

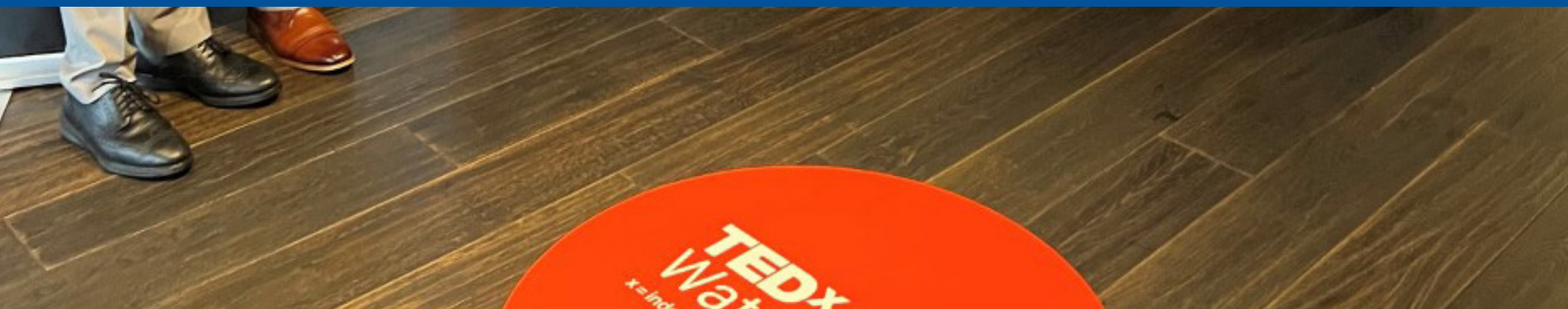
# GEO World

2nd QUARTER 2022

A GEO Publication for Employees and their Families.



## GEO Continuum of Care® Featured at TED Conference in New York City





# Executive Chairman's Letter

**George C. Zoley**, Executive Chairman of the Board

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I would like to express our appreciation to each and every one of our employees for their hard work and for striving to achieve operational excellence across all our service lines. It is the daily dedication and professionalism of our frontline employees which has allowed us to become a world leader in the delivery of safe and secure residential care, enhanced in-custody rehabilitation, and post-release support and reentry services.

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## **To the GEO Family,**

During the second quarter of 2022, our nation celebrated National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. This celebratory week was established by a Presidential Proclamation in 1984 by then President Ronald Reagan to recognize correctional officers across the country, and it was expanded in 1996 by the U.S. Congress to include all correctional employees.

We are proud of our 18,000 GEO employees, who are committed, patient, and persistent in carrying out what can be at times challenging tasks. Our employees serve admirably across the country as chaplains, teachers, counselors, supervisors, officers, nurses, managers, and directors; and they help to keep our communities safe.

On behalf of GEO's Board of Directors and our Management Team, I would like to express our appreciation to each and every one of our employees for their hard work and for striving to achieve operational excellence across all our service lines. It is the daily dedication and professionalism of our frontline employees which has allowed us to become a world leader in the delivery of safe and secure residential care, enhanced in-custody rehabilitation, and post-release support and reentry services.

We are pleased that our award-winning GEO Continuum of Care® (CoC) program has continued to garner national attention. In early May of this year, three GEO CoC Alumni participated in an unprecedented TED Talk in New York City that focused on criminal justice reform and reducing recidivism. During the presentation, which was hosted by GEO Board Member, Jack Brewer, CoC Alumni Dakota Jones, Kevin Sabbath and Elmo Golden shared their experiences as returning citizens and discussed the challenges they were able to overcome with the support provided by our GEO Continuum of Care® and post-release support programs.

This remarkable opportunity to share the life-changing impact of our GEO CoC programs was a testament to all of our employees and to the organizational commitment GEO has made to help all those in our care reenter society as productive and employable citizens.

As we continue to pursue opportunities to grow the delivery of our GEO CoC programs and all of our diversified services, we are pleased to have recently taken an important organizational step to strengthen our company. In July, we announced a number of proposed transactions to help address our company's outstanding debt which would have come due over the next few years. These transactions are expected to extend the due date for most of our company's debt for several more years and will place GEO in a stronger financial position to pursue future quality growth opportunities.



## 02 COVER STORY

### GEO Continuum of Care® Featured at TED Conference in New York City

The GEO Group was honored to be part of the TEDxWaterStreet Reimagine Conference on May 3-4, 2022, hosted in New York City.

