

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION



AWARDS

May 2018

Director's Award

In 1999, Matthew Clausen and his family decided to make a major move from Arizona to his wife's hometown in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It was January. His children had never seen snow before and one was apprehensive about getting off the plane because he wasn't familiar with the



white drifts he saw outside. Despite the change in weather, Clausen considered it perfect timing. He landed a job as a corrections officer at Ojibway Correctional Facility and loved the work. Clausen, an Institutional Training Officer at Ojibway Correctional Facility, was named the winner of the Michigan Department of Corrections Director's Award for his involvement in developing improved training for corrections staff statewide. The Director's Award is the highest honor that can be presented to employees of the MDOC. Clausen also received the department's Professional Excellence Award for his efforts. "Matthew Clausen's expertise, skill and guidance have been a tremendous asset to the department's efforts to enhance training," MDOC

Director Heidi Washington said. Clausen, who also has served as an Emergency Response Team commander, has helped produce a number of training videos for the department and oversees training for staff at his facility. He also assisted in the installation and development of a new camera system and developed a system that helps keep staff informed during facility mobilizations.

Clausen said he enjoys training and considers his colleagues an inspiration.

"I love being able to talk to staff, have a good discussion and help make them better at their jobs by giving them more tools," Clausen said. Before coming to Michigan, Clausen worked in video production for the city of Mesa, Ariz. It was there that he learned video production skills and techniques he now uses to create training videos for the department.

Clausen is also a musician and creates his own soundtracks for the videos he produces. He said he is grateful for the support of department leaders, including Warden Kathleen Olson, who have given him the ability to use his creativity to tell engaging stories through the videos that staff enjoy watching and participating in.

"It's been a really great ride," Clausen said.

"This is 100 percent in my wheelhouse. I can do a lot of the things that I love to do, all under the department of corrections."



Matthew Clausen with Warden Kathleen Olson

For a video of the ceremony, visit the MDOC on [Facebook](#). Photos of the evening's festivities are also on [Twitter](#), or click here to see more photos of the ceremony and honorees on [Flickr](#).

Professional Excellence Award winners



Kathy Arnold started her career with the department in 1986 as a probation agent and was promoted to a parole/probation manager for the Jackson Probation Office in 2003. In July 2016, she helped launch the Probation Sentencing Specialist pilot and was promoted to a parole/probation specialist in 2017. Arnold also serves on the Steering Committee for the Jackson County Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force, which works to address the problems of heroin and prescription opiate abuse.



Deborah Beltz has worked for the department for 28 years and is an accounting technician at Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility. She developed a method for quartermaster and warehouse staff to keep track of state-issued items. She also helped streamline ordering through the warehouse and helped make the transition to SIGMA at the facility run smoothly by ensuring the facility had sufficient supplies in advance while everyone learned the new system.



Debra Conine joined the MDOC 28 years ago and is currently a financial specialist with the Budget and Operations Administration. She is responsible for financial monitoring, reconciliation, forecasting and reporting. She mentors program area staff and colleagues in various financial areas. In addition, she also participates in EPIC to encourage and promote employee engagement.



Nicholas Cusack has worked for the department for 17 years and has held many different positions, including serving as a captain at Michigan Reformatory. He currently works as an internal affairs investigator and was also selected to serve on the Critical Incident EPIC team. In addition, he assists in the department's training for basic investigators. Cusack is a leader who is always willing to help others and lead by example.



Brenda Forrest started her career with the MDOC in 1987 as a typist clerk and went on to work in the Director's Office, the Office of the Executive Clemency Advisory Council and the Parole Board. In 2016, she was reassigned to the Parole Board Reentry Unit where she also assists in the Pre-screening Unit. Forrest is a committed employee who has a strong work ethic and high level of integrity. She goes above and beyond in all her work.

Professional Excellence Award winners



John Hassen has worked for the MDOC for more than 20 years and is a Corrections Medical Officer at Woodland Center Correctional Facility. As a veteran of the United States Army, he has a passion for volunteering with a local VA Hospital and with therapy dogs. He helped establish the first permanent live-in therapy dog, Sadie, to assist in treating mentally-ill prisoners. Hassen's passion and dedication to the therapy dog program has helped with its success and made him a positive role model.



