

Corrections Connection



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Corrections Connection is a publication of the Office of Public Information and Communications. Story ideas, feedback and comments can be submitted to Holly Kramer at KramerH@michigan.gov. Like MDOC on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

The image on the cover was taken in Manistique, Mich. by **Noah Nagy**, warden at Lakeland Correctional Facility. For the chance to have your photo featured on the cover of the newsletter, email a high-resolution version of the image and a description of where it was taken to Holly Kramer at KramerH@michigan.gov.



On the Road to Success

MDOC partnership with metro Detroit training school helps meet need in truck driving industry

Early last year, Cesar Redondo had more trucks than he would have liked off the road and parked in the garage of his freight shipping and trucking company.

But their inactivity wasn't from lack of business. Redondo needed qualified drivers behind the wheel. That changed this year as he has found skilled drivers to keep shipments moving through a partnership that is preparing returning citizens for work as commercial truck drivers.

In 2017, the Michigan Department of Corrections

approached the Romulus-based Suburban Truck Driver Training School about working together to teach commercial truck driving to individuals on parole and help them find jobs in the burgeoning industry.

Vern Fuller, consultant for the training school, said he reached out to carriers to gauge their interest and found a number of them were open to hiring returning citizens.

That included Redondo, owner of OBX Logistics in Romulus, who said he has hired about a dozen returning citizens so far.

"I tell them, I don't care what you did in the past as long as you want a second chance," he said.

The growing economy has helped many businesses in the industry expand and has opened up doors for returning citizens, said Lara Dowdy, director of Suburban Truck Driver Training School.

"The need is huge," Fuller said.

The state's Bureau of Labor Market Information



Pictured: Vern Fuller of Suburban Truck Driver Training School and Darryl Williams of Oliver Transportation, talk during a tour of the school. Williams also expressed interest in hiring returning citizens through the program.

identified truck driving as one of the state’s high-demand, high-wage occupations through 2026 with 6,870 annual job openings. So far, about 50 returning citizens have been through the program, which has had 100 percent job placement. Of those who have been through the program, 96 percent remain employed in jobs in the industry.

The 162 hours of training at the training school includes time in the classroom, as well as hands-on learning in driving a truck. In addition to those technical skills, students in the program also learn soft skills such as resume writing, interview skills, communication, customer relations and how to dress professionally.

“We tell them, even though you are a driver, there is a lot more to the job than that,” Dowdy said. The MDOC is also offering CDL training to prisoners through a virtual simulator at the Vocational Village at Parnall Correctional Facility, and it has partnered with West Michigan companies on a similar training program for parolees in that region since 2016. About 25 returning citizens have

completed the West Michigan training program, which also has had 100 percent job placement. About 92 percent have continued to work in the industry.

Fuller said the program wouldn’t be as successful as it is without the strong partnerships that have been created with those in the industry. It has continued to flourish as more companies experience success in hiring returning citizens.

“They are making some of the best employees,” Fuller said. “Partner carriers are telling us if you have more guys like this, send us five

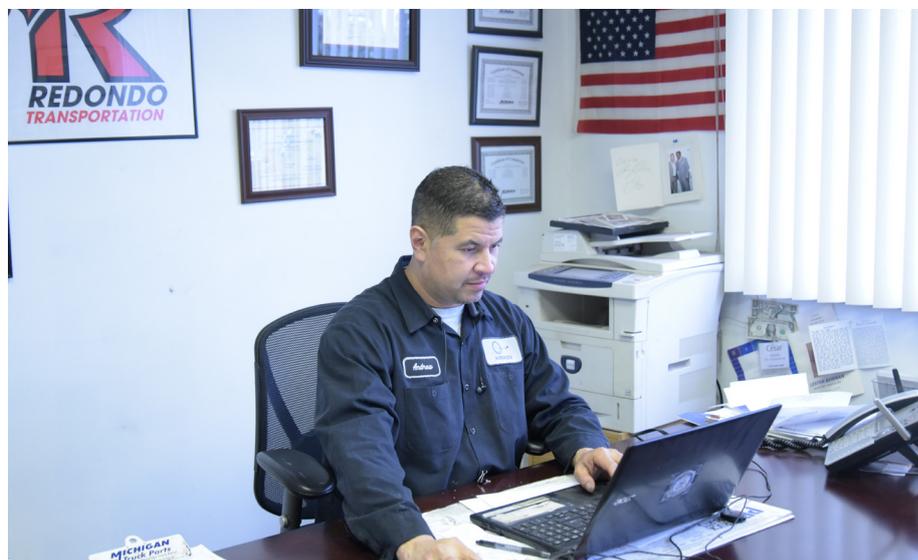
more.”