### Articles

06 **Secure Services**

20 **International Services**

22 **GEO Care**

### FEATURED ARTICLES



## 11

### South Bay Vocational Participants Impress Glades Business Community During Vocational Week 2022

The 2022 Vocational Week project at South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (SBCRF) was conceptualized during one of the many In-Service Teacher training sessions.

### EDITOTIAL STAFF

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## 20

### Restored Bench Seat Features in Hospital Garden

The restoration of an old timber bench seat has given men at Fulham Correctional Centre the opportunity to utilise their woodwork and construction skills for a community project.

### CONTRIBUTORS

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



## 30

### First Annual Father/Child Dance

The Male Community Reentry Program at the Long Beach Community Reentry Center recently hosted a Father/Child Dance.

# GEO Continuum of Care® Featured at TED Conference in New York City

The GEO Group was honored to be a sponsor of the TEDxWaterStreet Reimagine Conference on May 3-4, 2022. TEDxWaterStreet is the local New York City chapter of the national TED organization.

GEO was represented at the conference by Jose Gordo, Chief Executive Officer; Jack Brewer, GEO Board Member; Derrick Schofield, Executive Vice President, GEO Continuum of Care®; David Burch, Divisional Vice President, Continuum of Care®, and several other Continuum of Care® staff and Alumni members from around the country.

The conference started on the evening of May 3rd with Mr. Gordo providing the keynote address at the welcome event for conference participants and sponsors, which was hosted at the NASDAQ Stock Market. Mr. Gordo welcomed all guests and provided an overview of the services and programs GEO provides. The welcome event provided GEO with the opportunity to network with thought leaders from around the country and discuss important matters related to GEO's commitment to human rights and to providing enhanced rehabilitation programs and post-release support services for those in our care.

On May 4th, the TED conference hosted a variety of speakers, each providing 18-minute presentations covering topics from self-advocacy to human and economic resilience. The last presentation of the conference was facilitated by GEO Board Member, Jack Brewer, and it included testimonials from three GEO

Continuum of Care® Alumni: Dakota Jones (released from Florence West Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility in Arizona), Kevin Sabbath and Elmo Golden (both released from South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility in Florida).

The presentation was titled "Tackling Recidivism," and Mr. Brewer discussed the impact the criminal justice system has on fatherhood and the benefits of the programs provided by the GEO Continuum of Care®. He then turned the stage over to the GEO Continuum of Care® Alumni who discussed their challenges and successes and what it meant to have the support of the GEO Continuum of Care® and GEO Post-Release Services as they transitioned home.

During a reception that followed the conclusion of the conference, each of the GEO Continuum of Care® Alumni participants, as well as GEO Continuum of Care® staff members, Tim O'Boyle and Arthur Townes, had the opportunity to share their stories in a more intimate setting. It was clear from listening to these men share their stories that the impact they made during their 18 minutes on stage was eye-opening for some of the thought leaders in attendance.

It is through opportunities like the TEDxWaterStreet Reimagine Conference that the GEO Continuum of Care® can begin to open more doors for those we serve in a way that was once unimaginable.





## 2Q22 Veteran of the Quarter

# Michelle Cabrera

- **Facility:** Karnes County Family Staging Center
- **Position:** Lieutenant
- **Branch of Military:** U.S. Navy
- **Dates Served:** January 16, 2013 – present
- **Current title:** E-5 / Petty Officer Second Class (MA2)

Since Michelle has been enlisted, she has been awarded with the following:

- Armed Forces Reserve Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- 3-Navy and Marine Corp Achievement Medals
- Navy and Marine Overseas Service Ribbon
- National Defense Service Medal
- Navy Expert Pistol (M9)
- Navy Sharpshooter (M4)
- 2-Good Conduct Medals
- Joint Meritorious Unit Award
- Flag Letter of Commendation for superior performance for duties as Law Enforcement and Security Patrolman while assigned to the Security Division, Camp Lemmonier, Djibouti, Africa from July 2017 to September 2017 by R.L. Williamson, Rear Admiral, United States Navy
- Junior Sailor of the Quarter, Fourth Quarter, Fiscal Year 2017
- Letter of Commendation for Navy Recruiting District San Antonio's "Triple Play Award" for January 2020 by N.P. Gamiz, Commander, U.S. Navy
- Gold Wreath Award for Superior Performance at Navy Recruiting District San Antonio, Texas, November 2019

Petty Officer Michelle Cabrera is a Lieutenant with The GEO Group at the Karnes County Family Staging Center (KCFSC). Michelle joined GEO after returning from a three-year tour as a U.S. Navy Recruiter. She has been able to utilize her training, knowledge, and experience in the Navy towards her job at Karnes County Family Staging Center. She has galvanized her fellow staff on her shift into a cohesive team! Michelle has done this by being a role model of personal integrity, selflessness, and dedication for others to emulate. Her interactions with staff emphasize how each individual contributes to the overall success of the team. These efforts have resulted in forming a solid team which has pride in themselves and the work that they do, while remaining loyal to each other. She is the definition of a Leader!