Nicholas Knebl started his career as an intern at the Holland Parole and Probation Office and was hired in as a corrections program coordinator at Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility in 2009. He is currently a parole agent at the Holland Parole and Probation Office and is a veteran of the U.S. Army. Knebl is a go-to agent for support in the office, from assisting with tether issues to general supervision of offenders. He also works with Vocational Village graduates and is actively involved with the Carey Guides pilot.



Lukas Linn worked as an investigator for Child Protective Services before he became a field agent for the MDOC in 2015. He currently works in the Greenfield District Probation Office where he supervises ICOTS and sex offenders and is a liaison agent for the Detroit Police Department's 2nd Precinct. Linn has a fair and firm attitude towards his offenders and he has assisted officers at the 2nd Precinct in the seizure of nearly sixteen illegal firearms and a kilo of fentanyl this year.



Angel Lucas is an agent at the Bay County Parole and Probation Office who has taken over the Swift and Sure caseload. She is firm, fair and consistent with offenders she supervises and also travels around the state presenting Carey Guides training. Lucas has an infectious enthusiasm and positive outlook and has made remarkable achievements in her first year with the MDOC.



Brian Majerczyk started his career as a psychologist at Oaks Correctional Facility in 2001, and was promoted to Mental Health Services Unit Chief in 2012. Majerczyk has been heavily involved in the reorganization of the facility's segregation prisoners into the START Program and led the training for integrated care. In addition to his work with the MDOC, he also is a psychology instructor at Northwestern College and has a part-time private practice in Traverse City.

Professional Excellence Award winners



Tamara Marsh has been with the MDOC for more than 21 years and currently is the projections specialist with the Budget and Projections Division. Marsh is the point person for miscellaneous operating projects and is able to successfully lead efforts to help optimize the department's resources by addressing all maintenance needs with all available funding. She is able to break down barriers to communicate with others.



Callie Moss began her career with the MDOC at the Troy Probation Office as a word processing assistant in 2009 and was promoted to a probation agent position at the Pontiac Probation Office in 2013. In 2015, she joined the Adult Treatment Court Team and has stepped in on two occasions to assume the role of acting supervisor. She handled all situations well and is a leader and a team player.



Pablo Olvera began his career as a corrections officer in 1995 and is a past honoree as Officer of the Year. Olvera runs the recreation department at Saginaw Correctional Facility and assists with the MDOC chair repair program that repairs chairs at no cost to the other facilities. He also oversees the sewing program that donates its products to local charities and faith-based organizations in Saginaw County. He is well liked and treats everyone with dignity and respect.



Karri Osterhout has worked for the department since 1993 and is a deputy warden at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility. She has served as a field agent, state training professional, corrections program coordinator and departmental specialist during her career, and currently oversees programs at Women's Huron Valley. She is passionate about Offender Success and dedicates countless hours to ensuring programs are gender responsive and provided with integrity.



Cynthia Partridge has worked for the department for 38 years and currently manages the Time Computation Unit. She and her staff are responsible for the review of prisoner release dates and ensuring they are accurate. Recently, she and time computation staff were called on to identify juvenile lifers, audit their sentences, create time reviews and process eligible prisoners for release due to a court ruling. She and her team successfully completed the reviews in a short window of time.

Professional Excellence Award winners



Robert Rhinard began his career in 2012 as a corrections officer at Cooper Street Correctional Facility and became a parole and probation agent in 2015. He currently works at the Calhoun County Parole Office supervising the Vocational Village caseload. He has created meaningful relationships with the employers, vendors, Vocational Village staff and clients. He views his job as an opportunity to better the community by creating a safer place for Michigan residents to live.



Samantha Ruhl began her career in 2012 at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility as a corrections officer. She now works with the Bureau of Health Care Services as a recruiter. She is an incredibly hard worker and very active in her current position. Ruhl has a can-do spirit and has been instrumental in helping develop the BHCS centralized intern/clinical rotation program.



