

# GEO World<sup>®</sup>

3rd QUARTER 2020

A GEO Publication for Employees and their Families.



Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility



Graceville Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility



Blackwater Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility



South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility

## The GEO Group Achieves CARF Accreditation

CARF Accreditation focuses on promoting the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of rehabilitation programs



Moore Haven Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility



# Chairman's Letter

**George C. Zoley**, Chairman, CEO and Founder

**Ensuring the health and safety of all those in our facilities and our employees remains our number one priority.**

## **To the GEO Family,**

During the second quarter of 2020, our frontline GEO employees across the United States and overseas have continued to make daily sacrifices to care for all those in our facilities as communities across the world have grappled with the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic. From the beginning of this unprecedented crisis, our corporate, regional, and field staff have worked together to implement important steps to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 to all those in our care and our employees.

Working with our government partners, we have established COVID-19 best practices consistent with the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We have dedicated significant resources to deploy personal protective equipment, including facemasks to all those in our care and our employees across all our facilities. Additionally, we have focused on ramping up diagnostic testing, with approximately 20,000 COVID-19 tests administered to those in our care and our employees as of August of 2020.

As we continue to address the impact of COVID-19 on our facilities, employees, and those in our care, we are continually evaluating the steps we have taken, and making adjustments as appropriate. We are incredibly proud of all our employees whose daily commitment and dedication has allowed our company to implement steps to mitigate this unprecedented global pandemic. Ensuring the health and safety of all those in our facilities and our employees remains our number one priority.

Over the past quarter, we also accomplished several important milestones. In California, we achieved normalized operations at the government-owned, 512-bed El Centro Detention Facility under a new 9-year managed-only contract with the U.S. Marshals Service. In Texas, we were awarded a new 10-year contract, inclusive of renewal option periods, by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the continued operation of our company-owned, 1,840-bed South Texas ICE Processing Center. In Australia, we activated a 480-bed expansion at the June

Correctional Centre, increasing total capacity to 1,280 beds. We have also substantially completed a 137-bed expansion at the Fulham Correctional Centre, bringing total capacity to 1,045 beds, and we are awaiting final approval for a 300-bed contract capacity expansion at the Ravenhall Correctional Centre, increasing total capacity to 1,600 beds.

Additionally, in early August, GEO achieved a three-year accreditation from CARF International, an independent accrediting organization focused on promoting the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of rehabilitation programs. This accomplishment represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to an organization in the area of offender rehabilitation. This important recognition is a testament to our company's leadership in delivering enhanced in-custody rehabilitation programs and post-release support services through our award-winning GEO Continuum of Care.

# Table Of Contents

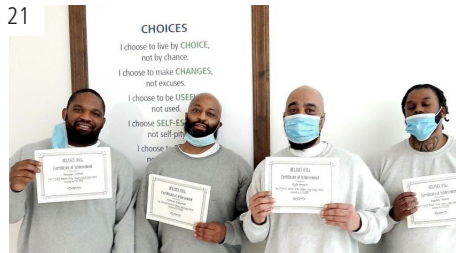
10



14



21



32



**3rd QUARTER 2020**  
**Volume 27**  
**Issue 3**

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

Editor in Chief & Designer

**Audra E. Birt**  
 abirt@geogroup.com

Contributors

**George C. Zoley**  
**Pablo E. Paez**  
**Chris Ferreira**

**Articles**

- 05** GEO Secure Services
- 18** International Services
- 21** GEO Care

**Features**

- 07 Kingman's Culinary Arts Program is Certified for College Credits**  
 After numerous planning meetings over a two-year period between staff from the Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (Kingman CRF) and the Mohave Community College, an agreement was reached to implement a college-level certified Culinary Arts program.
- 18 Bushfire Relief**  
 Over the summer of 2019-2020, Australia suffered one of its worst bushfire seasons on record. More than 18 million hectares were burned and 34 people lost their lives.
- 24 Abraxas Marienville Supports Front Line Heroes**  
 Our young men at Abraxas Marienville in the Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) program are lending support to the essential workers and heroes in New York City.



# The GEO Group Achieves CARF Accreditation

GEO's accreditation applies to the following programs and services:

- Intensive Outpatient Treatment: Alcohol and Other Drugs/Addictions (Criminal Justice)
- Outpatient Treatment: Alcohol and Other Drugs/Addictions (Criminal Justice)
- Prevention: Alcohol and Other Drugs/Addictions (Criminal Justice)

On August 10, 2020, The GEO Group achieved a three-year accreditation from CARF International. CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of rehabilitation programs. Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF International, the accrediting body establishes consumer focused standards to help organizations measure and improve the quality of their rehabilitation programs and services.

Brian J. Boon, Ph.D., President and CEO of CARF International, stated, "this achievement is an indication of your organization's dedication and commitment to improving the quality of the lives of the persons served. Services, personnel, and documentation clearly indicate an established pattern of conformance to standards."

This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to an organization and shows GEO's substantial conformance to the CARF standards. By receiving a three-year accreditation, The GEO Group has put itself through a rigorous peer review process. We have demonstrated to a team of surveyors our commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality.

The accreditation process applies sets of standards to service areas and business practices during an on-site survey. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process, signaling to the public that a service provider is committed to continuously improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community.

Accreditation also demonstrates a provider's commitment to enhance its performance, manage its risk, and distinguish its service delivery.



**Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility, Florida**



**Graceville Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility, Florida**

The accreditation process included multiple site surveys in July of 2020, consisting of confidential interviews and direct interactions with staff and participants, direct observation of GEO's operations and program service delivery practices, review of organizational documents such as policies and procedures, and a review of records of current and former participants. The site surveys were conducted at all five of GEO's Florida state correctional and rehabilitation facilities, making them the first GEO facilities to receive CARF accreditation.

Based on GEO's unique service delivery, combining expertise in facility operations and program delivery, we were recognized for demonstrating several areas of strength during the accreditation process. A few of the areas of strength identified in the CARF Accreditation Report are outlined below:

- Leadership demonstrates a person-centered philosophy. Facility Administrators and Assistant Facility Administrators take great pride in leading their individual organizations with humility while cultivating a familial atmosphere.
- Every employee brings a personal reason and valuable experience to GEO that helps to achieve successful outcomes for participants.
- It is evident that GEO leadership and staff strive to "turn out a better participant than who walked through the door" on day one.
- A commitment to reduce recidivism and pride in watching lives change through staff efforts, drives this organization.
- Participants express their gratitude for the opportunities they have been given at all the facilities.
- Everyone has shared how different the facility staff members have treated them, calling them "sir" and "mister", even upon arrival, getting off the bus that brought them to the facilities.
- The workforce development team demonstrates consistency in its organization and documentation. Employee charts are uniform across service locations.
- The employees know firsthand the positive impact programming has on purposed participant outcomes.
- Across all GEO sites, participants acknowledge that the respect and support they receive from staff members has made a significant difference in their individual transformative experiences in therapy, education, and vocational programs.

As a leading provider of evidence-based rehabilitation programming, GEO is proud to have achieved this level of accreditation from CARF International and will continue to strive towards supporting those in our care as they return to their communities as successful and productive citizens. This important recognition is a testament to GEO's leadership in delivering enhanced in-custody rehabilitation programs and post-release support services through our award-winning GEO Continuum of Care.



**Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility, Florida**



**South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility, Florida**



**Moore Haven Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility, Florida**



# Double Whammy-Diabetes & High Blood Pressure

Written By **Susan Napolitano, Corporate Human Resources**

Diabetes and Hypertension are serious diseases individually. But if you have both, which is more common than you might think, you now have a DOUBLE WHAMMY to contend with, increasing your risk for cardiovascular disease, which can lead to a heart attacks or stroke. Roughly 3,200 GEO employees or their family members have been diagnosed with both of these chronic conditions. This year, GEO decided it was time to help you fight back and combat this dastardly duo! Here are some incredible resources we've lined up to support you as you manage your health.

## Save right now on necessary medications

With nearly 25,000 blood pressure and insulin prescriptions filled in the past 12 months, Express Scripts is now providing members with reduced costs on select insulin brands and other diabetes meds: \$25 for a 30-day supply/\$75 for a 90-day supply. Just be sure you are filling an eligible brand--the list includes Humalog, Humulin, Novolin, Novolog, Levemir and Lantis, to name a few. Visit [express-scripts/thegeogroup.com](https://www.express-scripts/thegeogroup.com) to view the list of all eligible reduced-cost diabetes prescriptions.

## High Deductible Health Plan Rx CoPays

If you're in the Blue Cross HDHP Plan, you can now fill eligible prescriptions for blood pressure, diabetes and more with just a copay. No need to meet your plan deductible first!

## Introducing Livongo

GEO has partnered with Livongo to provide diabetes and hypertension management 24/7 for Blue Cross members. If you are diabetic, GEO will absorb the monthly costs for you to receive a new wireless glucose monitor with unlimited test strips and lancets. You will receive personalized tips with each blood glucose check and real time support when your numbers are out of range. GEO has also implemented their hypertension module, providing you with a brand-new wireless blood pressure monitor at no cost to you. All readings are automatically uploaded and available for you for share with your physician. Certified coaches are also available 24/7.

To learn more and join, text GO GEOGROUP to 85240. You can also call (800) 945-4355 and use registration code: [GEOGROUP](https://www.ready.livongo.com/GEOGROUP/register) or visit [www.ready.livongo.com/GEOGROUP/register](https://www.ready.livongo.com/GEOGROUP/register).

## Good Health Begins with You

There is no medication that can take the place of a healthy lifestyle. Changes to your behavior and diet are critical for prolonged wellness. Simple improvements will lower the risk of diabetes and high blood pressure and better your odds of good health.

1. You are what you eat: Most people diagnosed with stage 1 hypertension (Systolic, top number between 130 and 139, and/or Diastolic, bottom number between 80 and 89), can manage their blood pressure with a lifestyle change. Studies show that combining a low-salt diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, plus low-fat dairy, fish, poultry, beans, seeds and nuts, can help lower blood pressure as much as medication.
2. Move it: Studies show that people who exercise three times a week and follow a healthy diet can lower their blood pressure on average 16 mm Hg systolic and 10 mm Hg diastolic without medication after 16 weeks.
3. Put down the salt: The American Heart Association recommends people with high blood pressure keep their sodium intake below 1,500 mg a day. (Check labels, since up to 75 percent of the sodium you consume is hidden in processed foods.)

Using your resources here at GEO and making small lifestyle changes will double your odds of winning against diabetes and hypertension. Bet on yourself and improve your health!

# Going the Extra Mile

Written By J. Danielle Lawrence, Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility

The impact of COVID-19 at Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility in Milton, Florida has definitely proved to be challenging, but as Chaplains, we did not let that stop us! Our goal is to stay connected with our inmates and always do our best to meet their spiritual needs. Because we were facing a national pandemic, we knew our days were about to look very different. In keeping the inmates safe from the spread of this dangerous virus, our situation quickly went from restricted movement to almost no movement at all. It was at that time we realized we had to re-think how we do our jobs. We wanted to show the inmates that we care. We wanted them to know they were not alone in this and that how they choose to worship was in the forefront of our minds. After all, this encompasses GEO's vision of programming and the reduction of recidivism.