Congratulations Michelle Cabrera on being nominated for and selected as GEO's Veteran of the 2nd Quarter of 2022. We thank you for your service!



# Sun and Summer Safety

Written By **Johanny Handel, Corporate Human Resources**

Summer is officially here, school is out, and the heat is on. It's the perfect time for self-care! Spending time outdoors is a great way to be active and healthy. The sun boosts Vitamin D and serotonin, a chemical that makes you feel good. When you're out in the sun it's important to think about sun safety. Consider these tips to help protect yourself.

## Heat-related illnesses

Heat-related illnesses occur when the body is overheated and cannot properly cool itself. Heat related illnesses can be life-threatening and can also cause damage to the brain and other vital organs.

Become familiar with these symptoms:

- **Heat Exhaustion:** heavy sweating; cold, pale, clammy skin; fast or weak pulse; nausea or vomiting; muscle cramps; fatigue or weakness; dizziness; headache; and fainting. Seek medical help right away if symptoms worsen or last more than an hour.
- **Dehydration:** Headaches; fatigue; increased thirst; less urine output; and/or dry mouth.
- **Heat Stroke:** High body temperature of 103 degrees fahrenheit or higher; hot, red, dry, or damp skin; fast/strong pulse; headaches; dizziness; nausea; confusion; and losing consciousness. If you experience any of these symptoms call 911 right away! Heat stroke is a medical emergency.

## Drink up!

Staying hydrated is good for your organs, muscles, brain, and joints. It regulates your body temperature, improves your mood levels, and helps you sleep better. Water makes up about 60% of your body. Health and fitness experts say to drink 9 to 13 cups of water a day.

## Check your back seat

NEVER leave children, pets, or the elderly in unattended cars. Always double check your car before leaving. Some navigation apps even have reminder settings that will alert you to check your car upon arrival at a destination.

## Self-Exams

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer. Self-exams can help you identify potential skin cancers early. Use the "ABCDE" method from the American Cancer Society (ACS) to help you remember what to look for:

- A = Asymmetry: the shape of one half does not match the other.
- B = Border that is irregular. Borders of early melanoma can be uneven, notched or scalloped.

- C = Color that is uneven. A variety of colors can be a warning sign.
- D = Diameter is larger than the eraser on a pencil.
- E = Evolving. The mole has changed in size, shape, elevation, or color.

## Sunscreen

Your skin can burn even on a cloudy day. Use a sunscreen with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of at least 30 to block out most of the sun's UV rays. Choose a sunscreen labeled "Broad Spectrum." Remember, sunscreens are not waterproof, only "water resistant," and the ACS recommends reapplication at least every two hours.

## Log in for help this summer

All GEO employees have Telemedicine available to assist with any non-emergency medical issues. No need to wait at the doctor's office this summer! The first step in accessing care is to register yourself for an account:

## Blue Cross Blue Shield

All Blue Cross participants should register in advance to avoid delays should a physician consultation become needed. Separate registration is required for spouse and dependents over age 19.

Teladoc offers Dermatology visits via video phone call (where available) without co-pay until further notice. NOTE: Participants on the High Deductible Plan must satisfy deductible requirements first.

**BCBS Teladoc:** [www.Teladoc.com](http://www.Teladoc.com) or call 800-Teladoc (835-2362).

## Kaiser Permanente

If you are enrolled in a Kaiser medical plan, you can access Kaiser telemedicine. There is no charge for telemedicine visits. To access licensed care, log on to [kp.org/mental\\_health](http://kp.org/mental_health) or call 1-800-900-3277 (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Kaiser Nurseline:** [www.KP.org](http://www.KP.org) or call 800-281-1059.

## Allegiance (Cigna) – Preventive Plus Plan

Employees enrolled in the CIGNA Preventive Plus Plan have access to MDLive, which provides 24-hour physician advice for minor emergencies for a \$15 co-payment.

**Allegiance/Cigna MDLive:** [www.mdlive.com/allegiance](http://www.mdlive.com/allegiance) or call 877-753-7992.

Take precautions to stay safe in the sun this summer and year-round. And most importantly, have fun!