Krista Ward has worked for the department for more than 17 years and is currently an accountant in the Accounting Division. She also served as a department trainer during the implementation phase of SIGMA and has maintained an extraordinary workload since SIGMA was implemented. Aside from her work with SIGMA, she is the department's grant coordinator and assists staff with various grant processes.



Daniel Weaver has proved to be a strong advocate for the community and the betterment of offenders since beginning his career with the department in 2013. He currently works as an agent at the Alpena County Parole and Probation Office and is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He strives to assist offenders while also promoting public safety in the community. Weaver is very personable and professional and he is a well-respected leader in his community.



Stephen Weiss has been a respiratory therapist at Duane Waters Health Center for the last 10 years. He looks for things that need to be improved, evaluates the situation, researches how to make those improvements and always keeps his supervisor apprised during the process. He continuously trains nursing staff on the use and maintenance of equipment and has also saved the state financially by finding a way to acquire used CPAP machines.



O'Bell Winn began his career in 1993 as a corrections officer at Saginaw Correctional Facility and is now warden of the facility. Warden Winn has an excellent work ethic and a great attitude. He has overseen many facility improvements and program additions including perimeter security lighting upgrades, PPD system replacement, a youth deterrent program, two dog programs, PELL grant college classes and the establishment of a unit to address the needs of incarcerated veterans.

Agent of the Year

Agent Toni Narvais-Cooklin said it has been her goal to have impact in the lives of the offenders she supervises.



"I can impact people just by simply listening," said Narvais-Cooklin, an agent at the Tuscola County Parole and Probation Office. "The small or insignificant impacts I make could be the catalyst for hope or change for other staff and for our offenders."

Narvais-Cooklin was named the 2018 Candice Dunn Agent of the Year for her continuous efforts to learn, improve her skills and bring new ideas to the department.

Narvais-Cooklin, who has worked for the MDOC for 18 years, has served on the MDOC Recruitment Team and as the internship coordinator for the region, helping to draw new talent to the department.

She has worked with the Sobriety Court, has supervised specialty caseloads, and regularly volunteers for all available training both in and outside the department to relay what she has learned to her colleagues in corrections.

Narvais-Cooklin said she loves learning and appreciates the many opportunities she has had to gain new skills to provide positive guidance and direction to offenders.

This is the first year the MDOC's Parole/Probation Agent of the Year Award is named for Candice Dunn.

During her acceptance speech at the Employee Appreciation Banquet, she said it was an honor to be selected for the award from thousands of incredible agents across the state.



Agent Toni Narvais-Cooklin with Supervisor Charles Walker.

About the Candice Dunn Agent of the Year Award

Candice Dunn began her career with the Michigan Department of Corrections in 2004 with the Eastern District Probation Office.



As a probation agent in Oakland County's Pontiac Probation Office, she worked with the Urban Drug Court and Sobriety Court.

She was named the department's Agent of the Year in 2017 for her

exceptional work and efforts to help offenders on

her caseload succeed.

She was tragically killed in a car accident following the Employee Appreciation Banquet, where she accepted her award.

The Agent of the Year Award is now named for Candice to honor her legacy and the outstanding contributions of agents like her.



Parole/Probation Agent of the Year nominees



Lennie Alcorn is an agent with Monroe County Parole and Probation Office and a 23-year veteran of the MDOC. She took on the sex offender caseload and also educates coworkers and the community on the dangers and signs of human trafficking. She is also a certified counselor for victims of human trafficking.



Dionne Byers is an agent with the Wayne County Parole Office SAI-Aftercare Unit and is a 21-year veteran of the MDOC. She currently works as an SAI parole agent and continuously promotes offender success. She participates in additional training and education opportunities and serves as an important source of motivation for the offenders she supervises.



Nayatt Castelein is an agent with the Ingham County Probation Office and has worked for the department for more than nine years. She was new to probation supervision when she transferred to the office about a year ago, but she established herself quickly and was assigned the sex offender caseload. She has also helped mentor new agents at the field office.