With the Jewish and Muslim Holy Days right around the corner, we mapped out a plan we hoped would accomplish our goal. It was a no brainer, if inmates cannot come to us,

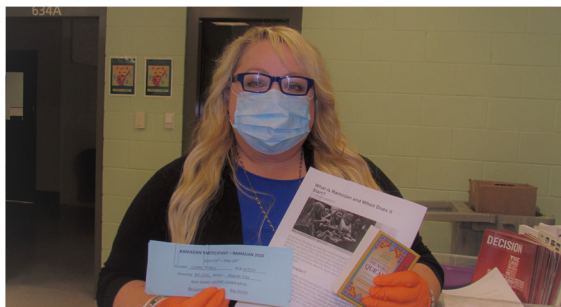
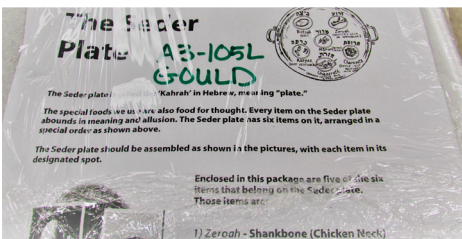
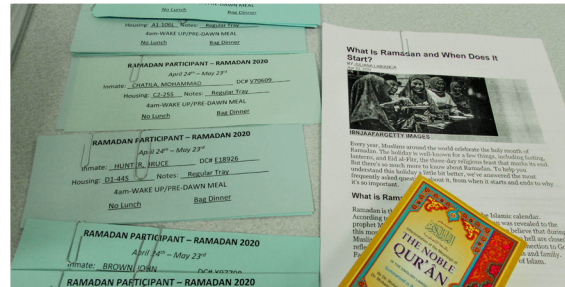
we must go to them. All of them! By this time, Passover was in full swing and food services was definitely in high gear! Shout out to our Food Service Director, Michael Deaton, and our amazing food service workers who successfully delivered kosher meals three times a day for eight days to over 300 inmates.

Next on our list was the Jewish Seder. With donations from The Aleph Institute, and a few others, we were able to put together fourteen Seder Plates so our Jewish inmates could observe the Seder ceremonial dinner. We personalized each box and added Jewish literature, as well as, grape juice. The response was a mix of thankfulness and utter shock as we delivered these meals. They were happy to receive, and we were happy to give. This was a definite win-win in our book!

The thirty days of Ramadan was soon approaching, and we knew our Muslim population was feeling discouraged since a big part of Ramadan is congregational prayer

and evening meals. We compiled several items into what we called our "Ramadan Packets." This contained an Islamic World Newsletter that explained what was going on in the Muslim world during the pandemic, which helped them understand that all Muslims around the world were making similar sacrifices and not congregating. We printed Islamic teachings, ordered new Qurans, and made personal Ramadan participation cards for each inmate. As we delivered the packages, we could see their spirits lift as they felt our support. Encouraging them was rewarding for us and delivering these packets to all sixty-seven of our Muslim inmates was no doubt worth every step.

In the end, our mission is to see our inmates flourish emotionally and spiritually. Our responsibility as Chaplains is to make sure we provide them with the tools to accomplish this. While these are not normal times, going the extra mile for our inmates is always normal for us and that is exactly what we've done!



# Thinking for a Change Spring Graduation



Written By **Monica Reynaga & Maria Rodriguez,**  
Eagle Pass Correctional Facility

The Eagle Pass Correctional Facility has implemented classroom curriculums with behavioral interventions to help target the behavior or act that caused the individual to become incarcerated. One of the many classes being offered is called Thinking for a Change. In 2019, the "Thinking for a Change" class had 53 graduates, and in 2020, there have been 20 graduates to date. "Thinking for a Change" is a cognitive behavioral program focused on how inmates think, develop internal controls, cognitive self-change, social skills and problem solving. The class is delivered at a rate of 1.5 hours a day, twice each week for a total of 16 weeks. The goal at the end of the course is for participants to learn how to think and alter their reactions to certain situations into a more socially acceptable behavior.

In addition to Thinking for a Change, there are three other classes taught to the offenders. These classes include Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Substance Abuse (CBI-SA), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Sexual Offending (CBI-SO). Prior to teaching these courses, instructors receive training consisting of a four-day curriculum administered by a certified University of Cincinnati trainer for CBI-SA and CBI-SO. For the "Thinking for a Change" class and ART class, the instructors receive a 4-day training by an instructor from the Idaho Department of Correction.

## COVID-19 Best Practices at KCFRC

Written By **Kourtney Johnston, Executive Secretary**  
Karnes County Family Residential Center

Since March of 2020, the Facility Administrator at the Karnes County Family Residential Center has emphasized the importance of proper social distancing to both residents and staff. Markers have been placed in the lobby as a guide for employees while they are waiting to clock in or out, and personal protective equipment and hand sanitizer are provided throughout the facility, with face masks being made available for all staff and residents. She also issues public announcements regarding social distancing measures and best practices. Every "Message of the Week" addresses new safety initiatives and updated information regarding how to best mitigate the risks associated with the pandemic.





# Kingman's Culinary Arts Program is Certified for College Credits

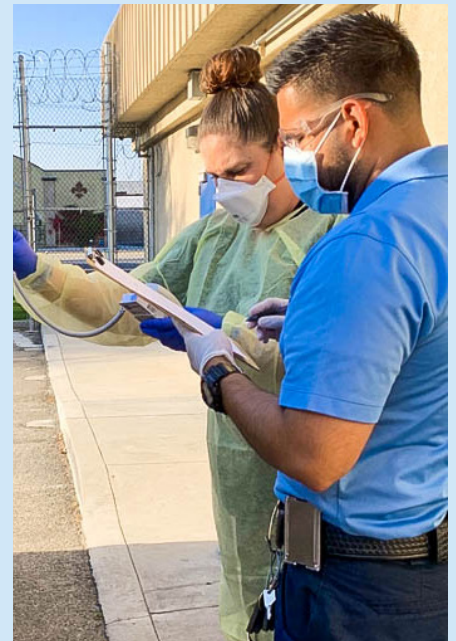
Written By **Lisa Black,**  
**Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**

After numerous planning meetings over a two-year period between staff from the Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (Kingman CRF) and the Mohave Community College, an agreement was reached to implement a college-level certified Culinary Arts program. Student inmates participating in the program will bear no costs with the Mohave County Work Force Development Agency agreeing to provide outside tuition payments for inmate students enrolled in Culinary Arts. On October 28, 2019, Kingman's Culinary Arts instructor and Chef-Extraordinaire, Dobry Cieszko, held his first class accredited by Mohave Community College.

Culinary Arts is a valued program for Kingman CRF. Mr. Cieszko has served more than 25 years in the Culinary industry, including 15 years as a Show-Chef in Las Vegas. He specializes in French and Italian cooking, and he brings a high level of talent and expertise to the course. Culinary Arts is taught at two levels: Baking and Pastry, then Hospitality and Management. Students receive the SERV Safe certification along with health and nutrition skills, catering skills, and knowledge

of American and International cuisine. The Culinary program has enjoyed a solid reputation since its inception in 2010. Employers have frequently visited the facility to interview and hire the program's graduates. With college accreditation now included in the program, interest among inmates, as well as, employers has expanded to new levels.

Kingman CRF also places a high importance on community involvement, and it is through networking with community organizations that we have made this collaboration possible. Education Manager Lisa Black represents The GEO Group as a Board Member for the Mohave County Work Force Development Agency. Mohave Community College President, Dr. Stacy Klippenstein, and Ms. Black led the discussions to reach this milestone of college accreditation for the Culinary Arts program. We are grateful to our community partners – Mohave Community College and the Mohave County Work Force Development Agency – for helping us realize a program that will facilitate inmates' employment in desirable jobs upon release into our communities.



## Maintaining Safety

Written By **Taquishia Parker,**  
**Mesa Verde ICE Processing Center**

COVID-19 arrived and changed the world. The GEO Group is actively working to slow the spread of COVID-19, and the Mesa Verde ICE Processing Center (MVIPC) is diligently doing its part. MVIPC is using safe work practices to protect staff and residents from spreading any contamination. Before every shift, staff complete the Employee Wellness Screening and have their temperatures taken. Everyone is onboard with wearing their personal protective equipment, such as face masks, gloves, and goggles when necessary. Staff are practicing the CDC guidelines on social distancing, frequent handwashing, and wiping down high-contact surfaces. All staff are working together to keep MVIPC COVID-19 free and ensure the health and safety of those in our care, as well as, our fellow co-workers.

# Road to Recovery

Written By Myra Strobel, New Castle Correctional Facility



I remember my first time seeing Mr. Freeman as he rolled into my office in a wheelchair sitting alongside my desk. My first question to him was “what brought you into the criminal justice system?” This question is often intimidating to answer for participants, so I made it my immediate duty to inform him that before he told me his story, I am not here to judge him or come off as condemning. Trained as a Transitional Case Manager, my number one dexterity is compassion and care to all of my participants to ensure willingness to open up and be unafraid to engage in our bi-weekly Individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy treatment sessions.

This helped Mr. Freeman feel secure enough with me to express his past behaviors and weaknesses all while opening his mind up to his own bad habits and triggers

that seemed to be driving his criminal behavior. As the weeks went by, I began to give Mr. Freeman assignments to complete that targeted his criminogenic needs. I began to recognize things that took others days or weeks to complete took Mr. Freeman much longer. His age and failing eyesight presented a problem for him but granted me the ability to have more in depth sessions with him. As the months passed by, Mr. Freeman gained even more ground by losing his wheelchair and walking on his own with the use of a cane, allowing him more exercise and physical freedom. Although Mr. Freeman made such progress, not all days came easy; he was often tested. Situations that would arise in his housing unit with other offenders would give Mr. Freeman the opportunity to use what he had learned in our sessions to diffuse situations that before wouldn't have been so simple to do.

My forthright compassion for my participants allowed for me to not only address criminogenic needs during Behavioral Sessions, but also spiritual needs as well. Many days, Mr. Freeman would enter my office with thoughts of never returning home. I took heed to these negative thoughts and placed prayer over him using a prayer that I keep posted on the wall of my office to read whenever anyone is feeling discouraged. As I took on the task of preparing Mr. Freeman for release physically and mentally, I most definitely prepared him spiritually as well. Throughout his 39 years of incarceration, Mr. Freeman received over 24 certificates, completed numerous classes and programs ranging from Life Skills, anger management, Transition programs and compass 100, all to rehabilitate and prepare him for a successful re-entry back into society.