Tim Johnson, owner of ATMJ Trucking, said he has hired about six returning citizens through the program and all have been good employees. He said there is a tremendous need for drivers in the industry and he encourages other carriers to consider hiring returning citizens through the program.

“It’s all about getting people with experience,” Johnson said. Dowdy and Fuller said the close partnership that has developed with the MDOC has been beneficial and they have also had the opportunity to team up with area parole agents to help ensure students under supervision are successful.

Fuller and Dowdy said it is rewarding to see students, especially those who are returning citizens, experience success. It is also rewarding to see smaller companies have the opportunity to grow after tapping into a pipeline of returning citizens who are motivated to learn and perform well, he said.

“You’re going to get out of it what you put into it,” Dowdy said. “They get so proud. That’s the part that’s so rewarding – seeing them reach their goals.”



Pictured: Cesar Redondo works in his office at OBX Logistics.

Governor and Lt. Governor visit MDOC staff, thank employees for their hard work

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist stopped by to visit MDOC employees in Lansing and thank them for their hard work on Jan. 16.

The visit was part of Gov. Whitmer's and Lt. Gov. Gilchrist's efforts to visit every state department and show support for the state workforce.

Gov. Whitmer said she looked forward to hearing stories from employees on the front lines making a difference and helping to keep the state's residents safe.

She was impressed by the efforts of MDOC

employees and called the work of staff "mind blowing."

She also plans to travel to talk to state employees at work sites across Michigan.

To hear more from Gov. Whitmer on her visit with MDOC employees, [tune in to this episode of the Field Days Podcast](#).

For more photos from Gov. Whitmer's and Lt. Gov. Gilchrist's visit, [click here](#).

Plus, [jump to Page 8](#) for a story about Gov. Whitmer's recent executive directives related to state employees.



HAVE YOU HEARD?

Check out the latest episodes of the Field Days podcast

- [Director Heidi Washington shares highlights of the department's newest strategic plan and the great things ahead for the MDOC.](#)
- [Listen to the very first episode of 2019 to learn more about the department's new programs, initiatives and efforts going into the New Year.](#)
- [Listen as we recap an eventful year for the Michigan Department of Corrections in the final episode of 2018.](#)



FIELDDAYS
PODCAST

Listen to us on



What's in store for 2019

The department will soon release its latest Strategic Plan. The goals and objectives in the new plan will run through 2022.

The department's previous Strategic Plan concluded in 2018. You can find details on the progress made through 2018 in the department's [Strategic Plan Progress Report here](#).



The department is expected to open its first Vocational Village for women, and third statewide site, in late 2019 at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility. Construction on the site began in 2018. The new Vocational Village will include training in computer coding, 3D printing, and cosmetology, among other trades.

The department is launching a statewide roll out of Motivational Interviewing training for staff. This important communication skill can help decrease stress and make interactions with offenders more impactful by focusing on long-term behavior change, while reducing resistance and defensive encounters.



The department aims to hire more than 700 new corrections officers in 2019 and will hold quarterly corrections officer academies. Academies are held in the Upper Peninsula, Lansing and Ypsilanti. Efforts are also underway to both attract and retain staff.