William Fleming is an agent with the Grand Traverse Parole and Probation Office and has worked for the department for 19 years. He is an Internet Crimes Against Children/Computer Crimes Agent and always displays a high degree of integrity in his work. He is trusted and respected by staff and others who interact with him.



Rachel Jarnagin is an agent with Oakland County's Pontiac Probation Office and started with the department as an intern in 2006. She is also a part of the Adult Treatment Court Team. She is a great team leader and she continues to be a wealth of knowledge to new agents and seasoned agents.



Valerie Landon is an agent with the Southwest District Probation Office and 22-year veteran of the MDOC. Her caseload of probationers has the highest employment rate in the Wayne County Residential Alternative to Prison (WRAP) program. She consistently displays a positive and professional demeanor while interacting with the public, staff and offenders.

Parole/Probation Agent of the Year nominees



Annegret Remmert is an agent with the Kalamazoo County Parole and Probation Office and has worked for the department for more than eight years. She is the designated Vocational Village agent and she initiated an office Employee Engagement Committee. Remmert is extremely knowledgeable, passionate and motivated regarding the career she has chosen.



Thomas Roys is an institutional parole agent at the Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility and a 29-year veteran of the MDOC. He has taken on additional responsibilities that include performing tasks for both Vocational Village graduates and the P70 populations at Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility. Roys is very dependable and reliable.



David Tumpkin is an agent with the Eastern District Probation Office and has worked for the department for 15 years. He is one of the first to respond to help de-escalate intense situations with offenders if they are non-compliant during arrest. He has served as a mentor to both his colleagues and offenders on his caseload.



Kenneth Werner is an agent with the Ogemaw County Parole and Probation Office and a 24-year veteran of the MDOC. He is always volunteering to take on extra work or to help others. He also has a great relationship with the law enforcement community and county employees.



Sean Wiltenburg is an embedded agent at the Muskegon County Parole Office and has worked for the department for 18 years. He works with the Muskegon Police Department and helps all other law enforcement agencies in the county. He constantly receives great feedback and goes above and beyond to ensure the public's safety.

Corrections Officer of the Year

Corrections Officer Elwanda Ray is a firm believer in the power of a positive attitude. Showing compassion and maintaining an optimistic outlook have a tremendous influence on changing



lives, she said.

Ray, corrections officer at Thumb Correctional Facility, was selected as the 2018 Corrections Officer of the Year for her compassion, integrity and professionalism.

She has worked for the MDOC for 17 years and worked with youthful offenders for about 10 years.

She said she hopes the lessons offenders learn in prison will help them lead better lives after release. She also volunteers at two nursing homes, delivers food to those in need and participates in a youth deterrent program with Flint Community Schools, where she talks to students about the importance of making good choices.

The Michigan Correctional Officers' Training Council, a group comprised of representatives from the MDOC, Michigan Corrections Organization, law enforcement and higher education, chose her for the honor from a pool that included four other finalists.

During her acceptance speech at the Employee Appreciation Banquet she stressed how much she loves her job as a corrections officer and is grateful for the support of her colleagues and mentors.

"Encourage each other, because we need each other in our daily walk," she said.

She said she was humbled to receive the award and to be among such outstanding honorees.



Officer Elwanda Ray with Warden Willis Chapman

Corrections Officer of the Year finalists



Peter Goodreau, a corrections officer at Baraga Correctional Facility, has worked for the department since 1996. His knowledge and calm demeanor have made him an asset to his facility. He is also a military veteran who fundraises to help students.



Jerald Nugent, a corrections officer at G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility, has worked for the department since 2000. He is a demonstrated leader who has helped train new staff and he started a Veterans Day fundraiser in 2013 that provides treats for soldiers overseas.



Thomas Johnson is an investigator for the Absconder Recovery Unit and 12-year veteran of the MDOC. He quickly acclimated to work as an investigator and has a clear passion for his job. He routinely travels around the state to conduct training for employees.