# Correctional Workers Week: All Star Edition

Written By September Millar, Broward Transitional Center

Correctional Workers Week 2020 was a week-long celebration for all the hard-working staff at Broward Transitional Center. It entailed healthy foods and sweet snacks delivered by our employee engagement committee, which was headed by Lieutenant Gary McCarthy. He coordinated, ordered, prepared, assisted, and made all aspects of the week amazing for our staff. He is often on all of the committees at our facility, sharing his ideas and implementing his unique celebratory skills. Pictured is his own Top Shelf Cobb Salad, consisting of mixed greens, tomatoes, crisp cucumbers, broccoli, tri-colored carrots, boiled eggs, grilled chicken, shredded aged cheddar cheese, avocado, and a variety of delicious dressings. This is just one example of the many treats served each day. Broward Transitional Center would like to thank and highlight Lieutenant Gary McCarthy for his continued participation in all of our featured events, as well as, his hard work and dedication to his current position.



**FROM LEFT:** Lieutenant Gary McCarthy; Melita Wilson, Facility Investigator; Jasmine Saunders, Transport Clerk

# Transition to Freedom

Written By **Bonnie Fletcher,**  
**Lea County Correctional Facility**

If you had asked Mr. McCarthy this time last year if he could envision dramatic changes in his life, opinions, or attitudes he would have said "No!" But now he says, "Because of the Continuum of Care program and my Continuum of Care Transitional Case Manager, Ms. Nolan", he has a whole new outlook on his life, the people around him, and especially his future!

David McCarthy says he has been a 'hater' all his life. He was first arrested when he was 14 years old. He has been a member of hate groups, biker clubs, and had a general disregard for others outside of these groups. Mr. McCarthy is in his early 60s and has been incarcerated for most of his adult life. He has been in and out of prison over 41 years of his life with the last 8 years here at Lea County Correctional Facility (LCCF). He will tell you that before Continuum of Care he would not have even considered discussing anything positive with a person of color much less making life altering changes about the way he thought, talked, acted, and believed. He says, "I was not about to let her think she could know me much less change me." He also states, "People think I'm a violent person and are generally afraid of me. And I was that person, until I met Ms. Misty Nolan."

Ms. Nolan says that at the beginning of her sessions with Mr. McCarthy, she was anxious



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Mr. David J. McCarthy and Ms. Misty Nolan, Transitional Case Manager, LCCF, (Photo taken January 2020)

and somewhat concerned that she would be unable to reach this hardened man. But she persisted in her conversations, activities, and hard truths about the life he had led until he began to open up and reveal his vulnerabilities and desire for change. Ms. Nolan explained that during one of their Continuum of Care sessions they were discussing "Hate/Anger Triggers" and it was during this session that Mr. McCarthy became emotional and began to talk about the hateful and awful things he had done in his past. It was also the moment where he started expressing remorse and regret for those actions. She also states, "I have gained respect for him and I believe he also respects me."

McCarthy says, "Ms. Nolan has the ability to meet us where we are, without showing any judgement. I tried to play the tough guy but she didn't let me get away with it. She has offered real and

constructive ideas to consider that make me think." He goes on to say that knowing Ms. Nolan has helped him bridge his skin color gap because he believes she sees no color, only the opportunity to help. He says that he has learned that skin color does not have to be something he considers anymore. He says that he has been talking to his mother about his involvement in the Continuum of Care program and that she is very pleased to hear the optimism in his voice and the hope he has for his future. He states, "I'm so grateful to GEO for providing this program here at LCCF and their willingness to invest in me and my future." He is also grateful to Ms. Nolan for her investment in him as well. He is excited about the future, and feels confident he will never return to prison.



# Expanding Client Partnerships in Southern California

Written By **James Grant, El Centro Detention Facility**

GEO Secure Services has developed a professional and trustworthy partnership with the United States Marshals Service (USMS) over the last two decades in the Southern District of California. The El Centro Detention Facility contract is a direct result of that partnership.

The El Centro Detention Facility in El Centro, California is located 220 miles south of Los Angeles, and only 13.5 miles from the U.S./ Mexico border. The Facility is owned by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The Facility first opened on March 23, 2020. The Chief of the Office of Detention Standards and Compliance USMS HQ emphasized the historical significance of the first Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) Detention Facility for the U.S. Marshals and applauded GEO for winning the award.

The transportation component at El Centro Detention Facility is designated as key personnel, and consists of one Transportation Manager and twelve Transportation Officers. GTI Driver Trainer Joshua Paine transferred from the Western Region Detention Facility in San Diego, CA to accept the Transportation Manager position in El Centro. The GTI team at El Centro operates a fleet of six total vehicles comprised of two high capacity passenger transporters, three passenger vans, and one ADA compliant passenger van.

The success of GTI Staff at the El Centro Detention Facility is critical to expanding the USMS partnership with GEO Secure Services. The Transportation Officers hired for this contract have a wide range of experience including law enforcement, military, and corrections experience. This experienced group assembled at El Centro includes:

- Joshua Paine, 13 years Sgt. Sycuan PD
- John Espinosa, 7 years Imperial PD
- Bryan Grayson, Army Veteran, 11 years Marine Corp Civilian Police, and 15 Years GEO Officer
- Juan Cornejo, DHS and FPS PSO Calexico
- Tomas Rodriguez, former El Centro PD
- Efrain Robles, 10 years El Centro ICE CO and AZDOC
- Pablo Garcia, 12 years MTC Transport Officer
- Enrique Castillo, 23 years Lieutenant with CDCR and in 2003 received the Correctional Gold Medal of Valor for Bravery Above the Call of Duty

These highly decorated and talented individuals are the backbone of the El Centro GTI team.

The El Centro GTI Team all possess the following required certifications: CDL, California

Weapons Card, California Guard Card, and a minimum of three years experience in law enforcement.

The unique operational logistics of this contract allows various components of the federal government, which include the United States Marshals Service (USMS), Bureau of Prisons (BOP), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to house individuals at the Facility. Transportation missions within the Area of Responsibility (AOR) include trips to courthouses, hospitals, medical appointments, other detention facilities, and JPATS sites. JPATS (USMS Air Operations) is a key component to the Facility's GTI mission. These movements require GTI Officers to transport individuals to and from the Victorville airport, located over 200 miles north of the Facility, on a weekly basis. Additional key missions for this contract include daily court movements to and from the El Centro Courthouse each weekday.

GTI is an industry leader and continuously strives to exceed expectations. GTI takes great pride in providing safe and secure transportation services at the highest level.

# Creating a Positive Environment

Written By Chaplain Hilda Jones,  
South Louisiana ICE Processing Center

Residents at the South Louisiana ICE Processing Center (SLIPC) are encouraged to participate in positive activities.

The week of May 18, 2020 through May 22, 2020, SLIPC organized one of seven leadership workshops scheduled for the year.

Residents have always needed to work together to succeed in creating a safe and peaceful environment within the Center. Within the Facility, there is a diverse pool of culture, talent, and education. This variety brings unique challenges of its own when it comes to creating a peaceful living environment with a vast and diverse population. There are different races, religions, languages, lifestyles, and many other unique characteristics to consider. For the facility to succeed, the residents learn that everyone needs to be on the same page and working towards the same goal. Our Leadership Workshop program offers Diversity Awareness training to assist residents in creating cultural awareness and inclusion for all other residents at the facility.

The Diversity training helps the residents become aware of other cultures and lifestyles in order to increase empathy among each other. The goal of Diversity Awareness training is to address unity and reduce poor cross-cultural communication, resentment, and competition, thus reducing negative friction, animosity, and gang related activities. One hundred and forty-eight residents at SLIPC completed the five-hour, week long program, and were each issued a certificate of completion. The participants

are encouraged to put these certificates of training on their resume for employment possibilities in the future.

Upcoming leadership workshops include:

- Ethics in the workplace
- Effective communication skills
- Conflict Resolution in the workplace
- Time Management
- Self-Motivation & positive emotions
- Universal precautions and self-care
- Workplace Diversity

These Classes were organized and orchestrated by Chaplain Hilda Jones. Chaplain Jones is a certified personal and professional life coach, has a Master's Degree in Education, and has been teaching professional and personal development workshops for years. Chaplain Jones' diverse talents have definitely made a difference at SLIPC.



Chaplain Hilda Jones



## Masks For All

Written By Tammy Fontenot,  
Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, surgical and N-95 masks were in high demand and short supply. Transportation Officer Ms. Deidre McClinton, along with her three sisters, saw a need and stepped up to help. Officer McClinton and her sisters started sewing masks for family members and friends that turned into a goodwill mission. The masks are made in many different colors and prints, ranging from animals, cartoon characters to sports teams. Some were designed to fit an N-95 mask inside, which was very helpful to the staff who were allergic to the paper masks. To date, they have sewn together over 2,000 masks. They have donated to the medical staff at local hospitals and medical clinics, a veterinary clinic in Dallas, Texas, several factories in Lake Charles, La., and many staff at PPIPC. During Officer McClinton's time off, as she went about the community, she would donate masks to elderly strangers when she saw they needed one. Strangers approached asking to purchase masks from her, so she sold some for \$5 each, and gave children masks at no charge. The money was used to replenish materials to make more! Officer McClinton, thank you for showing kindness and goodwill during a very trying time.

## Kingman Promotes Their Own

Written By **Deborah Triassi,**  
**Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**



**Banita Curtis** was hired by Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility's Medical Records Department in June 2018. She is a long-term Kingman resident who graduated from Kingman High School in 2001. Prior to being hired by the Facility, she worked for 19 years in a local nursing home where she held various roles, eventually working her way up to become the Dietary Manager. This past month, she was promoted within the Medical Records department from a clerk position to Medical Records Supervisor. Banita and her husband are foster parents within the Mohave County Foster System. She currently lives with her husband, two children and one foster child. Banita's passion has always been to help people in need and to give to those less fortunate. She has found a way to do both by working within the prison system. Way to go Banita!

## Promoting Higher Education at Kingman

Written By **Deborah Triassi,**  
**Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**



**Laura Beeson** is a Kingman, Arizona resident who recently graduated from Mohave Community College's Nursing School. She passed the national nursing examination (NCLEX) in October 2019. She has worked as a floor nurse for the Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility for just over 3 years. After passing her state board examination, she was promoted within the medical department and became Cerbat unit's Psychiatric Nurse. She is currently enrolled at the University of Phoenix and plans on graduating with her Bachelors Degree in Nursing in 2021. Her long-term plans include becoming a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner. For her, the best part about working in a correctional environment is the fact that, "You help those who are not able to help themselves in an environment most do not want to work in."

# GTI Staff Render Life Saving Assistance

Written By Steve Langford, Northwest ICE Processing Center



**PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** Bruce Scott, Jeffery Sweet, Steve Langford, Allison Kazinsky, Keith McGee, Will Mitchell

On April 2, 2020, GTI Officers Allison Kazinsky and Jeffery Sweet of the Northwest ICE Processing Center were traveling on their normal route through the mountain passes of Snoqualmie, Washington to Yakima, Washington, on a routine transport. As they drove, they observed several people standing alongside Interstate 90 frantically attempting to gain the attention of anyone willing to stop and render assistance.