Free Stress Management Tool available now

A new, comprehensive stress management tool is now available to state employees through the Employee Service Program.

The free, online tool allows employees and their families to create an individualized stress-management plan that will provide recommendations, techniques and tips for overcoming stress based on the sources of stress they identify. The tool can be accessed from home and uses a model that encourages resiliency.

To access the stress management tool, click here: www.mystresstools.com/registration/mich-esp.

Miles of Motivation

Classification Director inspires young girls to be joyful, healthy and confident

Kirsten Losinski wasn't always a runner, but when asked to be a running buddy for her daughter's 5K race with Girls on the Run she couldn't say no. Five years later, Losinski, Lakeland Correctional



Kirsten Losinski

Facility's classification director, continues to be involved with Girls on the Run and is going on her second season as a coach for the program. Girls on the Run is a 10-week program for girls in third through fifth grade that focuses on inspiring them to make positive choices and building their self-confidence. Losinski's involvement with Girls on the Run has allowed her to mentor youth in the Coldwater Community. She has watched girls completely transform. "As you work with girls throughout the program you see when they are down, and they get so excited to see you for an hour and a half" said Losinski. Losinski's work in the prison has given her a unique perspective on the importance of mentoring

youth. "Working in a prison I deal with people who haven't always been given the best home life, examples and leadership," Losinski said. "If we can teach kids these skills now, they will be able to make better choices in the future." Losinski sees firsthand what a positive experience it can be for a young girl to have a mentor. However, the benefit of being a mentor goes both ways. "For me, it's a reminder every day that I can still do anything I want to do and put my mind to," she said. "I can make a difference in the lives of people." Her most rewarding moment as a mentor was watching her step-daughter cry happy tears after finishing her first 5k race with Girls on the Run. "Watching her realize that she can do this, as a parent and coach, that was important," Losinski said. Girls on the Run isn't Losinski's only involvement in the community. She and her husband also put on a large golf outing which is the primary fundraiser for the Shop with a Cop program in Branch County. When asked what advice she had for anyone considering becoming a mentor to youth in their community, Losinski's answer was easy. "Do it," she said. "Get involved. It is so worth the time you put into it." *Story by Brianna Brugel, MDOC communications intern*

From the Director's Desk:
Thank you for your dedication and tremendous work as we move forward

In the last four years, we have made outstanding progress. We've continued to work every day to find new and better ways to keep our friends, neighbors and fellow Michigan residents safe and to help guide offenders to successful, crime-free lives.

We are a national leader in the corrections field, and I want to thank all of you for your dedicated service and tremendous work that has propelled us to the position we are in today. As I look ahead, I'm excited to continue working alongside you to expand on the progress we have made together.



We will soon release the department's newest Strategic Plan, which will detail our goals for the next four years. Those goals will include continued investments in you through expanded training and professional development programs. We will launch a new case management tool that will help make your jobs easier. We will focus on your well-being through the work of our new Wellness Unit, which includes a peer support and chaplain program for employees. We will continue to honor and support our military veterans, and we will continue to be aggressive in our recruitment efforts to attract talented new employees to the department. We also will be opening our third Vocational Village site at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility, we will expand our use of Motivational Interviewing and we will implement new models for supervision designed to enhance offender success. Our goals are ambitious, but I know we will continue to achieve great things together. I look forward to all we will accomplish in the years ahead.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issues executive directives for state employees

Since entering office, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has issued a series of executive directives that affect state employees.



The executive directives are designed to protect public health, safety and welfare; ensure transparency and ethical practices in state government; strengthen non-discrimination protections and secure equal pay for equal work.