David Rowley, a corrections officer at St. Louis Correctional Facility, has worked for the MDOC for 23 years. He often goes above and beyond in his job duties and is considered a role model for staff.

Corrections Officer of the Year nominees



Officer David Bottrell consistently exceeds expectations in his role at Oaks Correctional Facility. He encourages prisoners to make positive changes in their lives by teaching Thinking for a Change and financial management classes.



Officer Michael Brown has worked with Muskegon Correctional Facility's faith-based unit for two years and is involved with all of the unit's operations and programming. He serves as a mentor to others and his peers say he's the glue that keeps his platoon together.



Officer Marvin Cooper recently assisted the Dearborn Police Department in cracking a cold case involving a prisoner and also was responsible for preventing a large amount of contraband from being smuggled into Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility. He has served as a department trainer for more than 17 years and dedicates much of his time to educating new officers.



Corporal Kaywon Davis has been with the department just five years but is already one of the key facilitators for core programming with the Special Alternative Incarceration program at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility.



Officer William Dible continues to engage in creative ways to manage mentally ill inmates at Woodland Center Correctional Facility and developed behavioral management plans and tracking methods to increase a prisoner's ability to maintain stable functioning.



Officer Joanne Dutra is well respected by both staff and prisoners at Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility and has been instrumental in helping to calm prisoners in health care so they could be treated by medical personnel. She is a positive role model who regularly participates in charitable events.

Corrections Officer of the Year nominees



Officer Wyatt Federau is a go-to employee when procedural questions arise. He has suggested changes at Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility to enhance security and is always looking to improve his skills through training.



Corporal Amanda Feenstra is dependable, honest and direct when dealing with trainees at the Special Alternative Incarceration Facility for men, and she always volunteers for additional trainings when they are available.



Officer Billy Gaskill has been instrumental in preventing contraband from entering Carson City Correctional Facility by carefully watching monitors and listening to prisoner phone calls. He treats others with kindness and respect at all times and is always professional.



Officer Christopher Gattshall displays honesty and integrity in his actions at Cooper Street Correctional Facility. He is an Emergency Response Team member who stepped up and volunteered to serve as a shift trainer and an ERT trainer.



Officer Aaron Gordon, of Central Michigan Correctional Facility, has degrees in criminal justice and psychology and has saved numerous prisoner lives in his 23-year career, including one instance where he performed CPR on a prisoner for an hour and a half.



Officer Steven Greil's attention to detail has led to the discovery of contraband and prevented prisoners from engaging in activities that could threaten the security of Ojibway Correctional Facility. He is vital to the Security Threat Group team and is a mentor to new officers.

Corrections Officer of the Year nominees



Officer Paul Hackenburg revamped the property room at the Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center and created an efficient and detailed record-keeping system to track prisoner property and resolve grievances. He also helps improve the lives of offenders by leading a Thinking for a Change class.



Officer Curtis Johnson is a member of the Emergency Response Team at Saginaw Correctional Facility and spends time talking to law enforcement classes and encouraging others to consider a career at the MDOC.



Officer Kenyan Jones regularly assists in training her peers, as well as new recruits, and tracking training that has been completed. She is always security conscious and has recommended improvements to operations at Lakeland Correctional Facility.



Transportation Officer Dennis Lashley takes great pride in his work and often steps up to assist his colleagues when they need help. He has a positive attitude and serves as a trainer for new staff.



Officer Harold Levy is an air force veteran who volunteers his time as a videographer for his local high school football and basketball games and was a great resource in mapping the layout for Parnall Correctional Facility's camera system.



Officer Wanda Lowe is dependable and hardworking both at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility and out in the community. She volunteers at the local Kiwanis Club preparing college scholarships for area students.

Corrections Officer of the Year nominees



Officer Kelly Marantette, from the Detroit Reentry Center, is polite, courteous and professional and has shown great potential in her short time with the department. She has completed many job-related training courses and is learning American Sign Language to help her communicate with individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing.



Officer Victor Maul is a facility trainer at Macomb Correctional Facility and has volunteered to participate in emergency preparedness drills. He is dedicated, dependable and proactive in learning about new policies and procedures.



