

Article continued from page 20

Firefighter Carlos Owens said, "It is a good experience to build character with different cultures and in a family atmosphere and work as a team."

Dan Milne, Chief of the Offender Firefighters wanted to express, "It has been 23 years and there are not many programs to give you an opportunity to be productive members in society for those who are getting out."

Kelly Holland acknowledged that the training took him back to his military

training, the camaraderie between the men.

The firefighters were rewarded with a luncheon prepared by the culinary arts students from the Apprenticeship Program from the Department of Labor. Certificates were presented from the State Fire Marshall.

Everyone who participated in the week long training could not say enough kind words about the program. The firefighters were very dedicated to the mission presented to them and received high honors. ■

The Long and Winding Road, Cops Cycling for Survivors

By Janna Anderson, Administrative Secretary, Wabash Valley Correctional Facility

July 15, 2013... a bittersweet day for staff at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility. 25 members of the group Cops Cycling for Survivors were given an enthusiastic welcome as they rode past an American Flag draped entrance to the facility. Well over 125 staff members lined the drive and clapped hands to show their thanks to the group. They were riding for one of our own.

The cyclists, committed to the financial assistance for the families of fallen officers, stopped off at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility as part of its 13 day, 1,000 miles journey across Indiana. Cops Cycling for Survivors recognized the late Timothy Betts, a dedicated WVCF Correctional Officer who died in the line of duty August 26, 2012. A large photo of Officer Betts and Lake County Corrections Officer Britney Meux, killed while training for a law enforcement event, was wrapped around each side of the group's support vehicle. Staff members were encouraged to sign the picture in memory of their colleague, who collapsed as he was escorting an unruly offender to segregation following a cell house incident on that fateful Sunday morning.

It was truly an honor, yet with mixed emotions, as staff listened with full attention as group members read the End of Watch information for Indiana Department of Correction members killed in the line-of-duty, dating back to the early 1900's. Several members of Officer Betts' family, along with Indiana State Police and IDOC Commissioner Bruce Lemmon, joined Wabash staff for this special tribute to their fallen comrade.

The group was presented a \$500 donation from WVCF's Inside Out Dads & PLUS programs, which will help support their purpose: raise awareness for officers who have lost

their lives in the line of duty, and to raise funds for the families of those officers who have been left behind.

Rich Crawford, President of the group which is made up of law enforcement officers and friends of law enforcement, acknowledged that during the 11 years of the group's existence, there has never been such a warm, heartfelt reception like this one.

"We are honored, it's very emotional and we know it's a happy time but it's



The riders were greeted by staff as they entered the grounds of Wabash Valley.

also a little bit of a sad time because of what we have to be here for, because he's gone," said Amy Barton, Betts' daughter. "We're very humbled and honored by what they do, not just for our family and our Dad but for all the officers," said Barton.

Officer Timothy Betts was a Greene County native with 15 years of honorable service at the maximum-security facility. He was 51 years old. ■

Looking Toward Tomorrow...

By Matthew Andrick, David Vought, Jennifer Cline, and Michael Minthorn, Staff Development & Training

“Leading” the way of a growing national trend that is placing an emphasis on staff training and development. The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) is taking a pro-active approach to planning for tomorrow. With the growing emphasis, the leadership of the IDOC knew it was time to think about tomorrow.

The Indiana Department of Correction is working with other agencies to provide specialized training to State employees in many different areas such as Training for Trainers, Managing Multiple Projects, Baby Boomer vs. Generation X, Social Media, as well as over 100 modules of Computer Based Training.

While trying to be proactive IDOC is approaching the future by providing training in specialized areas and the ever important area of leadership and supervision.

While the Indiana Department of Correction prepares all of its employees to supervise the offenders in their care, until now not

much had been done to prepare staff members to supervise or lead their fellow employees.

Over the last few years the Indiana Department of Corrections' Division of Staff Development and Training has seen the introduction of three new supervisory programs and two new leadership programs. These new programs were designed to prepare, develop and refine the skills of tomorrow's leaders.