Here are summaries of each executive directive:

- Protecting Public Health, Safety and Welfare**
 Gov. Whitmer’s first executive directive aims to ensure any threat to public health, safety or welfare is immediately reported, assessed and investigated by department employees, directors and agency leaders. It is meant to empower employees to speak up and act promptly if they believe there is a threat to the health and safety of Michigan residents. Employees who become aware of a threat must immediately report it to their department director or agency leader.
- Assuring transparency and ethical practices in state government**

A second package of executive directives works to

continue to build public confidence by making sure state government operates in an open, transparent and accountable manner. State departments are required to report irregularities relating to public funds or property, employees are prohibited from using personal email for state business and soliciting or receiving political contributions in state facilities is prohibited. Employees are also barred from engaging in political activities while on duty and policies will be established for ethical conduct for state leaders.

- Strengthening non-discrimination protections**
 This executive directive focuses on ensuring equal opportunities in state employment, grant and loan programs. It clarifies that employment protections cover all state employees, prohibits discrimination in state services and requires all recipients of state contracts, grants and loans to extend protections to their employees. Each department must designate an individual as an Equity and Inclusion Officer.
- Equal pay for equal work**
 This directive prohibits state agencies from asking about a job applicant’s current or previous salaries until a conditional offer of employment is made. It requires compensation to be provided based on the nature of the work performed and not differentiated by gender.

Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility makes pledge to increase support for veterans in 2019

This year, Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility staff made it a goal to regularly collect items to help support veterans and to strengthen relationships with local veterans service organizations. The facility reached out to the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post and Veterans Service Center to collaborate on new programs. Representatives from the organizations recently visited the facility to talk to staff with experience in the military about benefits they can receive as a result of their service.

Employees at the facility also worked to “fill the footlocker” throughout the month of January with personal hygiene items for veterans in need in the community. The items will be distributed to local veterans with the help of the Veterans Service Center.

In addition, the facility installed appreciation plaques that recognize staff who have served.



Committed to Protect, Dedicated to Success

The Extra Mile

MDOC staff go beyond the call of duty to help others



In October 2017, Corrections Officers Susan Poling and Steve Haines responded to a prisoner's living area where they found a prisoner lying on the floor of his cell.

After assessing the situation, they determined medical assistance was needed and called for help.

Registered Nurses Kathryn Everhart and Gregory Boyd arrived and checked the prisoner's blood pressure and pulse and determined the prisoner needed to be transported to health services.

Officers Gary Coomer and James Dahms helped place the prisoner on a gurney to transport him to health services. While moving him, Officer Coomer noticed the prisoner had stopped breathing and

began performing CPR while Dahms attached defibrillator pads to the prisoner's chest.

After several cycles the prisoner began breathing on his own. The prisoner was then transported to a local hospital to provide further evaluation and treatment.

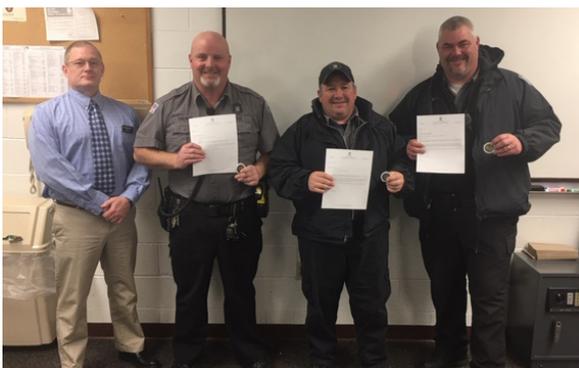
The teams' quick thinking earned them the department's Lifesaving Award.

Corrections Officer Tim Fridd, along with officers Jerry Nugent and Juan Contero, established a Veterans Day program for staff at G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility that benefits military veterans and members of the Armed Forces.

They turned the program into a fundraising event by organizing a cook-out with raffles and drawings. The event raised more than \$1,400 for deployed troops. The three also collected candy from staff and community members and shipped the candy to troops overseas. Their commitment to the community and those who serve earned them the department's Citizenship Award.