As fate would have it, Officers Kazinsky and Sweet were traveling without anyone on board their vehicle. As they drove closer to the bystanders, they observed a body lying in the grassy area next to a parked vehicle and collectively decided to stop. When they approached the bystanders to explore the situation closer, they were informed that the person lying on the ground was not breathing. During the process of initiating CPR, they determined that the person had no pulse, as the victim had turned blue in color and had stopped breathing. Immediately, Officer Kazinsky began chest compressions and Officer Sweet assisted with rescue breathing.

They continued to perform CPR until a state trooper arrived, at which time the state trooper was advised by the family that the victim was a drug user and likely had overdosed. The state trooper immediately administered NARCAN twice in conjunction with CPR and the victim was revived. We are thankful to these GTI officers for being good samaritans and jumping into action.

## Stay Safe

Written By Steve Langford, Northwest ICE Processing Center

With the ever-changing nature of COVID-19, we at the Northwest ICE Processing Center are working hard to remain safe, alert, and diligent. We have enhanced some of our protocols to further ensure the safety of all under our care. Upon entering the building, staff have their temperature checked and answer a questionnaire. Upon successfully meeting the entrance criteria, staff are to adorn a surgical mask and other personal protective gear provided by the facility. Supplying these items allow for our staff to know that we care not only about their safety but the safety of those around them. An intense focus has been placed on reminding staff of the importance of regular handwashing, as well as, other practices to limit exposure such as sneezing into your elbow.

However, our intensifications are not just geared toward staff. Detainee operations have also adjusted to maintain a safe environment. All hold rooms have been marked with six-foot indicators to allow for social distancing. The common areas such as the medication distribution line have been marked with green and red markers to help facilitate six feet spacing. We are continuously staying abreast of incoming guidance and information to further assure we are doing everything possible to preserve a safe, healthy environment, and remain free of exposure. In these uncertain times, we can all be steadied by the show of unparalleled respect that staff have shown for each other, detainees, and the public. We are reminded in our mission to stay strong and stay safe because we know this too shall pass.



# Navigating the Terrain of COVID-19

Written By **Timothy Johnson & Ronnie Richardson, Riverbend Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**

First Responders, EMTs, and Healthcare Workers have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing care to ill patients and battling the public health crisis from various angles. With this unprecedented pandemic, healthcare workers are balancing the concerns that we all have for our families and friends, our own health, as well as the changes to our lives outside of work.

While social distancing measures and shelter-in-place orders were implemented across Georgia and much of the country, essential workers, especially first responders, have remained on the job and take active roles in their communities. We have seen their dedication, innovation, and willingness to help others over the last few months.

In April, the Riverbend Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility offered their support to the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office and Navicent Health Baldwin Hospital by providing more than 130 pizzas and drinks to staff. We know that the current situation around COVID-19 is unnerving, and as things continue to change rapidly every day, it can be overwhelming.

During this time of uncertainty, tensions among the inmate population can run high because of modified movement, changes in educational and recreational programming, visitation restrictions, and worrying about the health of their families. The executive staff, along with Health Services Staff have taken the time to get out and talk to inmates in their assigned dormitories and

work areas, checking on them and offering support. They used these rounds to educate inmates on guidelines and protocols for preventing spread of the virus.

Correctional professionals carry many of the same burdens as our other front-line counterparts, with the added stress of supervising inmates who many times are unable to handle stress constructively. The executive staff shared the responsibility of increasing visibility among staff in an effort to reduce anxiety and provide them with the most current and accurate information available regarding COVID-19 and its impact on the work environment.



We are thankful for all of our front-line workers. We thank them for their commitment and dedication to the patients and families that depend on them during this challenging time. Thank you for your dedication and for continuing to stay in the fight against COVID-19.



## Patriotism Behind Bars

Written By **Hannah Winningham, New Castle Correctional Facility**

The inmates at New Castle Correctional Facility did not let the restrictions or pandemic dim their patriotic pride. Instead of the usual Memorial Day event, they "planted" 1,000 flags outside of their unit. The words to the left and right of the entrance door are "Never Forgotten." The NCCF staff and offender population are proud to honor our service men and women for the sacrifices they have made for each of us. We hope this gives encouragement to all in these challenging times.

### About the Veterans Program:

NCCF's HUM-V (H-Unit-Military-Veteran's) houses incarcerated Veterans from the Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force as well as National Guard and Reserve. They are held to a higher standard of living, as far as, cleanliness, respect and an altered military structure. This is the second such program in the Indiana Department of Correction, along with INVET.





## Mega Food Bank is a Success!

Written By Ashley Duran, Karnes County Detention Facility

The Karnes County Detention Facility (KCDF) assembles a team on a monthly basis to help Food Banks within the community. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff were unsure how exactly they would be able to safely execute the distribution of much needed food. Our small oil field and ranching community had taken a major hit because of the COVID-19 rules and guidelines, creating a greater need for food in our area. The San Antonio Food Bank recognized this need by hosting two mega food banks. In April and May, the San Antonio Food Bank sent 35,000 pounds of food to approximately 300 families. During these mega food banks, the Karnes County Horse Barn is transformed into a drive-thru distribution center. The transformation would not have been possible without the countless volunteers throughout the community, including KCDF staff, Community Leaders, Local First Responders, as well as, other entities within the county. Throughout this pandemic one thing remains clear, whether it's bagging goods for distribution, directing traffic, or loading trunks of vehicles the Karnes County Detention Facility team is dedicated to helping the community.



# Boosting Morale Throughout COVID-19 Pandemic

Written By **Ashley Duran,**  
**Karnes County Detention Facility**

At the start of COVID-19 pandemic, everyday products were challenging for staff to find. Non-perishable food items, toilet paper, and hand sanitizer were a few items that were difficult to obtain. At the Karnes County Detention Facility (KCDF), we knew we needed to do something to help relieve the stress of not having enough time to get these essential items. We started a food pantry, with items being donated by staff, for all who work at our facility to utilize. Together we are being as safe as possible and helping one another through this pandemic the best way we can. Lucky for us, Correctional Workers Week gave us another opportunity to bring everyone together. Each day we would transform our lobby to suit our theme for the day, which ranged from a sports theme to a luau and fiesta theme.

Inmate morale has also taken a hit from the pandemic due to the cancelation of visitation so we are doing everything in our power to keep them in good spirits. We have created several programs to keep them involved and active. Programs included arts and crafts, physical fitness classes, and poetry. Our very first art contest focused on Mexican-American Culture and we had 33 participants.

Countless staff members have been waiting all year for their children and siblings to walk the stage and graduate whether it be from High School or College. We knew we needed to act and show our support to these graduates and staff on behalf of the facility. Together, with staff, we decided to take the "Adopt a Graduate" trend to the next level. We asked all staff with graduating high school and college students to fill out a questionnaire about their child, grandchild, or sibling. We then proceeded to take this information and create baskets donated from staff to each graduate. We plan on presenting each graduate with baskets at a modest socially distanced luncheon. We believe in these uncertain times it's important to remain vigilant and safe while recognizing their accomplishments, hard work and dedication.

Our second morale boosting project was a physical fitness competition based on three categories: pushups, sit-ups, and burpees. Each category was one minute long with the inmates doing as many reps of each of the respected category as possible. The fitness test proved to be a challenge for the 28 inmates that entered. The Karnes County Detention Facility has much more in store and strives to outdo ourselves with each passing project.





## Success Behind Bars at South Bay Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility

Written By Dr. Charelee Morgan, South Bay Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility

“Your life does not get better by chance; it gets better by change” - Jim Rohn

This is an appropriate quote to preface the journey and subsequent triumph of a group of South Bay Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility (SBCRF) student inmates, who decided that they would not just “go to Rome and do as the Romans do” but would “grasp the finger of opportunity.” Their perspective was not to magnify the inherent challenges that would occur in their daily lives behind bars but to see each challenge as a unique opportunity. Indeed, rather than sit on the sidelines and become spectators in their educational journey, they became star athletes and valuable supporting bench players. They changed their thinking and played the game earnestly, knowing that the only acceptable outcome is to win or draw the hand they are dealt.

At SBCRF the word “inmates” takes on an entirely new meaning as an acronym for “Inspire Now, Make All Together Earn Success.” This aligns with the Facility’s culture on how inmates should be treated. It is critical that upon arrival at the Facility, all stakeholders (correctional officers, program staff, and facility leadership) embrace the approach that inspiration, togetherness, and success are critical elements to an inmate’s

rehabilitation. Moreover, this template can be easily duplicated throughout the institution by all employees, which will result in lower rates of recidivism, more value-added services, and higher quality citizens returning to their communities. The Program Department’s group of inmate aides and teaching assistants epitomize the best with their dedication, commitment, and daily efforts to support their fellow inmates. The fact that many of the aides provides insight into the character of these men who provide unwavering assistance in whichever capacity they are asked to serve. Many of them emerged as stalwarts during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating unbridled enthusiasm and leadership in ensuring that program assignments were distributed and collected, and tutoring any inmates who needed assistance. The results of the symbiotic relationship between inmate teaching assistants, program staff, and program participants, culminated in January of this year when over 200 inmates donned their cap and gowns to receive their graduation certificates. We are proud of the achievements of our program participants and will continue to “Inspire them Now to Make All of them Together Earn Success.”

## Big Spring Supports Its Own

Written By Michael Harding, Big Spring Correctional Facility

Big Spring Correctional Facility held a fundraiser for Big Spring Correctional Facility staff members Captain Veronica Schroyer and Lieutenant Frederick Schroyer, as their house had a fire on Friday, March 6th. The staff of Big Spring Correctional Facility and Flightline Correctional Facility donated over \$2,000 to help them with expenses while their house is being repaired. The brisket burritos were prepared by Assistant Facility Administrator Jimmy Bingham.



Frederick & Veronica Schroyer

# Bushfire Relief

Written By Kim Blinkhorn, Head Office, GEO Australia

Over the summer of 2019-2020, Australia suffered one of its worst bushfire seasons on record. More than 18 million hectares were burned and 34 people lost their lives. Communities were devastated with almost 6,000 buildings destroyed and agricultural businesses ravaged. The impact on wildlife was catastrophic — it was conservatively estimated that more than one billion animals were killed and many more injured or orphaned.

GEO centres throughout Australia were proactive in supporting bushfire relief efforts, with staff and inmates raising funds and helping local communities. At Junee Correctional Centre inmates showed their support for the local fire brigade by donating \$3,287. The money will go towards extra equipment for fire trucks. Presents left over from last year's children's Christmas party were also gifted to the brigade so they could be donated to children who lost houses.

Deputy Captain of the Junee Rural Fire Service Paul Armour said the donations were greatly appreciated. "Donations like this from the community are a godsend, they take a lot of pressure off the committee having to run around and find funds elsewhere," he said. In another bushfire relief effort, inmates made kangaroo and possum pouches for orphaned wildlife. The pouches were donated to the NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service (WIRES), Australia's largest wildlife rescue organisation.

