

# **F.Y.I.**

Special Edition

2015

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**Michigan Department of Corrections**

Employee Appreciation Banquet  
**Award Winners**

# Director's Award

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**S**heila Wilkinson joined the MDOC in 1992 as a corrections officer. She went on to serve as an ARUS and RUM, while continuing her education for her Limited Psychology and Professional Counseling licensures. She currently serves as unit chief at Newberry Correctional Facility and oversees the Michigan Sex Offender Program/Sex Offender Program.

Wilkinson earned both the Director's Award and the Corrections Manager of the Year Award for 2015.



Sheila Wilkinson and Director Dan Heyns

Wilkinson helped launch and implement the Michigan Sex Offender Program and spent many hours meeting with department staff, including facility employees, wardens, Parole Board members and other MDOC leaders, to provide them with information on the program and ensure their support. She regularly conducts site visits, quality assurance and training and has logged at least 20,000 miles a year traveling to attend meetings and oversee the implementation of the program.

She has been instrumental in identifying the department's needs for sex offender training and organizes outside training with nationally-recognized experts in sex offender therapy. Wilkinson and Terri Wood also created new databases and screening methods to organize the number of prisoners waiting for sex offender therapy. She has worked to train staff across the state on authoring high-quality Sex Offender Risk Assessments and works with other sex offender experts to review complex cases.

Wilkinson said she always looks forward to new challenges in her career and will continue to do so.



# Corrections Officer of the Year

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**W**hen Scott Nadeau heard Marquette Branch Prison was looking to create a new program for prisoners with mental health disorders, he was interested to find out how he could help.

Nadeau ultimately assisted in providing input and direction in the development of the prison's Interim Care Program for prisoners with major mental disorders, and his experience and dedication have been credited as major factors in the program's success.



Corrections Officer Scott Nadeau and Marquette Branch Prison Warden Robert Napel

Nadeau was named the MDOC's 2015 Corrections Officer of the Year for his work, and staff and administrators have lauded his leadership abilities, work ethic and consistently positive attitude.

"Scott's level of honesty, integrity, and dedication are unsurpassed," Marquette Branch Prison Warden Robert Napel wrote in his nomination of Nadeau. "Scott is an excellent role model who is seen by his peers as a dedicated leader who is quick to assist any and all staff."

Nadeau is an 18-year veteran of the department who started his career as a corrections officer at Alger Correctional Facility. He has also worked as a resident unit officer at Alger Correctional Facility and Marquette Branch Prison, and has served as a corrections officer at Marquette Branch Prison since 2002.

He and his partner worked with mental health staff, health care staff and facility administrators to develop and launch the Interim Care Program, and Nadeau has continued to provide critical observations and suggestions for improvement to ensure proper care is provided to prisoners in the program.

Nadeau also has intervened in numerous medical emergencies where his quick and professional response has helped save prisoners from serious injury and death, Napel wrote in a letter nominating Nadeau for the award.

Nadeau said the Interim Care Program offered a new challenge and it was rewarding to see the positive effect it had on prisoners.

"It changes their demeanor and their attitude," he said. "It's definitely a transformation."

Nadeau said he would advise new recruits to trust their instincts, treat everyone respectfully and stay positive. Working in corrections can be stressful, but that stress needs to be left at the door at the end of the workday and shouldn't change who you are, he said.

Nadeau said he felt humbled to be a part of this year's awards and was happy for the other winners and nominees.

"Everyone who was there was deserving," he said.

In addition to his work at Marquette Branch Prison, Nadeau and his wife volunteer with the local Alzheimer Patient Program at Messiah Lutheran Church, and help with programs at Father Marquette School and the Special Olympics.

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## Professional Excellence Awards

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**Jared Ayres** started his career with the MDOC in 1989 at Standish Correctional Facility.



After spending 10 years at Standish, he transferred to Saginaw Correctional Facility as a corrections officer and was promoted to sergeant in 2000. In 2011 he accepted a position as prison build supervisor.

Under his supervision, the program produced 1,500 beds for children in cooperation with the Department of Human Services in 2014. The program also made 130 lockers to upgrade the Ferris State University football locker rooms, 80 beds for the Fowler Center in Mayville, 48 picnic tables for the Baldwin/Newago State Forest Campgrounds and numerous wood craft items that were donated to charity. Ayres has cultivated partnerships for the program to ensure its growth and is focused on improving the employability of prisoners upon release.

**Jordan Becklin** was hired as an agent with the Kent County Probation Office in 2007.



He later took on the responsibility of a specialized gang caseload and became an embedded agent assigned to the Grand Rapids Police Department in 2013.

In 2014, Becklin was able to link a parolee who was on GPS to a shooting on the city's southeast side. He provided the name of the offender and tracked him to the scene of the shooting and to his home, where evidence was found that led to the offender's arrest. He also spent 13 days comparing jail photos to old probationer and parolee pictures to assist police with a homicide investigation. Becklin's knowledge of local gang members, professional demeanor and ability to obtain critical information regarding probationers and parolees earned the respect of local law enforcement, who value their partnership with him.