The first program to be introduced was in 2007, the “Commissioners Experienced and Emerging Leadership” program also known as “EEL”. This program was a collaboration between the IDOC and Professor George Manning from the University of Northern Kentucky. EEL is an executive leadership program targeted to prepare selected staff for future assignments of increased responsibility. This progressive program consists of four sessions, one each quarter, of a day and a half in length. Participants are immersed in a myriad of leadership principles,

Article continued on page 23

Looking Toward Tomorrow... Article continued from page 22

teamwork, camaraderie, and work production on current issues for the Department. Since the inaugural class graduated, the EEL program has seen numerous graduates promoted to executive positions within the agency.

The second program to be introduced was in 2008, "The Leadership Academy". This two-week training program is designed for staff members who are looking to unlock their potential and become future leaders.

The Leadership Academy is conducted in two, one-week sessions. The first session is focused on the foundations of leadership; self-awareness (completion of a 360° assessment questionnaire), developing personal accountability, and emotional intelligence. The participants are then given several weeks to return to their worksite and apply the skills that have enhanced during the first week of the program.

The second week of the program then focuses on Communication, Problem Solving and Team Building. During the second week of The Leadership Academy participants are provided the opportunity to not only learn, but to apply their leadership skills in a myriad of activities that challenge them physically and intellectually.

With two solid Leadership programs up and running IDOC's Division of Staff Development and Training was not done yet. Under the direction of the Staff Development and Training management team and the motto "Focus on the Field!", the Curriculum Development team was charged with developing a supervisory program based on the needs of the staff in the field. The development team set out to produce a program that would be beneficial to all supervisors. What they got was a program that was beneficial to all employees!

In August of 2009 the Division of Staff Development and Training debuted the "D.O.C. Supervisory Program", the title of which is actually an acronym

for three individual classes that as a whole make up the program. This three tier program is designed to enhance the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective supervisor in the ever changing correctional environment. While each program targets a unique audience, overall the program is a building block process.

The first block of the program is Developing Professional Employees. This three day program is designed to provide a foundation for staff recently promoted to the ranks of supervision. During this program participants will examine the difficult transition from peer to supervisor and hurdles that may arise during the transition. Upon completion of the program participants will have a better understanding of the Duties and Responsibilities of "Supervision".

The second block of the program is Optimizing Heightened Effectiveness. This three day program was developed to benefit supervisors/managers as they excel on their ladder of success. It was designed to enhance the performance of supervisors with 2-5 years of supervisory experience. Optimizing Heightened Effectiveness introduces the supervisor to potential challenges he/she may face, as well as presenting a building block process to address those challenges in a professional manner.

The third block of the program is Conquering Maximum Efficiency. This three day program is designed to assist supervisors in developing professionally as a mid-manager in a supportive and challenging learning environment. This course is essential in developing the skills and knowledge needed to function in a mid-management position and to increase the accountability and effectiveness of supervisors. This program was developed to benefit supervisors/managers with 5-10 years of supervisory experience.

The Indiana Department of Correction takes great pride in providing its

staff with the tools and opportunities needed to allow its employees to grow both personally and professionally, and by doing so they will continue to be a model for others to follow.

Staff Development and Training has recently begun to offer these programs to all State agencies, county agencies and city municipalities at no cost. Over the last couple years, agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security, State Board of Toxicology, State Budget Agency, Department of Workforce Development, Department of Labor, Family and Social Services, Public Retirement System, Office of Environment Adjustment and the Department of Mental Health have participated in one or more of these programs.

During the 2012-2013 training year Staff Development and Training expanded upon these offerings to include programs such as Train-the-Trainer, Making A Change Academy and many more. Staff Development and Training specifically collaborated with the Indiana Statewide Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) to offer these programs to juvenile detention facilities around the state. Since beginning this collaboration many county agencies have taken advantage of the training including: Bartholomew County, Boone County, Clinton County, Dubois County, Johnson County LaGrange County, LaPorte County Morgan County, Tippecanoe County, Ripley County, Shelby County, Pulaski County, Washington County and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

By offering these programs to other government organizations we are helping to improve upon the successful and talented pool of government workforce Indiana has and helping to make "Indiana the State that works for All".