Helping care for Australian wildlife was a consistent theme across GEO centres with inmates at Fulham



Correctional Centre also putting their skills to work. The inmates made possum boxes, comfort bears, and species-specific pouches for a range of animals including kangaroos, sugar gliders, bats, possums, snakes, and koalas. The items were donated to East Gippsland Fire Animal Rescue Collective. Inmates also raised \$1,677 for the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund (GERF) 2020 Bushfire Appeal.

Fulham staff were also active in the community during the peak of the crisis — unloading trucks and stacking 100,000 litres of donated bottled water is just one example of their support efforts.

At Ravenhall Correctional Centre, donations by staff, inmates, and GEO alliance partners' employees, as well as, a dollar-for-dollar pledge from the GEO Australia Head Office, resulted in \$5,406 being donated to a bushfire appeal and an additional \$1,880 to Wildlife Victoria.

Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre was creative in its efforts as well by selling fire-themed bath bombs to staff, leading to a \$500 contribution to the Rural Fire Service.



Fulham work crews are always in high demand -  
(Photo taken in January 2020)

# Work Crews in Demand

Written By Regina Regulska, Fulham Correctional Centre

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, three inmate work crews from Fulham Correctional Centre spent several months actively engaged in a range of community projects for the Shire of Wellington's parks and gardens division, Gippsland Water, and various community organisations.

Crews maintained streetscapes, parks, botanical gardens, and other public spaces in Sale, Heyfield, Stratford, Boisdale, Maffra, Kilmany, Toongabbie, Licola, Rosedale, Walhalla, and Yallourn North.

Crews also undertook general maintenance tasks at community centres, churches, schools, cemeteries, and other community facilities. This included working daily at Gippsland Water's 8,500 hectare Dutson Downs soil and organic recycling facility removing plastic contaminants.

# End of an Era for GEO in Queensland

Written By Kim Blinkhorn, Head Office, GEO Australia

On 26 March 2019, the Queensland Government announced that the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre was to transition its operations to Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) after more than 27 years of correctional services being delivered by The GEO Group. QCS's Deputy Commissioner stated that "This is the first time a transition of this magnitude has been undertaken in Australia or anywhere in the world."

Since that announcement, GEO and the staff at Arthur Gorrie have been resolute in delivering high quality services and have worked collaboratively with QCS and other stakeholders to ensure a seamless transition. The transition 'Operational Certitude,' has brought many challenges to GEO and the Centre including planning for the year-long transition, bridging the gap between two

different operating models, facilitating training for both GEO and QCS staff and the recent onset of COVID-19.

GEO's Transition Team consisted of experienced staff in areas including operations, human resources, health services, and finance and administration. This group worked closely with QCS and West Moreton Health Services to plan, implement, and execute the diverse range of transitional activities required to effect Operation Certitude, with one of the most important achievements being the vast majority of GEO staff transitioning their employment to QCS. All GEO staff at Arthur Gorrie have played a critical role in the effective transition of the Centre to QCS, and we thank them for their dedication.



**Visit Staff – (left to right)** Betsy Harris, Donna Sparke, Ann Wedlock and Ana-Rita Kingi



**Senior Management Team – (left to right)** Brad Kidd, Peter Ma'a, Judy Windle, Sam Nespoli, Sophie Rosenblatt, Megan Barkle, Helen Wilson and Hanneki Mocke



**Officers – (left to right)** Rebecca Shaw, Jemima Nevin, Karl Webb, Aaron McSorley, Jen O'Donohue and Allan Kowaltzke

**\*Photos taken in the first quarter of 2020**

# COVID-19 Measures Adopted in Australian Centres

Written By Lyndell Coutts, Head Office, GEO Australia



Staff at Ravenhall Correctional Centre wait for screening



Video visits at Ravenhall Correctional Centre

The global COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered the way GEO Australia's staff undertake their responsibilities. In Australia, GEO has been fortunate; however, it is safe to assume any kind of 'normalcy' in our Centres will take some time.

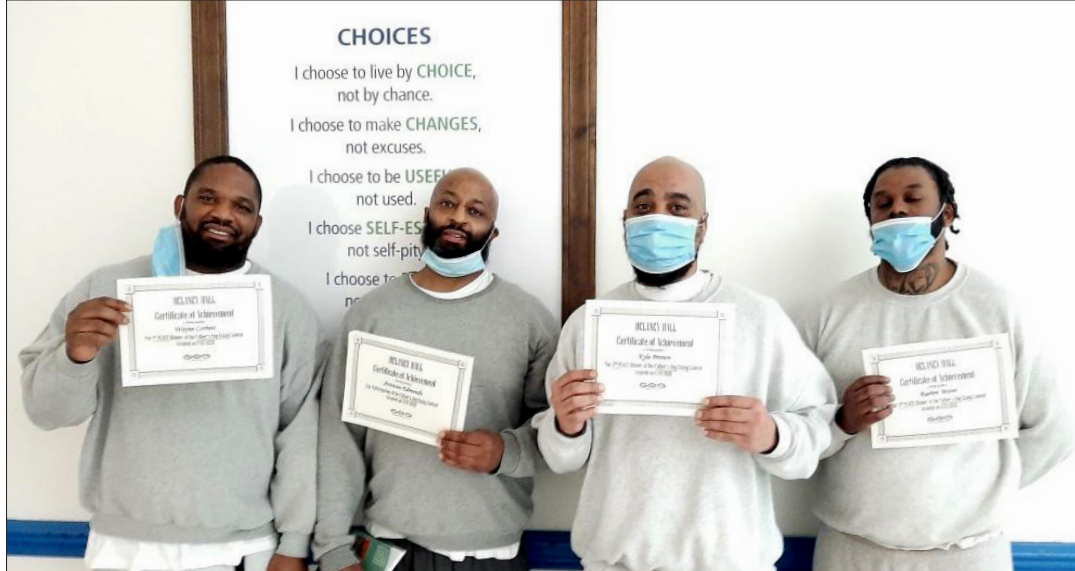
To minimise the risk of COVID-19 being introduced by external contacts, a significant range of measures were implemented at each Centre. These include:

- Screening of all staff via specific questioning and temperature checking via a fixed thermo imaging device. Anyone who failed these processes were turned away and referred for COVID-19 testing.
- Physical visits were suspended and virtual visits conducted via secure video conferencing was adopted.
- Inmates who displayed flu-like symptoms were isolated pending the outcome of COVID-19 testing.
- Community work programs were suspended.
- Extra cleaning protocols adopted, including hand sanitisation.
- Social distancing practised by staff and inmates.
- New reception inmates were accommodated in designated "isolation beds" for 14 days.

Fulham Correctional Centre designated a temporary Communications Officer to ensure the timely distribution of information about COVID-19 to staff and inmates. This included producing a staff and inmate 'Weekly Update.'

At Ravenhall Correctional Centre, a COVID-19 training package was developed for staff that focused on how to prevent the potential spread of the virus, and how to safely manage inmates with COVID-19 if it did enter the Centre.

A train-the-trainer model was also implemented, with the Correctional Supervisors playing a pivotal role in ensuring staff received the training in a timely manner. Within two weeks, nearly all staff had participated in COVID-19 training.



**Left to Right:**  
 Wayne Corbett (1st Place)  
 Antwan Edmonds (Participation award)  
 Kyle Brown (2nd Place)  
 John Whitley (Participation award)

## Delaney Hall Holds Father's Day Essay Awards

Written By Kristin Sanfilippo & Karen Collins, Delaney Hall

The month of June is host to Father's Day, and Delaney Hall in Newark, New Jersey, acknowledged the holiday by holding an essay writing contest for residents who were willing to write on the topic of fatherhood.

The center provides parenting skills as part of comprehensive residential reentry programming, and the Father's Day essay was an opportunity to highlight what residents are learning about being a father, or how life with their father has affected them. All the entries were reviewed by staff and were awarded based on meeting certain criteria, most importantly that the written message was pro-social and demonstrated a desire on the part of the resident to engage in positive parenting.

"Being an incarcerated father is challenging for many of our residents, and the program staff recognizes that holidays like Father's Day can be particularly difficult," said Kristin Sanfilippo, Assistant Facility Director of Programs at Delaney Hall. "This year, the COVID-19 pandemic further intensified negative emotions for some of the participants, as they've been unable to visit with their children for

months due to the cancellation of the visitation program. Delaney Hall program staff therefore sought a way for residents to connect to their children and honor their fatherhood during this unprecedented time, and it was decided that one of the best ways for them to do so would be through writing."

Most powerful was when one contestant highlighted the fact that, while he can work on developing and strengthening his parenting skills while incarcerated, it is not until his release that he can truly parent his children. This particular resident was insightful enough to identify that he can't effectively parent his children while incarcerated, and that before he is able to be of any true help to them, he must first deal with his own issues pertaining to criminal and addictive thinking and behavior.

On Friday, June 19th, residents who participated were invited to the lecture hall for an awards ceremony. The group received certificates of participation and a sweet treat for their effort. The first, second, and third place winners received grooming kits and fatherhood books, and the first place winner was informed he could order lunch that day. To close out the awards



**Delaney Hall Fathers Day Winner – Wayne Corbett**

ceremony, several of the residents shared their ideas regarding fatherhood with the group. The Delaney Hall staff is proud of the residents who chose to participate, who committed to writing their essays, and completed the task with honest demonstrations of a desire to become a better father.

# Asteroid Employment Provides Transitional Opportunities For Returning Citizens

Written By **Kenneth Garner, Continuum of Care**

The GEO group entered into a partnership with Asteroid Cleaning Solutions in April of this year. Asteroid is an affiliate of "The Broadway Foundation" a non-profit organization based in West Palm Beach, Florida whose mission is to assist unemployed individuals facing barriers to employment through mentoring, job skills training and paid transitional employment. As a small company, they were aware of the advantages of hiring former inmates and made a commitment to assist returning citizens through Transitional Employment opportunities. Asteroid's concept of mentoring through transitional employment is a perfect match for GEO Post-Release participants. New hires are afforded opportunities through promotions, operator licensure, and personal and social growth within the workplace.



LEFT TO RIGHT – Anthony J. (Project Manager) & Jerrick D.



Asteroid is sub-contracting on several developments in Florida, Georgia and Maryland. One of the sites, is adjacent to the GEO Group Corporate Office in Boca Raton. The owner and CEO, Mr. Rayder Bailey says "We established this partnership because we understand the obstacles and challenges this population faces in trying to start over after incarceration. We are Christians first, and this is what should be done as a second chance after an individual has paid for his wrongdoing."

Jerrick D. was the first GEO applicant hired with Asteroid Cleaning Solutions after his release from Graceville Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility. "I had only been home from Graceville for a little over two weeks and had applied for multiple jobs with no answer," says Jerrick, "I was really getting discouraged, because I have two small children, and then my Post-Release Case Manager and Mentor, Amlak - I Foley referred me to Mr. Garner, who set up the interview with Asteroid Cleaning. After three weeks of working with the company, I was promoted to a Lead employee position, which also came with a pay raise. I am grateful for the opportunity that the GEO Group and Asteroid have given me!" Jerrick plans to enroll at Palm Beach State College in the fall while continuing to work at Asteroid.