**Christopher Crysler** is a 25-year veteran of the department and serves as program development manager for Prisoner Reentry.



The activities he is responsible for include the Parole Release Unit and the parole process, commonly referred to as D-47. Both operations are highly technical, but he presents information on them in an engaging way that also stresses the importance of this work. Crysler routinely interacts with staff on a personal and professional level and serves as a positive role model, challenging them to do their best. He is motivated, enthusiastic about his work and embraces change with a positive attitude.

## Professional Excellence Awards

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**Janell Freeman** joined the MDOC in 2007 as a probation agent in Macomb County, and acted as drug court agent for a year and a half.



She transferred to the Kent County Parole Office in 2008 and spent four years supervising the gender-specific caseload. During that time, she developed and organized “Women Celebration Recognition Day,” which involved recruiting outside speakers and volunteers to talk to female parolees about issues they face. The event has been so successful that parolees who have been discharged return to hear stories and share their own. Other counties also recognized and adopted this event.

**Donald Martin** started his career with the MDOC in 1999 as an agent at the Macomb Probation Office. He has also worked as an agent in Allegan and Van Buren counties, and as an OMNI trainer. In 2008, he transferred to the Kalamazoo Parole/Probation Office and was promoted to supervisor in 2010.



Martin assisted in the planning and design of new office space for the Kalamazoo Parole/Probation Office to ensure it would allow for efficient operations for staff. He is also the facilitator for the Region 8 Operations Facilities Committee, which is piloting a new process for submitting Field Agent Daily Reports. He has established positive working relationships with key agencies in Kalamazoo, including local law enforcement, the prosecutor’s office, county officials and service providers.

**Noah Nagy** joined the MDOC in 1995 as an athletic director at Western Wayne Correctional Facility. He transferred to SAI in 1999 and became a parole/probation officer in 2001.



He was promoted to supervisor at the Calhoun County Parole Office in 2007 and became manager of the Parole Violation/Supervision and Discharge Unit in 2010. After his own battle with cancer, Nagy created the organization Thought1, which raises money to provide college scholarships to Jackson County high school seniors whose lives were impacted by losing a parent, step-parent or guardian to cancer, or who are cancer survivors themselves. The organization has raised \$40,000 so far. He also assisted in establishing a Toastmasters group at central office to enhance the speaking skills of MDOC staff.

He is a tireless cheerleader for the MDOC and his staff, and has improved the Parole Violation/Supervision and Discharge Unit through his visible commitment to his employees.



## Professional Excellence Awards

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**Tracey Raquepaw** was hired as a teacher in 2002 at Saginaw Correctional Facility. She was transferred to St. Louis Correctional Facility in 2003 and then was promoted to Reentry Coordinator at Saginaw Correctional Facility in 2007.



Raquepaw assisted in developing a memorandum of understanding between the Veterans Administration, Michigan Veteran's Affairs Agency and the MDOC, which allowed inmates to access VA disability benefits. Her efforts broke down barriers to help the VA better serve incarcerated veterans.

**Ann Marie Schaefer** has worked as a probation/parole agent in Van Buren County for more than 20 years. During the first 15 years of her career, Schaefer supervised intense caseloads, including SAI graduates and offenders supervised on electronic monitoring systems. In 2008, she took over the gender-specific caseload.



Schaefer was instrumental in developing a "Living in Balance" treatment group and assisted Van Buren County with the development of a Drug Treatment Court Program. She also assisted with the development of Van Buren County's Swift and Sure Sanctions Program. She is a connected, caring and resourceful agent, who has innovative ideas to help offenders succeed.

**Marti Kay Sherry** has served as planning manager for the Bureau of Health Care Services (BHCS) for the past five years. Prior to joining the MDOC, she worked for the Michigan Public Health Institute as a program coordinator.



She spearheaded the development and implementation of the BHCS five-year strategic plan, oversaw the MDOC's efforts to implement the Affordable Care Act and provided leadership as BHCS worked to develop special housing unit space for older or medically fragile prisoners, which will lead to more focused and efficient care for the population. Sherry also provided leadership to all of BHCS quality improvement activities and has helped coordinate numerous teams that have improved operational efficiency.



## Professional Excellence Awards

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**Paul J. Slagter** joined the MDOC in 2000 as a corrections program coordinator at Central Michigan Correctional Facility. He also worked at Florence Crane Correctional Facility, Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center, and served as a departmental specialist at the Huron Valley Complex. In 2014, he became a departmental specialist at the department's central office.



When working on a project, Slagter ensures each facet is thoroughly researched and vetted and welcomes the challenge of finding more efficient and effective ways to do business. He is often sought out as the "go-to man" for answers and resolution to questions or issues at both the facility level and in central office. He is described as relentlessly positive and is always willing to lend a hand.

**Anthony Stewart** is a 27-year veteran of the department, who started his career as a corrections officer. He went on to serve as a sergeant, lieutenant, inspector, assistant deputy warden, deputy warden and warden of the Detroit Detention Center and Detroit Reentry Center. He currently serves as warden of Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility.