# Celebrating National Correctional Workers Week

## Joe Corley Processing Center

The Joe Corley Processing Center celebrated another annual 'National Correctional Workers' week to recognize and honor the effort and dedication shown by all its employees. Each day of the week had a different activity, from a pizza day to a prize giveaway. Ms. Senae Hall, executive secretary, and her team also took time to make sure that every employee felt appreciated by handing out gift bags and goodies. We are grateful to work with such exceptional people. As they say "Teamwork makes the dream work!"



## LaSalle ICE Processing Center

The LaSalle ICE Processing Center's National Correctional Workers Week 2022 was a great success! During the first week of May, facility leadership showed their appreciation to staff with a number of activities throughout the week. Each day, the facility held multiple raffles, giving away hundreds of prizes and serving food from Kalaches to tacos.

The week kicked off with Facility Administrator Rice meeting with the town Mayor, LaDawn Edwards, for the signing of a proclamation honoring the week. All staff received a customized Picnic Blanket and a bag of scrumptious snacks! The week was a huge morale boost for staff, and they certainly deserved it!





## Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility

The first week of May was National Correctional Officers Week, and at Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (BRCRF), we celebrated our staff by coordinating activities and prize drawings each day of the week. BRCRF has a group of dedicated volunteer employees called the Employee Planning Committee (EPC), which consists of employees from every department. They help plan, execute, and participate in each event. The activities included an executive breakfast, a BBQ Lunch with ice cream from Mr. Softee, burritos from Moe's and pizza. Each staff member also received a Tervis tumbler, featuring a design voted on by staff, in appreciation for their dedication. The EPC was at each shift change throughout the week to ensure each staff member was served fresh food and received their prizes. The staff always look forward to Correctional Workers Week because of the great prizes that are given away. This year, BRCRF gave away over 60 prizes including TVs, video game systems, and baseball tickets. We had so much fun celebrating this week. It is a lot of hard work to execute but worth every minute to show our great appreciation to our Correctional Officers and staff.



## Karnes County Family Staging Center

During the first week of May, 2022, the Karnes County Family Staging Center (KCFSC) organized a week of fun filled events for Staff Appreciation Week.

This year's Staff Appreciation Week was celebrated a little bit different than most. We wanted to recognize staff for their hardwork and commitment to the facility and GEO. The success of our organization would not be possible without our wonderful staff.

There was something planned for the staff every day during that week. The week included door prizes, a pancake breakfast, pulled pork sandwiches for lunch, dress up themed days, and so much more.

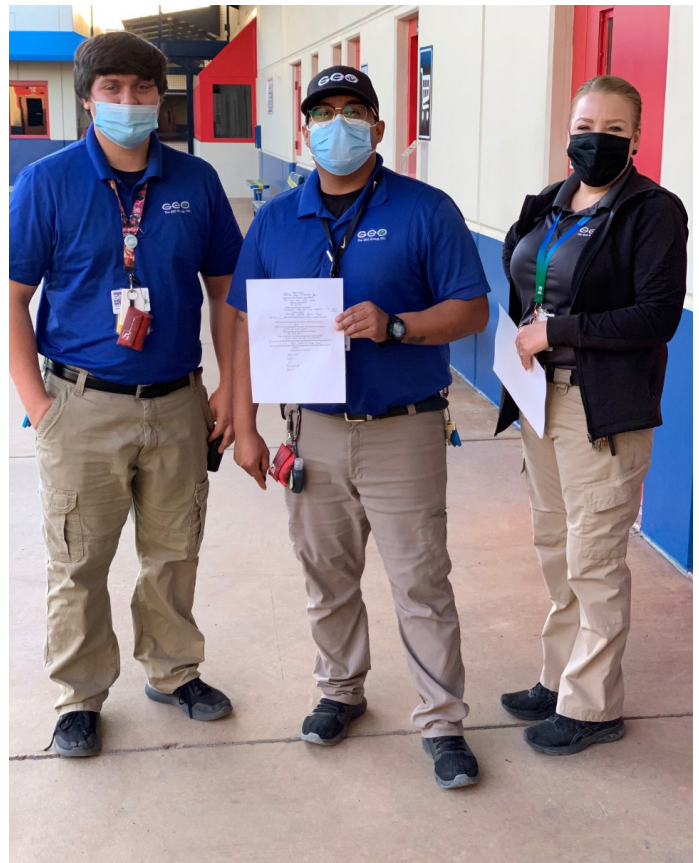
Our team manages to go above and beyond in all the work they do. We truly have the best employees!