Warden Kevin Lindsey and Officer Tim Fridd



On Dec. 5, while completing a search of a prisoner, Corrections Officer Ryan Reddin found 24 pieces of card stock saturated with liquid methamphetamine.

Additionally, on Dec. 12, Corrections Officers Robin Dinehart and Jeffrey Wiles observed a prisoner walking out of bounds to pick up a package. The officers stopped the prisoner and confiscated the package, which included half an ounce of marijuana, 1.1 ounces of tobacco and four Samsung Smart Phones, that had been thrown over the facility's fence.

Warden Randee Rewerts presented Reddin, Dinehart and Wiles with the Good Government Symbol of Teamwork Coin for their diligence and outstanding efforts.

The Extra Mile continued...



St. Louis Correctional Facility Acting Warden Mark McCullick presented a Warden's Coin to Corrections Officer Gerald Leonard, who was selected as the facility's 2019 Corrections Officer of the Year nominee. Officer Leonard has a positive attitude and gives his best effort every day.



St. Louis Correctional Facility Acting Warden Mark McCullick presented Warden's Coins to Inspector Ernesto Salinas and Brandon Hull. Both have worked very hard to ensure contraband does not enter the facility during visits.



THANK YOU LCF FOR THE MILITARY CARE PACKAGES!

Thank you for the kind and thoughtful care packages! It was really nice to receive some comforts from home! My kids really enjoyed the hot chocolate! Thank you for thinking of us overseas. Have a wonderful holiday!
 The Boeding Family



Wishing you so much joy
 this Holiday Season.

Season's Greetings

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE CARE PACKAGES! THE CONTENTS WERE SHARED ACROSS THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND. WE ARE MADE UP OF NAVY, ARMY, MARINES, AIR FORCE AND COAST GUARD PERSONNEL SO YOUR GIFTS, THOUGHTS AND KINDNESS TRULY REACHED ALL SERVICES.

THANK YOU!
 S13L

Do you have a letter of thanks sent to your facility or office that you'd like to share?

Send it to Holly Kramer at KramerH@michigan.gov and it could be included in a future edition of the Corrections Connection.

Corrections Quiz

Name this icy fundraiser dozens of MDOC employees participate in each winter to raise money for Special Olympics athletes.

Send your answer to Holly Kramer at KramerH@michigan.gov. The first person to answer correctly will receive a congratulatory shout out on MDOC social media, and the answer and winner will be published in the next edition of the newsletter.

December Quiz Recap

The Michigan Department of Corrections CDL training program for returning citizens began in which region of Michigan in 2016?

Answer: West Michigan, Region 4

Congratulations to **Debra Conine**, financial specialist for the Procurement, Monitoring and Compliance Division for being the first to answer the November Corrections Quiz. Great job!

Carson City Correctional Facility offers workshop for incarcerated veterans

Carson City Correctional Facility is now offering a Veteran's Workshop to eligible incarcerated veterans.

The Michigan Works! organization has Veteran Career Advisors through the Michigan Talent Investment Agency that provide intensive and individualized employment services, assisting incarcerated veterans in overcoming barriers they may face when seeking employment after they are released from prison. The services include increasing resume marketability, improving interviewing skills, and effectively using social networking tools. The first Veterans Workshop was held in January.



Wondering where to go for state employee discounts?

State of Michigan employees are eligible for discounts on a number of services and items from area companies.

[To find out what discounts are available, click here.](#)

Winners announced for MDOC buck photo contest

The MDOC Employee Engagement EPIC Team hosted a buck photo contest from Oct. 1 to Dec. 1 that challenged MDOC employees to submit photos of themselves with their Michigan buck from the 2018 season.

Entrants had a chance to win a \$25 Cabela's gift card and winners were selected at random.

Congratulations to gift card winners Ryan Bowne of Michigan Reformatory and Chad Martin of Cooper Street Correctional Facility. The Employee Engagement EPIC Team would like to thank everyone who participated.