## Turning Inspiration into Art

Written By **Douglas Rigg, Abraxas Academy**



This year, students participating in the carpentry program at Abraxas Academy created a masterpiece for the Habitat for Humanity of Berks County Annual Birdhouse Challenge.

Their inspiration for this year's birdhouse challenge was a whirligig plane that was modeled after a flying jenny. They chose this because recently the woodshop had been making whirligigs. For those that do not know, a whirligig is an object that spins or whirls, or has at least one part that spins or whirls.

Several students worked on this project with the supervision and aide of teachers Jeff Swavely and Christian Edsall. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the annual Birdhouse Challenge was canceled this year, so instead they donated this year's birdhouse to the Goodwill resale store.



# ADAPPT Reentrants Engage in Art Therapy

Written By Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing

ADAPPT Residential Reentry Center in Reading, Pennsylvania, was able to provide opportunities during the pandemic that engaged reentrants through art therapy. Exercises in art therapy helped the reentrants to recognize and understand their addiction and begin a path towards recovery. Reentrants expressed themselves by painting positive messages throughout the facility.

"One of the things we enjoy the most is being able to introduce new ways for reentrants to have a better understanding of their addiction," said Dawn Martin, Assistant Facility Director at ADAPPT. "Art therapy offers an opportunity for sharing positive expression and establishes a path towards recovery."

The ADAPPT art therapy has lifted spirits and delivered a message of recovery for both reentrants and staff. ADAPPT provides inpatient and outpatient programming, and is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs.



Reentrant Kyle Huscher is the artist stands with his artwork



Reentrant Bryan Sell assisted in the painting of the characters

# Casper Residents Help Make Masks For Youth Centers

Written By Josh Brown, & Karen Collins, Casper Reentry Center

A job well done, for the Therapeutic Community (TC) residents of the Casper Reentry Center, who answered a call for help from The Mirror Program to assist in making masks for youth at the Natrona County Juvenile Center and the Youth Crisis Center.

Thanks to a partnership between The Mirror Program, Blakeman Sewing, and The GEO Group, the residents were given the tools and materials needed to create the masks. Upon completion, the residents provided 200 cloth masks to help protect youth and to give back to their community. The Mirror Program is a local organization that helps juveniles by establishing dialogue between juveniles and inmates about making positive choices.

All were grateful for this special opportunity to help their community by giving back, and taking part in a positive activity that reinforces GEO's Reentry programming. "We are very pleased to take part in helping the youth of our community, and to answer the call from our community partners," said Joshua Brown, Director at Casper Reentry Center.



# New Jersey Alumni Feed the Needy

Written By Karen Collins, NJ Alumni Services

Members of GEO Reentry's New Jersey Alumni Services gave their time during the Pandemic to deliver food to the needy in their communities. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, a group of Alumni set out to bring food to those in need in Newark and East Orange. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, a group distributed food in Plainfield at an event organized by the Mount Olive Baptist Church. Members wore masks and gloves to protect themselves, but the virus did not deter the brave volunteers from the opportunity to give back to their communities.

One volunteer, Darius H., who is a survivor of the virus himself, said, "I have been given a second chance more than once, first through reentry treatment and second by recovering from the virus. I value the message of giving back to others and I am committed to passing on what has been given to me."

Members of New Jersey's Alumni Services group have demonstrated an excellent track record of community service. After completing their GEO Reentry program, individuals volunteer to help current residents transition to the community by sharing resources.



Alumnus Darius H. delivering food to the needy in Plainfield, NJ



Alumni members Juan V. (left), and Arthur Townes (right) delivering food to the needy in East Orange, NJ during the lockdown

# Abraxas Marienville Supports Front Line Heroes

Written By Jeanne Godlesky, Abraxas Marienville

Our young men at Abraxas Marienville in the Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) program are lending support to the essential workers and heroes in New York City. After some research, they decided to send a monetary donation and cards of appreciation to Healthcare workers of the NYC Health + Hospitals Organization which encompasses 11 hospitals or care facilities, employs over 42,000 staff, and serves over one million patients per year. These front line heroes have been in the trenches, helping COVID-19 patients and have assisted in sending over 5,000 back home on the road to recovery. We respect, admire, and appreciate all essential workers!



# BI SmartLINK: Keeping Agencies and Clients Connected During COVID-19

Written By Dustin Pettit, BI Incorporated

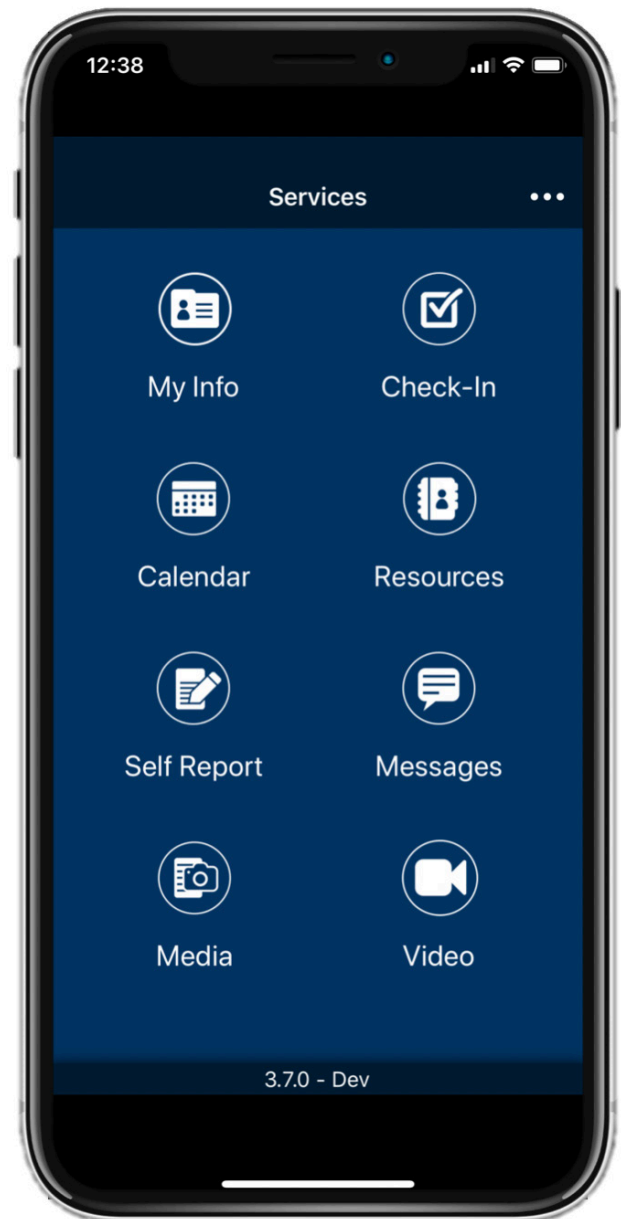
The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted criminal justice in many ways, affecting local, state and federal community supervision, in-custody facilities, treatment providers and more.

This unique and challenging situation is forcing all aspects of our criminal justice to adapt, while agencies work to ensure that all client or offender requirements are still being met and progress is being made.

BI Incorporated (BI) released a client-focused smartphone application called BI SmartLINK® in 2017 that works as both a low-risk supervision application and a communication tool to keep officers and/or case managers connected with their clients in a meaningful way. The application offers the following agency features and client support tools:

- Secure, in-app messaging and two-way video conferencing
- Confirm client location using the optional biometric verification
- Manage client appointments and meeting reminders through the interactive calendar
- Approve and manage client schedule changes and requests
- Upload and view case documents and paperwork
- View and access local community resources

Prior to COVID-19, BI SmartLINK was being utilized by clients across local, state and federal agencies; however, enrollments have since increased significantly. Once the pandemic prevented community supervision officers and case managers from meeting with their clients in-person, BI was able to step in and enable agencies to resume meaningful client interactions through the secure, two-way SmartLINK video conferencing feature. Over a six-week period, beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, more than 26,000 video conferences have been successfully completed by multiple local, state, and federal agencies.



**BI SmartLINK application for iOS**

SmartLINK continues to be recognized by criminal justice professionals as a reliable way to manage low-risk individuals, support and empower them through community supervision, and keep them connected with supervising officers and case managers. As we all continue to navigate the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, officers, case managers and clients now have an effective, modern tool to keep them connected.



# Gender-Responsive Programming at Pomona DRC

Written By **Liz Button & Matthew Hill, Pomona DRC**

The Pomona Day Reporting Center in Pomona, California has long been a steadfast provider of gender-responsive reentry programming that addresses the unique physical and mental health needs of women.

While it is common for women who enter the criminal justice system to have experienced severe trauma or abuse in their lives, most correctional environments often fail to address women's prior victimhood. Through GEO Reentry Services, the Pomona DRC offers trauma-informed, evidence-based treatment that allows formerly incarcerated women to start healing as they serve the conditions of their sentences and pursue a crime-free life.

Programming at the Pomona DRC has been specifically designed to meet the unique concerns, needs, and risks of female participants; addressing the type and frequency of offenses, criminogenic risk factors, and treatment and engagement needs, including substance abuse issues and family relationship reconciliation. By taking this approach, the DRC helps female participants manage health problems and high-risk behaviors that are often contributing factors to crime.

Pomona DRC staff are highly trained and motivated to help women identify their personal issues, learn new life skills, and successfully reintegrate into the community. Staff members, which include a female substance abuse counselor, job developer, housing coordinator and several case managers, treat participants with respect and make sure they know they are in a safe space.

With this support, DRC participants feel comfortable in all aspects of the reentry process: during assessments, in their living quarters, and speaking at groups and individual sessions. They also feel empowered to follow their treatment plan and work towards their professional and personal goals.

Many on the DRC staff are trained on the WRNA COMPAS assessment instrument developed by the National Institute of Corrections, which addresses risks and needs common in women. In addition, the DRC's Supervising Case Manager speaks at the monthly women's empowerment meetings run by the local parole department.

Pomona DRC programming also includes a longstanding women's trauma group designed to help break the cycle of trauma, abuse and incarceration many female participants experience. In addition to female-specific therapy and skills groups, the DRC partners with community organizations to supplement services as needed and regularly organizes events, projects and activities.

In recent years, the Pomona DRC has observed a marked increase in the engagement and success of our female participants. Going forward, the DRC's trauma-informed, gender-responsive programming will continue to benefit local formerly incarcerated women, while simultaneously resulting in reduced recidivism and enhanced public safety.

## NJ Alumni Services Meetings Go Online

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing**

GEO Reentry's Alumni Services members in New Jersey continued to attend regularly scheduled alumni meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic using an online format. Members were still able to share the message of positive reentry experiences, and continue to support each other while being able to abide by social distancing measures.

