



Impact Georgia

February 2012 Newsletter

In This Issue

GDC Employees Attend International Conference for Special Olympics Pg 1

Gibson Hall Wins the Children's Book Drive Pg 1

Investigating Sexual Misconduct: Training for Correctional Investigators Pg 2

Valdosta Transitional Center Partner with Local Parole Office Pg 2

Grand Opening of Coastal State Prison Career Center Pg 3

Phillips Transitional Center Residents Seeking Higher Education Pg 3

How to Prepare for Biometric Screening at State Offices South Pg 3

GDC Employees Attend International Conference for Special Olympics

Contributed by Chief Probation Officer Scott Chitwood



L to R: Royal Canadian Mounted Police Officer, Special Olympics World Games gold medalist, Major Liggins, RCMP Officer, Chief PO Chitwood, and Training Officer Thompson

In recognition of the Georgia Department of Corrections' efforts for the 2011 Special Olympics Torch Run, Special Olympics Georgia awarded

GDC the opportunity for three employees to attend the International Law Enforcement Torch Run Conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

GDC was second in fundraising amongst all law enforcement agencies in Georgia collecting just under \$41,000. Training & GDC Torch Run Coordinator Major Carolyn Liggins, Chief Probation Officer of the Mountain Circuit Scott Chitwood, and Public Safety Training Instructor II Joe Thompson represented the top

representatives of various law enforcement agencies from around the world attended numerous workshops and planning sessions regarding Special Olympics and fundraising programs. Almost four million individuals with intellectual disabilities participate in Special Olympics in over 170 countries.

The funds raised in Georgia will remain in the state to support programs for the Georgia Special Olympians and their families.

three Torch Run fundraising GDC work units at the conference.

Liggins, Chitwood and Thompson along with other

Gibson Hall Wins the Children Book Drive

Contributed by Re-entry Coordinator Lisa Haughey



Dir. of HR Patricia Smith, Staff and Re-entry Coordinator Lisa Haughey representing Gibson Hall staff winners

Congratulations Gibson Hall! Gibson Hall of the Department of Corrections headquarters at State Offices South at Tift College won the 2011 Children's Book Drive by collecting a total of 719 books!

Headquarters staff held a book drive for the new Children's Center at Walker State Prison. Walker SP is the first Faith & Character Based prison in Georgia and is the first male facility to have a Children's Center.

A total of 2,148 books were collected during the drive that began on October 31st and ended on December 16th of 2011. Upshaw Hall, OPT Division staff, brought in the second

largest number of books at 593. Guest House, Campus Operations staff, collected 419 books. Ponder Hall, Administration Division staff, collected 173 books. William Lies Hall, OIC and ECS staff, collected 168 books. And Rutland Hall collected 76 books.

As winners of the book drive, Gibson Hall staff will receive a catered lunch by Galley Gourmet of Atlanta and a group photo of the Gibson Hall winners will be displayed in the Children's Center along with the message boards throughout the campus.

"It was so exciting and touching to see how Central Office really came out to support this project. Never did I think we would get over 2000 books!! It shows what wonderful people we have working here at Tift," said Haughey.

Did You Know..Walker State Prison is the first male facility in the state to have a Children's Center!

Georgia DOC Vision & Mission Statements

VISION

The Georgia Department of Corrections is the best corrections system in the nation at protecting citizens from convicted offenders and at providing effective opportunities for offenders to achieve positive change. We are a leader and partner in making Georgia a safer, healthier, better educated, growing, and best managed state.

MISSION

The Georgia Department of Corrections protects and serves the public as a professional organization by effectively managing offenders while helping to provide a safe and secure environment for the citizens of Georgia.

Investigating Sexual Misconduct: Training for Correctional Investigators

Contributed by Statewide PREA Coordinator Karen Jett

In collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Justice and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles, the Department conducted specialized training for sexual assault investigations.

The two and a half day training session was attended by investigators from the Office of Investigations & Compliance including Internal Investigations, Inmate Affairs, and Intelligence Unit. The GDC investigators were joined by DJJ and Parole Internal Affairs investigators.

Training was funded by a

Technical Assistance grant provided by the National Institute of Corrections, and was conducted by The Moss Group, Inc. of Washington D.C.

Instructors included Andie Moss of the Moss Group, Jeff Shorba, Deputy State Court Administrator for the Minnesota State Court System, and Cari Gerlicher, Director of the Minnesota Department of Correction's Office of Special Investigations.

A practitioner roundtable included GDC Statewide Mental Health Director Dr. James

DeGroot, Prosecutor James Moss, DJJ Director of Behavioral Health Services Miguel Fernandez, and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Denise Atkinson, RN.

The group was welcomed by Georgia Department of Corrections Commissioner Brian Owens and Department of Juvenile Justice Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Youth Services Carl Brown.

The 54 investigators received training on the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), legal issues, boundaries,

Sexual Response Teams, crime scene and investigation processes. Agency investigation policies, first responders, role of medical and mental health, working with victims of sexual abuse, interviewing and report writing were also discussed.

Through this training, investigators will be better equipped to respond to victims of sexual abuse in a gender and trauma informed manner.

This training moves these agencies toward compliance with federal mandates of PREA, which establishes

a zero-tolerance for sexual abuse of incarcerated offenders.

The Department of Corrections has a zero tolerance of sexual abuse and seeks to eliminate sexual abuse of offenders under agency supervision. Perpetrators of sexual abuse are aggressively investigated and prosecuted.