He was instrumental in the opening of the Detroit Detention Center and the success of the facility is credited, in part, to his commitment, innovation and excellent working relationship with Detroit agencies. In its first year, the center saved \$1.2 million. Stewart is a proactive leader, who strives for excellence in improving any facility he works at and is committed to helping the community.

**Anita Talcott** has served the state for more than 31 years and is the projections manager with the Budget and Projections Division of the MDOC's Budget Operations Administration.



Her work monitoring expenditures has helped the department reduce the need for legislative transfers, effectively utilize existing resources and provide reliable information for decision making that has been essential to the department operating within its budget and improving its relationship with the legislature. She has also helped identify internal resources to use toward the department's physical plant projects. She effectively and efficiently approaches her job and her work reflects the department's value for excellence.



## Professional Excellence Awards

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**Joslyn Wilkerson** joined the MDOC in 2010 as an agent at the Lahser District Probation Office.

She has supervised specialized caseloads and currently supervises a traditional caseload.

Wilkerson and another agent recently helped a probationer secure placement in a local shelter so she could escape a potentially abusive relationship. Wilkerson is diligent in her job duties, maintains a positive and professional demeanor with staff, offenders and the public, and is always willing to help her colleagues.



**Thomas Zahon** joined the department in 1988 and has worked with the Lahser District Probation Office, Outer District Parole Office, Greenfield Probation Office and Court Services Unit. He is currently a supervisor at the Greenfield District Probation Office.

Zahon has stepped up to assume many responsibilities. He handles building issues, is a mentor to new supervisors, and is known as the “numbers guy” because of his knack for interpreting numbers and data easily. He is well-liked and well-respected by staff and maintains a positive relationship with the courts and other probation and parole offices.





## Employee Appreciation Banquet

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### Award Winners

#### Effective Process Improvement and Communication

**Lynnette Kaufman** joined the MDOC in 1989 as a word processing assistant at Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility. She went on to serve as a secretary for Ottawa County Parole and Probation, and then became a probation/parole agent in Kent County in 2002 before being promoted to parole supervisor in 2010. In January she was named Program Manager for Field Operations Administration Region 4B.



She is the initiative manager for the FOA Administrative EPIC Team, which includes four sub-teams: Probation Violations, Restorative Justice, Sanctions and Work Statements. She was praised by EPIC team members and initiative managers for her dedication, optimism and hard work on her EPIC team. She promoted the EPIC process and encouraged others to be involved, and led her team toward a common goal to improve operations and bring positive change in the department.

#### Teacher of the Year

**Douglas Fitch** has served as a correctional educator with the MDOC for 15 years and currently serves as an academic instructor at Parnall Correctional Facility.



He and special education teacher Connie Adams created a support program for reluctant students that provides additional counseling and individualized encouragement to help students improve, rather than disciplining them for their short comings. Fitch regularly adjusts the instruction in his workgroups to adapt to the needs of his current students and often seeks new ways to provide better educational opportunities.

#### Health Care Employee



**Natalie Souder** has worked for the MDOC for more than 14 years and serves as a registered nurse at St. Louis Correctional Facility.

She participates in the Health Care Weekly Case Management Team and is the nursing representative for the Quality Assurance Team. Souder serves as a mentor for newly-hired nurses, effectively communicates with the prisoner population and staff at the facility, and uses sound judgement to make appropriate decisions under pressure.

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## Employee Appreciation Banquet

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### Award Winners

#### Administrative Support



**Michelle Smith** has been with the MDOC for 13 years and serves as secretary of the Ogemaw County Probation and Parole Office.

Smith has maintained a great working relationship with local agencies and has been an excellent resource for the courts, judges, and other county staff. She volunteered to fill in for the Roscommon office for about 6 months until a new secretary could be hired and then helped train the new secretary. She also recently volunteered to take on extra responsibilities to cover the Iosco office for several months until a secretary could return from maternity leave. Smith has a take-charge attitude and is an

ultimate team player.

#### Probation/Parole Agent



**Tamela Lail-Monday** has been with the MDOC since 1994 and serves as a parole Agent at the Detroit Metro Parole Office.

Lail-Monday has worked with the Parole Gang Unit for 13 years and assists Correctional Facilities Administration inspectors with interpreting gang intelligence, which has led to the prosecution of gang offenders. She has been a valuable partner in U.S. Department of Homeland Security investigations since 2009 and has participated in many of their anti-gang initiative programs. She has also assisted the FBI with prosecuting members of the Latin Counts gang and was given a professional excellence coin for her diligent work. She is an excellent

resource and mentor to new agents and shows great integrity and dependability on the job.

# F.Y.I.



# HELP MAKE THINGS RIGHT



## Thanks for your hard work and dedication



The large group of nominees for this year's awards is a clear indication of the dedication, commitment and professional integrity of the department's employees.

About 450 people attended this year's Employee Appreciation Banquet to honor the 68 nominees and award winners representing all areas of the department.

The MDOC is grateful to have such exemplary staff who go above and beyond every day to serve the state and hold offenders accountable.

Thanks for your hard work this year and every year before it.