# Thinking Outside the Box

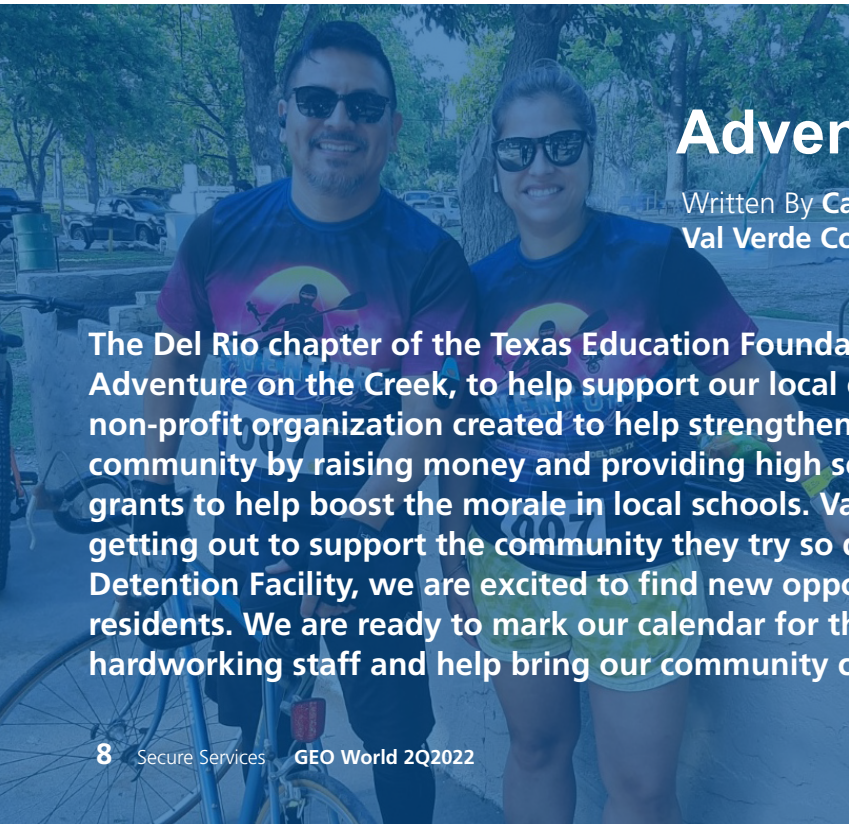
Written By **Kourtney Johnston,**  
**Karnes County Family Staging Center**

Robin Alaniz, Shift Supervisor at Karnes County Family Staging Center (KCFSC) started “Thinking Outside the Box” training because of the large number of new hires we have had. She wanted to make the new hires think about safety and the importance of their role. Robin went into further detail explaining to them that as the security department they are the first responders, which means they respond to other departments during any emergency. Robin organized a scavenger hunt to help new hires remember where safety equipment is at all times.

The new hires were excited and quickly paired up to try and figure out all the answers before anyone else did. At the end of the shift, they would group together and discuss each of the questions in detail. This allowed them to learn at their own pace, to ask questions without feeling embarrassed, and to build themselves up as a team.



Robin's goal was to teach and prepare the staff. She believes knowledge is power, and the more staff know, the better they are as a unit.



# Adventure on the Creek

Written By **Carly Palmer,**  
**Val Verde County Detention Facility**

The Del Rio chapter of the Texas Education Foundation recently sponsored their 2nd Triathlon, Adventure on the Creek, to help support our local community. The Education Foundation is a non-profit organization created to help strengthen and support our small but thriving local community by raising money and providing high school scholarships and innovative teaching grants to help boost the morale in local schools. Val Verde County Detention Facility enjoyed getting out to support the community they try so diligently to serve. At the Val Verde County Detention Facility, we are excited to find new opportunities to engage with our local Del Rio residents. We are ready to mark our calendar for the next adventure that can bring light to our hardworking staff and help bring our community closer together.

## 2022 Arizona High School Scholarships

Written By **Cruzetta Sepulveda, Florence West Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility and Central Arizona Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**

During the month of May 2022, Florence West Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility and Central Arizona Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility provided 21 \$1,000 Scholarships to three High Schools.

- Florence High School received 6 scholarships
- Poston Butte High School received 9 scholarships
- San Tan Valley High School received 6 scholarships

The schools and students are grateful for the donations and for The GEO Group Foundation's support of their educational pursuits.

## GEO Group Foundation's Generosity in Arizona

Written By **Shannon Hilton, Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**

For the past seven years, The GEO Group Foundation has donated \$34,000 each year to college scholarships for students in Mohave County, Arizona, home of the Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (KCRF). That is a total of \$238,000 in scholarship donations!



Scholarship funds are distributed to each High School in the County, along with a donation to Mohave County Community College. Most of the scholarships issued by the schools range from \$500 - \$1,000.