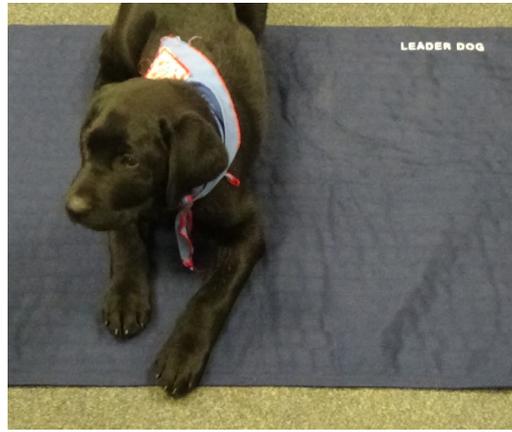
To view the 2018 MDOC Buck Pole contest photos [click here](#).

SNAPSHOTS

A look at life around the MDOC



Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility staff worked with the HOPE Program in Muskegon to donate bath towels and holiday gifts to students in need at the Muskegon Covenant Academy. Towels were requested by the program after students expressed it was an item they needed.



Michigan State Industries is now offering bed mats for puppies and dogs in facility Leader Dogs for the Blind training programs. The mats are made of durable material resistant to chewing with "Leader Dog" embroidered in the upper right corner. Mats are 24 inches by 30 inches and cost \$16.65 each. To order, use product number 26F-3100 or call the MSI Sales Department at (517) 335-3771.



Prisoners at Newberry Correctional Facility made stuffed animals, hats, scarves and mittens for those in need in the community. More than 150 items were donated to Warm Hands, Warm Hearts, the Link and Helen Newberry Joy Hospital.

Corrections in the News

[A role for theatre in criminal justice](#) — American Theatre

[Individuals on parole or probation saving on court-ordered supervision fees](#) — Lansing City Pulse

[Looking for a job? Michigan needs 700 corrections officers](#) — Detroit Free Press

[Michigan Department of Corrections Recruiting 700 Corrections Officers](#) — WBKB

[Crime Down in Saginaw in 2018](#) — WSGW

[Man rescued from van that left icy road, struck tree](#) — MLive

Spread the word about some of the great things happening at the MDOC and share these stories with friends, family and coworkers.

Seen on Twitter...



MichiganDOC @MichiganDOC · Jan 16
Thanks Gov. @gretchenwhitmer and Lt. Gov. @garlin for visiting the MDOC's hardworking staff! We were excited to talk about the great work happening around the department.

Check out photos from today's visit here:



Gov. Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Gilchrist visits MDOC Central Office
Explore this photo album by MDOC on Flickr!
flickr.com

7 42

To see more, follow the MDOC on [Twitter](#).

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November New Hires

Alexander, Jacob	Registered Nurse, Parnall Correctional Facility
Bojicic, Benjamin	Field Agent, Troy Probation Office
Castaneda, Ricardo	Cook, Gus Harrison Correctional Facility
Coffinger, Christopher	Licensed Practical Nurse, Marquette Branch Prison
Davenport, Laura	Registered Nurse, G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility
Dixon, Larissa	General Office Assistant, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center
Gates, Kayla	Corrections Qualified Mental Health Professional, Parnall Correctional Facility
Halstead, Kyle	Cook, Ionia Correctional Facility
Hawver, Tracy	Licensed Practical Nurse, Marquette Branch Prison
Hernandez, Elida	Field Agent, Wayne County Court Services Unit
Ibrahim, Ahmed	Corrections Officer, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center
Johnson, Kim	Registered Nurse, Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility
Majewski, Nicole	Recreational Therapist, Macomb Correctional Facility
Monroe, Sarah	Food Services Supervisor, Oaks Correctional Facility
Nkrumah, Marian	Registered Nurse Manager, Woodland Center Correctional Facility
Nurmi, Debbie	Licensed Practical Nurse, Chippewa Correctional Facility
Rivard, Caleb	General Office Assistant, Office of Legal Affairs
Rodriguez, Nicole	General Office Assistant, Gus Harrison Correctional Facility
Sullivan, Mackenzie	Corrections Qualified Mental Health Professional, Ionia Correctional Facility
Swihart, Shelby	Corrections Qualified Mental Health Professional, Cooper Street Correctional Facility
Thelen, Thomas	Cook, Carson City Correctional Facility
Thurston, Beverly	General Office Assistant, Lakeland Correctional Facility
Troyer, Calleen	Registered Nurse, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center
Tyrrell, Jeffrey	Refrigeration Mechanic, Detroit Reentry Center
Waters, Stephanie	Registered Nurse, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center