Arthur Townes, NJ Alumni Coordinator, saw the importance of being able to stay in touch with other members during the pandemic, so he purchased a personal online account and set up a schedule of meetings.

"Our digital meetings are a success," exclaimed Mr. Townes. "We had a great response from members and

meetings are held weekly with several attendees. Good information relevant to reentry and the facilities, tips for guarding against the spread of the virus; including where to get masks, food supplies, and the importance of staying home are shared during meetings, helping our members stay safe.

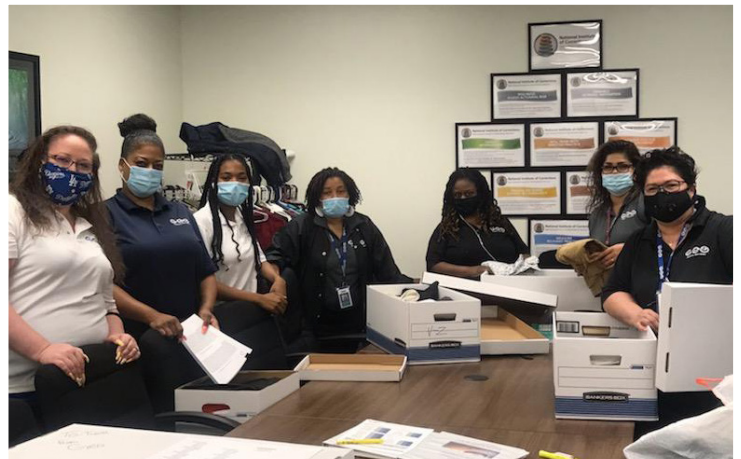
Alumni members who have completed a GEO Reentry program, and are now living successful lives in the community, act as mentors to others still in programming or recently released. Alumni Services in New Jersey hold regularly scheduled meetings at reentry facilities throughout the state and offer support services for those looking forward to a successful transition back to the community after program completion.

# Dress for Success Clothing Drive

Written By **Ebony Bryant, CDCR STOP Area 4**

Case Manager Livie Baxter brought an idea to the STOP team at the STOP Area 4 program to do a clothing drive for participants in the program. This was due to an increase in population as participants were being rapidly released from custody. Due to COVID-19, the clothing locations that case managers would normally refer participants to for clothing needs were closed. During the course of several weeks employees brought in clothes for men, women, and children.

Case Managers gathered sizes from participants who were in need of items and staff volunteered to sort, box, and deliver items to participants. As we delivered items to participants, Case Managers received calls from participants thanking them for the clothing items and several of them stated that it was a blessing to receive the donations. Also, in the clothing boxes were activity kits created by AOD Counselor, Margaret Duenas. These activity kits were filled with crossword puzzles, wordsearches, and other items to keep participants busy during this idle time.



# Ventura County Center Experiences Successes by Mentoring

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing**

The Ventura County Reporting and Resource Center in California is experiencing many benefits from a mentorship program that was established as a partnership between Pacific High School and GEO Reentry Services. Pacific High School is a local continuation high school that students attend as an alternative to high school, that is more flexible for time and study. Former participants of the Ventura center, who have successfully completed the GEO Reentry program, volunteer to go on site at the school as mentors to the students. Mentors are supervised by school staff and GEO Reentry staff.

The mentors share their experience with the students, telling them about mistakes they made and how they can stay clear of those mistakes and live a productive life. The mentors describe how reentry programming has taught them new positive principles for living and how they have learned to

cope with challenges in ways that are beneficial. “Students can often identify with a mentor so they are able to feel comfortable opening up about their life and also seeing that they can overcome obstacles just as their mentor has,” said Mary Jane Cordova, Program Manager of the Ventura center. “It’s a very fulfilling partnership!”

The program started with the help of Ventura’s Education and Employment Coordinator Mark Garcia, who reached out to community organizations in the hopes of creating positive community relationships. The principal of Pacific High School toured the Ventura Center, and came away impressed by the participants and staff, who were working hard and having success with improving lives. The mentorship program was then developed as a partnership, and has since experienced much success in the last year since its inception.



## Every Dog Gets a Bone

Written By **Josh Brown,**  
Casper Reentry Center

The Casper Reentry Center (CRC), in Casper, Wyoming, continued its tradition of giving back to the community by caring for others, including the four-legged companions of the community, by donating to two local animal shelters. Residents of the work release program at the CRC decided to perform an act of community service by helping Casper's Metro Animal Control and the Casper Humane Society. The residents went on a mission to collect food, toys, and treats for the animals. In addition to the donations, residents also contributed \$148 to the Casper Humane Society.

As a thank you for the hard work of the residents, the Shelter Manager of the Casper Humane Society sent a letter to the CRC acknowledging the generosity of the group with an explanation of how much the donation helps their important work.

Residents experienced a sense of reward and satisfaction from demonstrating positive behavior. Through community service events, residents come to understand the importance of giving back to the community.

## Good Enough Isn't

Written By **Northern California DRC Program Managers**

The COVID-19 Global Pandemic has brought about challenging times for all of us across the world. However, it has not stopped GEO Reentry staff from providing high-quality services. Here are several examples of non-residential programs in Northern California that have embraced our mission, while innovatively delivering services.

### MONTEREY COUNTY DAY REPORTING CENTER

Since the start of the pandemic, the Monterey County Day Reporting Center has continued to support program participants by continuing to offer Cognitive Behavioral Treatment. Over time, the way treatment is being delivered has evolved, but participants continue to receive one-on-one treatment with their case managers, as well as treatment via small group phone sessions.

Recently, we had a participant who had been struggling to call the Day Reporting Center to check-in. He was also missing scheduled appointments with his case manager. Eventually, we were able to get a hold of him. He is a young man who lives with his family and struggles with gang associations and peer pressure. His case manager had the opportunity to talk to him about what was going on. Her approach was very responsive, instead of providing an immediate sanction for this participant to address his violations, his case manager sought to understand him, and the reasons for his absences. She learned that this young man has had to solely provide for his entire family since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both his father and his mother had been laid off from work, and his younger siblings cannot work, which meant he had to step up and provide for his family.

We learned this young man needed space, space to be understood, and for someone to listen as he was overwhelmed, stressed out, and nervous. His case manager created a program schedule that works around his new work and personal schedule. She is also being responsive by allowing him to change his meeting times when his work schedule changes. Additionally, she was able to provide him some resources for healthcare hotlines and areas in the community that were supplying personal protective equipment at no cost. The participant is now making progress in the program, even if it's over the phone. We trust that the relationship he has built with the program will continue to flourish as we continue to find innovative ways to support him and the many other participants under our supervision.

- *Nayely Guerrero, Monterey County Day Reporting Center, Program Manager*

### STOCKTON DAY REPORTING CENTER

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was an uncomfortable adjustment for everyone both employees and participants at the Stockton Day Reporting Center. Our dedicated staff now check-in with each participant via telephone and continue to provide support to those we serve. We are grateful to GEO for

their continued support for us in the field and we hope to get back to normal business as soon as possible.

– Gloria Alcantara, Stockton Day Reporting Center, Program Manager

### NAPA COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS SERVICE CENTER

As we all experience uncertain times right now, one thing that has not changed is that we can still be here to support the participants we serve. At the Napa Community Corrections Service Center (CCSC), we wanted to figure out a way to be involved in a "Good Enough Isn't" capacity. Two staff at the program, Maria Chavez and Rebecca Morales started a food drive. They began collecting food to distribute to the participants. Staff connected with each participant and found out if they had a need for food, and then the food was bagged for the participant to pick it up curbside.

Another way we decided to serve is by making homemade, cloth masks for staff who might need one, or for delivery to the local shelter. We are still in the mask-making process and are grateful to be able to be a part of helping improve community safety. Although these times can be difficult, they can also be seen through the lens of "Challenge Equals Opportunity."

- Karen Graff, Napa Community Corrections Service Center, Program Manager

### SOLANO DAY REPORTING CENTER

At the Solano Day Reporting Center, we have kept an open line of communication with our participants while practicing social distancing. The team has been very positive during this odd time and we have worked hard to

continue to connect with our participants and their families through text, phone calls, and conference calls.

Providing services over the phone has been a unique way to ensure interventions are being provided and dosage for participants does not go out the window. The DRC has been engaging our population and administering dosage to them by facilitating groups, individual cognitive-behavioral therapy sessions and check-ins over the phone.

Another thing we have focused on is being purposeful when participants are calling to check-in. We make it a priority to engage participants to call and check-in and ensure that we use this opportunity to connect with them in a way that inspires change rather than just checking the box that they called in. Above all, we have continued to embrace kindness with everyone we come into contact with. We can't choose our situation, but we can certainly choose to be kind.

- Michael Reyes, Solano Day Reporting Center, Program Manager

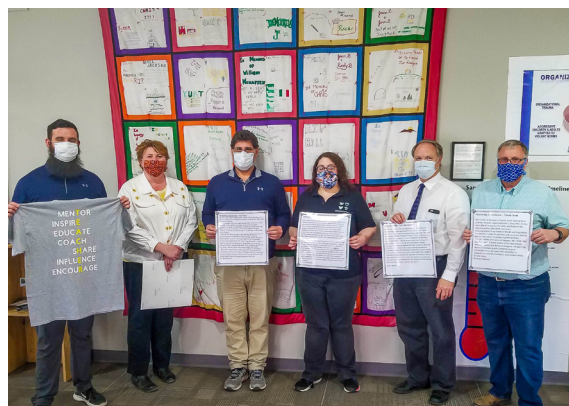


Napa Community Corrections Service Center

## Celebrating Mentors at Abraxas Marienville

Written By Jake Boston, Abraxas Marienville

Abraxas Marienville recently celebrated informal leaders and mentors at the facility. These Mentors may not be in direct supervisory roles, but have made a significant impact on employee development. Team members nominated their Mentor by submitting a write up on how this individual has directly impacted them. The Mentors were honored during an appreciation luncheon. Congratulations to our Abraxas Marienville Mentors Ray Hansen, Susie Brosius, Rachel Bendal, Charlie Scott, and Dave Fitch!



# Cambria County DRC Acknowledged by County Director, for 'Fantastic' Staff Performance During Pandemic

Written By Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing, Cambria County Day Reporting Center

The Cambria County Day Reporting Center was grateful to receive an outstanding recognition from Toni White, the Director of Day Reporting for Cambria County, Pennsylvania, for the center's operational performance, efficiency, and staff capability during the pandemic. John Hogan, GEO Reentry Regional Manager, received a note from Director White, who extended her compliments to the GEO staff at Cambria County DRC, for their commitment to the reentry mission during this difficult time.

"I am writing to express how pleased I am with the GEO Staff," said Director White. "The staff has not complained and has gone above and beyond their duty to ensure that the DRC stayed operational. The front staff (Ashley, Karen, and Kathy) are amazing! They ensure that all the participants are informed by taking the time to explain everything to them." Ms. White continued to compliment the staff as "FANTASTIC," and extended a special acknowledgment to Julie Boring, GEO Reentry's Program Manager of the Cambria County DRC for her leadership.