Valdosta Transitional Center Partners with Local Parole Office

Contributed by Continuous Improvement Cathy Smith-Curry and Counselor Amy Smith



Counselor Laura Fountain with Valdosta Transitional Center residents

In an effort to prepare the men at Valdosta Transitional Center for successful reentry, the staff at the TC established a partnership with the local Parole Office in March of 2011 to favorably influence recidivism rates. Since that time, they have had great success with this partnership and helping residents to transition back into society.

Local Parole Officer Eric Bryant currently teaches a chapter from the Reentry Handbook to the residents on a frequent basis which outlines Parole Supervision, and what to expect while on parole. This class helps the residents to be more prepared for the next step after a transitional center and approximately 90% of the residents release with parole

to follow.

Also, there are quarterly meetings scheduled which are "Question and Answer" Sessions. Local Parole Officers visit residents at the Valdosta Transitional Center and answer questions they may have about the process of having an address approved, when they may expect a

parole date, and other issues they may have. Counselor Amy Smith and her team are also very instrumental in this process, teaching classes and conducting informational sessions. These sessions work very well and have proven beneficial to the residents in the reentry process.

finding local residences and staying within this community. This helps not only the employment in the community, but also helps the residents to stay out of prison due to not going back to "old habits, old friends, old playgrounds."

Another contributing factor to the success of the reentry process at Valdosta TC is the employment rate which currently stands at 98%. Valdosta TC houses approximately 100 residents. When potential employers contact the TC with available jobs, with their employment rate being peek, they are able to refer them the local parole office to seek workers to fill those jobs.

The residents are also keeping their jobs after release and, due to local parole's help, the residents are

Grand Opening of Coastal State Prison Career Center

Contributed by Secretary Emma Arnold

On December 15, 2011, Coastal State Prison held a Grand Opening for their new Career Center. Warden Jack Koon cut the ribbon and officially opened the new center.

Risk Reduction Counseling Unit Manager Keith Jones, Program Director Chandra Fussell and Social

Service Program Consultant Pearlina Mosley from the GDC Risk Reduction Services attended the ceremony along with with Crystal Crews, Kristen Kinney, and Tia Allen of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

The center will provide Coastal SP inmates who are near

their release dates access to more than 20 computers. Career Clerks from the Faith and Character Based Program at Coastal SP and who are trained by the Department of Labor will provide assistance to the inmates.

The center is expected to serve up to 1,500 inmates

each year as they move through the Coastal Strategic Intervention Programs. Coastal SP averages 30 inmate releases each week.

"The center will be a tremendous asset to those inmates nearing their parole or release dates," stated Warden Koon.

Phillips Transitional Center Residents Seeking Higher Education

Contributed by Counselor Jennifer Grey

Three Phillips Transitional Center residents completed the Fall 2011 semester in two colleges in the Atlanta area.

Residents Herbert Hector and Gerald Sean Green attended Omni Technical Institute and Resident Deante Campbell attended Georgia Piedmont Technical College.

Both Resident Hector and Resident Green are working toward degrees in Audio Engineering. Resident Campbell is working towards a HVAC certification.

All three residents posted passing grades for the term and are continuing their education this year.

These three residents posted passing grades for the term and are in the process of continuing their education.

Phillips TC sent an additional two residents to Atlanta area colleges in 2012. Resident Carl Stokes began classes at Gainesville State College where he is working towards a degree in Business Administration. Resident Matthew Meadows is attending the Atlanta Technical College and is working towards a diploma in Diesel Technology.

Please join the staff of Phillips TC in commending these residents on their accomplishments and best wishes for a brighter future!



L to R: Resident Hector, Resident Green, and Resident Campbell at Phillips TC Career Center

How to Prepare for Biometric Screening at State Offices South



CIGNA

All United Healthcare and Cigna GDC employees who signed up this year for the Wellness Program are required to obtain a biometric screening which includes four metrics: blood pressure, body mass index, cholesterol and glucose.

Screening must be completed between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012.

On February 23rd, the GDC and Cigna are sponsoring a Biometric Screening at State

Offices South at Tift College for all SHBP members.

The screening is provided free of charge to all members and their covered spouse. It is, also, open to all GDC employees near the State Offices South campus that wish to attend.

Registration began on January 19th. If you have yet to register for a screening time, please visit <http://www.registerformyevent.com/shbp>.

Steps employees should take to prepare for the screening:

- Do not eat or drink anything but water for 8 hours prior
- Drink at least two 8-oz glasses of water 1-2 hours prior
- Do not exercise 12 hours prior

What to expect on the day of your screening:

- Entire screening process should take 20-25 minutes
- Employees will complete and sign a consent form and personal health questionnaire
- Height, Weight, Waist Measurement, Body Mass Index (BMI) and Body Composition will be taken
- Blood Pressure Testing
- Cholesterol and Glucose Testing (Total, HDL, LDL, Triglycerides, Coronary Risk Ratio)
- Health Coaching (3-5 minutes)

Once screening is complete, test results will be available on-site for review.

Each participant will also receive a booklet that includes recommendations for them to follow.

If you are unable to attend the Biometric Screening at State Offices South, please contact an in-network physician and set up your screening before June 30, 2012.

Calendar of Events

Thursday, February 3
Board of Corrections Meeting

Wednesday & Thursday
February 8 & 9
CLI Session III

Thursday, February 9
Board of Public Safety & CLI Graduation

Saturday, February 18
Hubbard Alumni Association Dinner

Monday, February 20
GDC Roll-up "Day in Central Office"

Thursday, February 23
Biometric Screening at State Offices South

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We welcome all submissions. Please submit articles and photos to: Gwendolyn Hogan by February 16th