November Retirements

Ademodi, Juanita	Word Processing Assistant, Wayne County Special Services Unit
Arens, Todd	Corrections Officer, Carson City Correctional Facility
Blodgett, Anthony	Corrections Officer, Ojibway Correctional Facility
Bosworth, Stacey	Corrections Program Manager, Carson City Correctional Facility
Bradley, Brian	Storekeeper, Lakeland Correctional Facility
Burns, Kevin	Corrections Officer, Ionia Correctional Facility
Cox, John	Maintenance Mechanic, Ojibway Correctional Facility
Cushman, Debra	Assistant Resident Unit Supervisor, Kinross Correctional Facility
Czachowski, William	Corrections Officer, Central Michigan Correctional Facility
Dye, Richard	Corrections Officer, Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility
Fisher, Robert	Corrections Officer, St. Louis Correctional Facility
Freeman, Paul	Corrections Transportation Officer, Macomb Correctional Facility
Gamble, Dorothy	Word Processing Assistant, Chrysler District Probation Office
Gettys, Lisa	Field Operations Administration Manager, Sex Offender Management Unit
Gibson, John	School Teacher, Chippewa Correctional Facility
Heise, Thomas	Corrections Officer, Cooper Street Correctional Facility
Hopkins, Dorothy	Corrections Officer, Carson City Correctional Facility
Howes, Steven	Field Agent, Delta County Parole and Probation Office
Hutchinson, Gayle	Corrections Officer, St. Louis Correctional Facility
Irwin, Phillip	Corrections Officer, Chippewa Correctional Facility
Jones, Alice	Field Agent, Sex Offender Management Unit
Kaunisto, Virginia	Corrections Officer, Kinross Correctional Facility
Kleimola, Robert	Physical Plant Supervisor, Ojibway Correctional Facility
Laplaunt, Barry	Corrections Officer, Chippewa Correctional Facility
Levy, Harold	Corrections Officer, Parnall Correctional Facility
McGhee, Dave	Corrections Officer, Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility
Meade, Valerie	Field Agent, St. Clair County Probation Office
Michelli, Scott	Inspector, Ojibway Correctional Facility
Miller, Rosanne	General Office Assistant, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center
Mills, Michael	Corrections Officer, Newberry Correctional Facility
Morris, Jeffrey	Corrections Officer, G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility
Olson, Kathleen	Warden, Ojibway Correctional Facility
Penix, James	Corrections Officer, Newberry Correctional Facility
Poel, William	Field Agent, Hudsonville Parole and Probation Office
Sinacola, Andrew	Field Agent, Troy Probation Office
Stanton, Lorrie	Corrections Officer, Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility
Stimac, Michael	Corrections Officer, Alger Correctional Facility
Suchey, Ronald	Corrections Officer, Kinross Correctional Facility
Sweet, Michael	Corrections Officer, Muskegon Correctional Facility
Tehako, Todd	Corrections Officer, Baraga Correctional Facility
Ward, Kevin	Corrections Officer, St. Louis Correctional Facility
Wolfe, Phillip	Corrections Officer, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center