Staff at KCRF have the great privilege of representing GEO during scholarship awards presentations to graduating Seniors at the five High Schools in Mohave County. The Community College targets students from Mohave County who are identified after graduation as needing additional assistance to continue their education.

Recently KCRF and Mohave County Community College officials met to discuss various partnerships they have formed for staff and inmate programs. During the session, some scholarship recipients expressed their deep appreciation for GEO's generosity.

One student commented, "I am so grateful to GEO. I would literally not be able to continue college if I did not receive this scholarship. I want to say thank you to The GEO Group for helping me. With my degree, I will be able to help other people improve their lives."



## Heritage Trail Correctional Facility Celebrates Graduates

Written By **Janet Ploeger, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility**

In April, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility, along with IVY Tech Community College, held a Recognition Ceremony for seventeen individuals who completed their High School Equivalency Test examination. This was the first graduation ceremony since 2019. The ceremony was well attended by staff and other participants. IVY Tech Community College provided snacks and refreshments for all graduates and attendees. The facility will be facilitating another graduation ceremony in late summer.



## Meals on Wheels, Lending a Hand

Written By **Rhonda Darby, Joe Corley Processing Center**

Meals on Wheels is a non-profit organization providing meals and transportation to over 800 seniors in the Montgomery County area. Next year, the local chapter will celebrate their 50th year of operations. Their slogan, "More than a Meal" encompasses all that they do to support and enrich the lives of local seniors. As a non-profit, they rely heavily on a dedicated group of volunteers to help them accomplish their mission.

One such volunteer is Joe Corley Processing Center's own, Mr. Zubian Shamsheer. Mr. Shamsheer began volunteering with Meals on Wheels over two years ago, faithfully delivering Breakfast Bags to seniors on Saturdays. Breakfast Bags provide more than nutrition. Their delivery also serves as a safety check from a friendly face. Recently, Mr. Shamsheer signed up for an additional route delivering Breakfast Bags to even more homebound seniors, and he even recruited his wife and son to help.

The local Meals on Wheels chapter is a relatively small organization, and without the help of kindhearted volunteers like Mr. Shamsheer, their mission would be impossible to fulfill. They are truly appreciative of all that he does for Meals on Wheels, and most importantly, for local seniors.

# South Bay Vocational Participants Impress Glades Business Community During Vocational Week 2022

Written By **Dr. Cheralee Morgan, South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**



The 2022 Vocational Week project at the South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (SBCRF) was conceptualized during one of the many In-Service Teacher training sessions. The project covered four key objectives: to increase awareness among the business community regarding the skills, competencies, and knowledge of South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility's (SBCRF) Vocational graduates; to solicit apprenticeship and furlough opportunities for SBCRF's participants; to forge partnerships with the government and business sectors regarding training and employment opportunities for SBCRF's graduates; and to emphasize South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility's commitment to the industry's workforce development efforts. SBCRF's vocational teachers and students embraced the project with a high degree of zest and excitement, and very soon the project morphed into an intense, but friendly, competition between the vocational students and teachers.

In May 2022, SBCRF's Visitor Park was transformed into an amazing array of carpentry masterpieces, all of which demonstrated the capabilities, competencies, employability skills, and career readiness of the students.

The attendees were drawn from all sectors, representing government, business, academia, and civil society. Some of the notable attendees included: Mayor, Joe Kyles and Vice Mayor, Mrs. Betty Bernard of the City of South Bay; Mayor, Steve Wilson of the City of Belle Glade; Mrs. Erica Whitfield, Superintendent of the School District of Palm Beach County; Professor Marshal DeRosa; and Dr. Mellonni Smith of South University. The guest speaker was Mrs. Angela Geisinger, GEO's Senior, Director of Programs.

The Mayor of South Bay presented Mrs. Lori Sink, Facility Administrator; Dr. Morgan, Programs Director; and the Carpentry class with awards for distinguished service and partnership with the City of South Bay. The community stakeholders had very high praise and commendation for the quality of the exhibits and the talents, skills set, and knowledge displayed by the students. Florida Crystals' representatives indicated an interest in having the Culinary Arts students cater their functions, and dialogue is already in progress with Prince Development Group regarding hiring our Welding graduates. Vocational Week 2022 bedazzled and enthralled, and our objectives were met. SBCRF's partnership with the business community is relationally and structurally positioned for a number of collaborations geared towards increasing rehabilitation and decreasing recidivism.