Officer Phynetha Odom-Williams' quick action and attention to detail has been vital to responding to medical emergencies that have occurred at Michigan Reformatory. She also takes her position running the pedestrian gate seriously. Staff can depend on her thorough searches and her interaction with visitors is personable and highly professional.



Officer Paul Oparka is a great team leader at the Detroit Detention Center. He proposed using white wristbands to help identify young offenders so they could be appropriately separated from adult detainees. He is professional, dependable and integral to his facility's operations.



Officer Arnulfo Ortiz is a volunteer firefighter and for years has worked in Chippewa Correctional Facility's segregation unit. There are fewer problems in his wing because of his calm demeanor and professionalism.



Officer David Paquet can be counted on to do an excellent job on any assignment he is given at Marquette Branch Prison. He is an excellent role model who is seen by his peers as a dedicated leader, and his response to a number of emergencies at the facility has prevented serious injuries to prisoners.

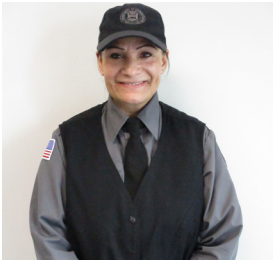
Corrections Officer of the Year nominees



Officer Cody Rees has been an integral part of a new program at Ionia Correctional Facility designed to reduce the segregation population. He is a natural leader and has great enthusiasm to learn more.



Officer Gregory Renard was instrumental in re-establishing and maintaining programs at Kinross Correctional Facility after it relocated. He is a hard worker who sets a high standard for others to follow.



Officer Esther Rodriguez is always willing to go the extra mile to achieve goals and is a positive role model for others at Gus Harrison Correctional Facility. She is the first to volunteer for difficult tasks and ensures that the needs of both staff and prisoners are met.



Officer Kevin Schroeder has been instrumental to the success of Newberry Correctional Facility's shelter dog training program. He coordinates the training for new handlers and ensures the needs of the dogs are met. He is honest, energetic and vital to housing operations at his facility.



Officer James Tawney has a wealth of knowledge and experience that was a tremendous asset to his colleagues at West Shoreline Correctional Facility. He also heroically rescued a young girl from a car accident that occurred on Muskegon Correctional Facility property in 2002.



Officer David Tennyson is often the first to come to the aid of prisoners or staff at Alger Correctional Facility when they need help. He was a member of the Emergency Response Team for 15 years and has assisted with locating missing persons in the community and responding to prisoner disturbances.



Officer Joseph Voorheis facilitates cognitive-based and religious programming for offenders at the Lake County Residential Reentry Program. He has assisted in developing an incentive program to reward offenders for compliance and helped create processes to improve transportation scheduling, billing and Medicaid enrollment.

Thank you to our outstanding MDOC employees

This year's awards ceremony honored employees from across the state for their exceptional work that has helped the department reach a number of important milestones. The recidivism rate declined to 28.1 percent, which is among the lowest in the nation, and parolee employment is up. The prisoner population has also fallen below 40,000 for the first time in more than 20 years, as more offenders are now equipped with the skills they need to be successful and remain in the community. More than 460 people attended

the Employee Appreciation Banquet and awards ceremony that honored 70 employees at the Lansing Center in downtown Lansing. Human Resources Director Jonathan Patterson and Acting Administrative Assistant Angela Helm also received accolades for assisting in the apprehension of an Ingham County Jail escapee on April 30. The night included a special guest, Gov. Rick Snyder, who took time to thank staff for their hard work to make Michigan a better and safer place to live. Department spokesman Chris

Gautz served as the master of ceremonies for the evening. Kathleen Meyers, chaplain at Parnall Correctional Facility, gave the invocation and Jeremiah Weaver, a corrections officer at G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility sang the national anthem. Awards were presented by Director Heidi Washington, Deputy Directors Russ Marlan, Ken McKee and Jeri-Ann Sherry, and Michigan Corrections Organization President Tom Tylutki. Congratulations and best wishes to all the winners and finalists.