Participants referred from the county are required to report regularly on an in-person basis to the DRC, creating a challenge for daily operations during the height of the pandemic. The GEO staff rose to their new mission without missing a beat. Services to the participants referred from the county continued without interruption, delivering Moral Reconciliation Therapy® (MRT), Life skills, Substance Use Disorder (SUD), individual counseling sessions, and anger management by using remote technologies. Staff spoke to participants by phone to conduct individual sessions, and the internet was used to provide web-based material that emphasized enhanced treatment and accountability. Material was posted to the GEO Reentry Connect website, making it easy for participants to access and utilize reentry services.



**From left to right by row starting at the Heroes sign are as follow:**

**Row 1:** Julie Boring, Program Manager and Kathleen Jennings, Client Services Specialist

**Row 2:** Karen Fedorko, Client Services Specialist and Ashley Benner, Client Services Specialist

**Row 3:** Lucas Zimmerman, Case Manager and Samantha Snowberger, Substance Abuse Therapist

**Row 4:** Timothy Johnson, Substance Abuse Therapist and Lindsey Scott, Case Manager

"Cambria County DRC stood apart in delivering the reentry mission," said John Hogan. "Staff spent unlimited time and energy to establish safety measures that would meet protocols. Hard work on their part enabled the staff to do what they do best; deliver the message of GEO Reentry Services that helps our participants develop a productive life and recover from substance abuse."

Throughout the period of March through June 2020, Cambria County DRC was able to maintain a high check-in rate of 94% during this time of the pandemic. Staff was most inspired by the uplifting words of Director White, and they received it as encouragement and support. Congratulations to staff who expressed no hesitation to adopt a new routine and perform their duties with willingness.

As restrictions are being gradually eased for the pandemic, the staff looks forward to a new normal, and they are ready to work in a safe and positive environment that focuses on creating positive thinking and behavior to provide a new start for those in their care.





## Merced & Los Banos DRC's Celebrate Two Graduations

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing**

Congratulations to both the Merced County and Los Banos Day Reporting Centers (DRC's) in California, for their ability to continue their GEO Reentry Services non-residential programming during the pandemic, resulting in two transition ceremonies that honored program completion. Employees of both centers, under the supervision of Mai Yang, Program Manager for both locations, worked diligently to take every precaution for participants and staff to stay safe, and followed the rules and regulations established to help promote safety for all.

The ceremonies were held to acknowledge the success of those who completed the GEO Reentry program, after having been referred from the Merced County Probation Office, and the Merced County Sheriff's Department. All felt the transition ceremony is an important tradition to maintain, for participants, officials, and families, and agreed that a celebration was in order. Los Banos held their transition ceremony on July 24, and Merced on July 31.

Staff came up with solutions to honor the graduation that could be held safely during this time. They gathered certificates of completion, recognition documents from California Assemblyman Adam Gray's office, a commemorative trophy, and boxed meals.

"While we typically host a fun celebration for families, participants, probation officials, and others who support these individuals, we believe it is important to host a transition celebration that marks this milestone in a safe and fun way," said Mai Yang, Program Manager, for Merced and Los Banos DRC's.

During this time, GEO Reentry's non-residential centers have made adjustments to usual reporting procedures and in person check-ins. Both centers are experiencing success with alterations to delivering programming, consisting of telephone check-ins, video conferencing, social distancing, and the wearing of masks.

At the Merced and Los Banos centers, participants are provided with a program of evidence-based reentry services designed to help individuals reenter society as productive citizens and experience the rewards of a positive life. Substance abuse counseling, Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT), parenting skills, anger management, and other services are provided to participants with the hopes of completing the program and being honored with a transition celebration that marks a new start, and lessens the chance of a return to the criminal justice system.

---

## Exploring Administrative and Secretarial Sciences at Abraxas LDP

Written By **Craig Schmidt, Abraxas Leadership Development Program**

Two interns at the Abraxas Leadership Development Program (LDP) helped Teacher Aide, Lindsey Kell design the entry way bulletin board in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week. Both young ladies have also been participating in PACTT (Pennsylvania Academic/Career & Technical Training Alliance) services for career exploration and training in the field of administrative duties. This program works through the LDP Learning Center and provides the opportunity for youth to gain valuable experience with administrative roles and interpersonal skills.

One of the interns said the following about the program: "At the Leadership Development Program I was given the opportunity to participate in the Administrative and Secretarial Sciences Internship. A few things I've learned are the proper use of time management, utilization of office technology, and developing professional relationships surrounding the work environment. These skills will benefit my successful return home due to the knowledge I gained regarding; deadlines with school assignments, future job opportunities, and communication with all types of people."

# Central Region and Louisiana DRC's Compete on Demonstrations of COVID-19 Info

Written By Karen Collins, GEO Care Marketing

The health and safety of GEO Reentry Services participants and staff are at the forefront of the fight against the spread of COVID-19. To reinforce the message of taking steps to stop the spread of the virus, a team-spirited competition for "Best Bulletin Board" took place in the Central Region and in Louisiana's non-residential reentry centers. Central Area Manager Andrew Young, and Louisiana Area Manager Timithia Hall, coordinated the competition between their centers in May. The result was fourteen beautifully created displays that highlight critical information to help stop the spread of the virus.

"Staff took this opportunity to use creativity to promote a safe workspace for them and their families," said Mr. Young. "The bulletin boards can be used as effective tools that encourage staff and participants to use all CDC recommended precautions to maximize safety and wellness." To ensure fair and unbiased appraisals, the Central Region competition was judged by an impartial group of licensed clinical social workers working within the Illinois Department of Corrections. *The winner was the East St. Louis Reentry Services Center (RSC), with the Chatham RSC earning second place.*

"We are so proud of our staff for creating these beautiful displays to help us all stay safe," said Kenneth Johnson, Program Manager for the East St. Louis RSC and Springfield Juvenile DRC. Mr. Johnson's centers were awarded two of the top three honors in the competition.

Louisiana's efforts began at the Baton Rouge Day Reporting Center. The project went so well at Baton Rouge, Ms. Hall expanded it throughout the state. "We have great teamwork at our Louisiana DRC's," said Ms. Hall. "Our employees continually show passion and devotion to their work. Staff work together as a group, at individual centers, as well as together throughout the state. We are proud to support each other."

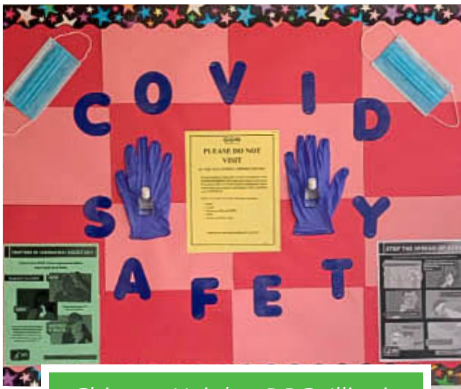
All the bulletin boards are prominently displayed at the centers for all to see upon their entrance to the facility. Staff enjoyed the challenge and rose to the occasion, expressing the important message of keeping themselves and their families safe, and sharing a healthy workspace. The creativity demonstrated exceptional skills in recognizing the role we play in looking out for each other.



**Winner:** East St. Louis Reentry Services Center, Illinois



**2nd place:** Chatham Reentry Services Center, Illinois



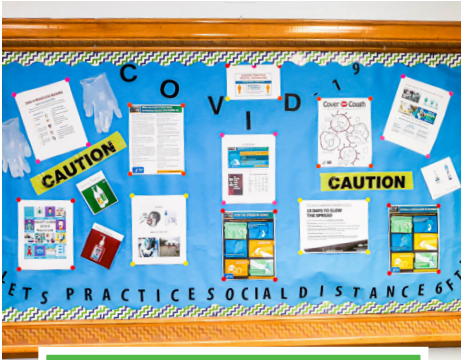
Chicago Heights DRC, Illinois



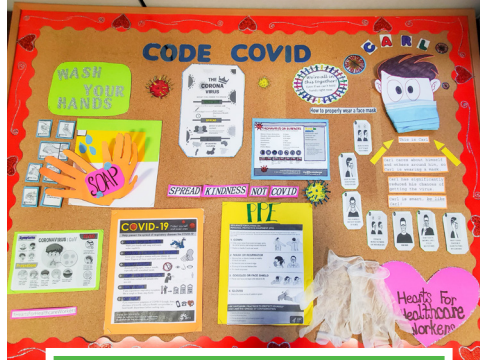
Chicago West Fulton DRC, Illinois



Decatur DRC, Illinois



Rockford DRC, Illinois



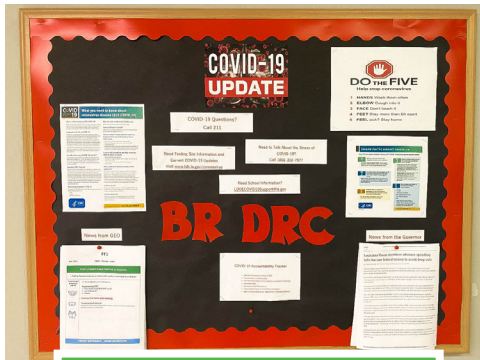
Springfield Juvenile DRC, Illinois



Louisville DRC, Kentucky



Wichita DRC, Kansas



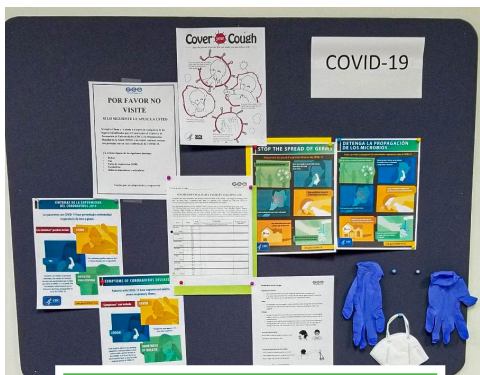
Baton Rouge DRC, Louisiana



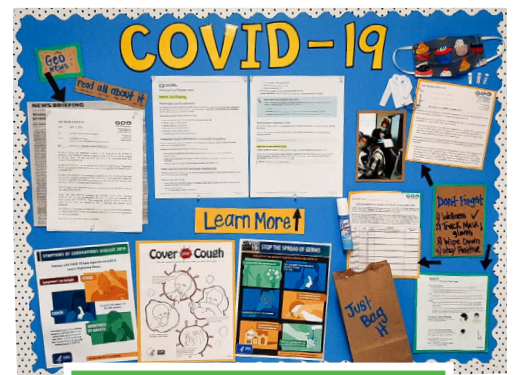
Covington DRC, Louisiana



Harvey DRC, Louisiana



Monroe DRC, Louisiana



Thibodaux DRC, Louisiana

---

**GEO WORLD MAGAZINE**  
**3rd QUARTER 2020**  
**Volume 27**  
**Issue 3**

---