## Baptism at the Eagle Pass Detention Facility

Written By **Chaplain Jay Lentz, Eagle Pass Detention Facility**



While teaching a bible study last month, a young man approached me and asked if he could be baptized. It took a lot of effort from the Eagle Pass Detention Facility employees, but working together, we held a successful baptism. It was a beautiful day for the baptism and eighty men and women followed the Lord when he said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...and teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you...and, I am with you always, till the end of the world." [Mat 28:19-20 KJV] This was a memorable day for the facility and myself. As the Chaplain of the Eagle Pass Detention Facility, I hope to continue to perform baptisms and encourage those who seek to declare their newfound faith.

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## Kingman Staff Member Receives Prestigious Community Award

Written By **Shannon Hilton, Kingman Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**

Tom Jonseck serves as Shift Commander supervising security operations at the Huachuca Unit at Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (KCRF). When off duty, Lieutenant Jonseck serves Lee Williams High School as Head Coach of the wrestling team. In May of 2022, Lt. Jonseck was named Coach of the Year at Lee Williams!



A former High School State Wrestling Champion on a State Championship team in Michigan, Lt. Jonseck has served as Coach at Lee Williams the past seven years, including the last 4 years as Head Coach. During Lt. Jonseck's tenure as Coach, Lee Williams has produced three State Champions. This year, Senior, Payton Wayman won the State Championship for the second consecutive year.

Other achievements for Coach Jonseck and Lee Williams High School during his tenure as Coach include 11 athletes who placed in State competition and 23 athletes who qualified for State competition. Lee Williams has also won the Colorado River High School Championship five years in a row! This year, Coach Jonseck helped start the first full season of girls wrestling at Lee Williams.

Aside from coaching wrestlers to perform at their highest level possible, Lt. Jonseck also takes the opportunity to recruit his athletes for jobs at KCRF. Five former athletes who wrestled for Coach Jonseck were hired on as correctional officers after graduation from high school.



## Coming to America!

Written By **Daniela Moise, Montgomery Processing Center**

Hello, my name is Daniela Moise, and I am from the beautiful country of Romania. I have been living in the United States together with my family for almost seven years now. I came here because of my husband's job transfer and, to be honest, I always considered myself too old for this journey. We have two children who were 8 and 13 years old when we came here. It was amazing how fast they adapted, and I barely kept up with them. This challenge that I jumped into with my family was the best one out of all the other challenges I have ever faced!

Everything was so new to me. I was so scared. I didn't know anyone, and I barely spoke the language. But I had to get used to it and adapt to whatever obstacles I faced.

I was accepted to work for GEO 4 years ago as a bookkeeper at the Montgomery Processing Center. About one year ago (after five years on a green card), I was eligible to apply for naturalization. Then this year, at the end of March, I was called for the interview, was accepted, and recommended to become a U.S. citizen. Two weeks later, I had the citizenship oath ceremony, and I became a U.S. citizen on April 16, 2022.

Coming here changed my whole life. I was lucky enough to succeed in everything I set out to do. But the key is, of course, to comply with the rules, to pay your taxes, and to prove in any situation that you can be a better citizen, a better neighbor, and a good friend whenever needed.

Our next step is to register to vote, because we need to dream big!



## Karnes County Detention Facility Sponsors 91st Annual Chamber Banquet

Written By **Brittany Morales**,  
Karnes County Detention Facility

The Karnes County Detention Facility was honored to be one of the sponsors for the 91st Annual Karnes City Chamber of Commerce Banquet. Staff connected with county elected officials, local business owners, and community members.

# Top Prize Awards

Written By **Brittany Morales**, Karnes County Detention Facility



The Karnes County Detention Facility (KCDF) was proud to recently donate two bikes to the Big Fish Bay Vacation Bible School (VBS) Camp. The VBS Coordinator said, "I can't wait to see the excitement on each child's face knowing the possibility that it could become one of theirs. We would like to thank GEO for their generosity." KCDF was very proud to support such a cause.

## Heritage Trail Correctional Facility Inmates Complete the Computerized Numerical Control Program

Written By **Janet Ploeger**, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility

Six inmates at the Heritage Trail Correctional Facility recently earned their certificates of completion for the Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) program at the Gene Haas Training and Education Center in Lebanon, Indiana. The program teaches participants the following skill set:

- Practice reading blueprints and precision measurements, and experience using Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing (GD&T) to direct tool paths.
- Proficiency in Computer-Aided-Design (CAD) and Computer-Aided-Manufacturing (CAM) software programs focused on geometry for milling parts.
- Preparation to qualify for credentials from the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS), in the areas of Measurement, Materials and Safety, Job Planning, Benchwork and Layout, CNC Milling and CNC Turning.