If someone is interested in attending one of these exciting training events, please contact the Indiana Department of Correction, Staff Development & Training, at 765-521-0230. ■

Kids Spend Father's Day in Prison with Their Incarcerated Dads

By Gaylie R. Cotton, Public Information Officer, Indianapolis Reentry Educational Facility

More than 90 children gathered at the Indianapolis Reentry Educational Facility (IREF) on Saturday, June 15, 2013, to celebrate Father's Day with their dads, grandfathers, uncles or father figures who are residents at the Indiana Department of Correction minimum-security prison.

The children, who live in several different counties in Indiana, including Marion County, made the trip to IREF to honor nearly 70 of their fathers who are currently participating in IREF's Family Education Department (FED) Inside Out Dads and Children's Visitation Center (CVC) programs.

The Father's Day Picnic is the biggest of the FED-sponsored events focusing on rebuilding the father-child relationship, to take place at IREF since the all-male population transferred from Plainfield to its current location on the Near Eastside of Indianapolis.

A large portion of the grounds was roped off and converted to accommodate a carnival full of games, activity booths, prizes, and a large bounce-house. Picnickers participated in the ring toss, corn-hole games, three-legged races, potato sack races, water-balloon tossing, tug of war contests, face painting, tattoos, and many other fun games and prizes.

IREF Chaplain Keith Blackburn entertained the children by twisting balloons into different animals, flowers, and other objects. The fathers and their guests enjoyed snow cones, popcorn, a picnic-style lunch of grilled hot dogs, chips, cookies, and plenty of cold punch and water.

Several children attending the Father's Day Picnic had not seen their fathers for many years. One fifteen year old girl from Marion County spent the day getting acquainted with her father after

meeting him for the first time in her life at the picnic.

"These are the types of people our FED and Inside Out Dads program is designed to assist and benefit: inactive or incarcerated fathers and their children who are living in homes where there is an absence of that father figure," said Family Education Department Director Tamera Shirley.

According to the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), which was founded in 1994 to confront social problems of widespread father absence in the U.S., and pioneer of the Inside Out Dads program, children who grow up in homes with absent fathers are more likely to be poor, abuse drugs, experience behavioral problems, and engage in criminal behavior than children who live with their married, biological or adoptive parents.

IREF and the IDOC adapted NFI programs such as Inside Out Dads to focus on bridging the gap between incarcerated fathers and father figures such as uncles and grandfathers, and their children while the fathers are still incarcerated, and to increase the proportion growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers. The CVC at IREF is one of the only programs of this extent to exist in IDOC facilities.

"My daughter has experienced a series of circumstances that kept us apart for such a long time," said IREF Resident Robert B, father of the fifteen year old girl. "I am so grateful that I transferred to IREF. I have missed out on so much of her life. This program will allow me to really get to know my little girl. We can sit and talk or play and have fun for hours without it feeling like a prison to her. This type of interaction is not available anywhere else. I'm glad I made it here, to this prison. Who would have thought it?"



Residents at IREF enjoyed playing games with their children during a Father's Day celebration.

At a recent Inside Out Dads graduation ceremony, IREF Superintendent Laurie Johnson challenged the graduates to take what they have learned from the program and apply it in their family unit when they are released from incarceration. "Father's Day is a time of reflection. The residents must realize that incarceration has a negative effect on their children, and it is their responsibility to change that," Superintendent Johnson said. "Our job is to ensure every resident passing through this facility and the CVC is equipped with the ability, tools, and skills to make a positive impact on their children, their families, and their communities."

Program Director of Parole and Re-Entry Services Division for the IDOC, Liz Johnson, IREF staff and volunteers, and local community church groups volunteered their time to ensure the Father's Day Picnic was a success. "Just seeing the children and their dads enjoy activities that build a bond that may not have been there before, especially on Father's Day weekend, is just awesome to me," Director Johnson said. "If we want the community to give our guys a second chance and believe they can become great dads and successful citizens, we have to show them as staff that we believe in what we are doing, and show the men that we are here to guide and show them an alternative way of handling situations."

The FED Father's Day Picnic was made possible by funds raised via food sales, fundraisers, donations from local churches, volunteers, and the residents. ■