The program began in 2017 and has assisted numerous individuals with obtaining employment in the field after their release. The program began as a partnership with the Indiana Department of Correction and Vincennes University, in which the Heritage Trail Correctional Facility has continuously participated in since its inception.







## Law Enforcement and Emergency Response Appreciation Week

Written By **Brittany Morales, Karnes County Detention Facility**

The Karnes County Detention Facility (KCDF) is very proud to have a close relationship with local law enforcement. In honor of Law Enforcement and EMS Appreciation Week. KCDF donated energy snacks and GEO goodies to the Karnes County Sheriff's Office, Karnes City Police Department and the Karnes County EMS.



## Heritage Trail Correctional Facility Veterans Assistance

Written By **Janet Ploeger, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility**

In May of 2022, veteran inmates at the Heritage Trail Correctional Facility (HTCF) received assistance from Mr. Scott Seibert with the Community Outreach Division of Veteran Health Indiana. Mr. Seibert provided informational handouts regarding compensation claims, housing after release, suicide hotlines and other pertinent resources that will be beneficial for the inmates upon release. HTCF had twenty-seven veterans attend the presentation. Mr. Seibert will be coming back in another couple months to follow up on any needs that our veterans may need.

## Riverbend Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility Receives ACA Re-accreditation

Written By **Angela Reaves, Riverbend Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility**



Riverbend Correctional & Rehabilitation Facility (RCRF) recently achieved their American Correctional Association (ACA) re-accreditation under the 5th Edition Standards. The audit was very successful with 100% compliance with all mandatory standards and a 99.7% compliance rating on non-mandatory standards. RCRF is extremely proud of the professionalism, knowledge, and dedication staff illustrated during the audit. The hard work staff put in to preparing for this audit did not go unnoticed and was definitely reflected by its success. This accreditation demonstrates the amazing work being done at this facility.



## Karnes County Easter Egg Hunt

Written By **Brittany Morales**, Karnes County Detention Facility

The Karnes County Detention Facility teamed up with the Karnes County Sheriff's Office, the Karnes City Justice of the Peace Office, and the Karnes City Chamber of Commerce to bring Easter Joy to the youth in the county. With safety as a top priority, all entities contributed in every way needed to pass out over 12,000 stuffed eggs through out the local park and assured each child had a safe environment to hunt. During the hunt, children were visited by Easter bunnies and door prizes were given out throughout the event.

## Saints Prison Ministry Visits Heritage Trail

Written By **Janet Ploeger**, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility

In June of 2022, the Saints Prison Ministry softball team visited Heritage Trail Correctional Facility (HTCF) in Plainfield, Indiana. The team played competitive softball with two other teams from HTCF and spent time in group and individual prayer. Despite losing to the Yellow Jackets, the HTCF team was inspired and thankful for the chance to participate in this event. Thank you to the GEO Continuum of Care® Division for coordinating the event.



# LaSalle ICE Processing Center Building Relationships in the Community

Written By **Craig Franklin, LaSalle ICE Processing Center**

The LaSalle ICE Processing Center (LIPC) recently hosted a quarterly Community Relations Board Meeting in Jena, Louisiana. Leadership at the LaSalle ICE Processing Center continues to strengthen long lasting relationships with the community.

Due to an unexpected deployment to another facility, Facility Administrator, Shad Rice was unable to attend, however, Assistant Facility Administrator, Lisa Bowen flawlessly navigated the meeting. "We are so thankful to be able to once again host our Community Relations Board Meetings," Bowen said. "Because of the pandemic, we've not been able to have these regularly for a couple of years. It's nice to be with everyone in one room once again." Participants who attended the event at the Strand Theater in Jena were treated to a meal and informally visited with one another while sharing various

accomplishments, activities, and projects that GEO has participated in or sponsored.

"The pandemic has had a severe strain on our abilities the past two and a half years but I know that now more than ever all of us want to move on," Bowen stated. "I know I speak for our LaSalle ICE Processing Center family when I say we want to be more and more involved with community projects and development in areas that we can assist."

Bowen pointed out that it was at a similar meeting many years ago that the idea of conducting a LaSalle Parish Scholars Reception was presented, and since that time, the reception has become one of the Parish's premiere events that recognizes the accomplishments of LaSalle Parish graduate students.

Along with giving updates about the LIPC and introducing



new employees, Bowen also spoke of the many ways they are currently involved with community endeavors, including donations for the Strand Theater, the annual scholars' banquet, and other projects such as providing Christmas gifts for LaSalle Head Start. "We are always open to new ideas on how we can assist with projects in the community, so if at any time, someone has an idea, please give us a call and let us know," she said.

Community leaders attending the luncheon thanked GEO for conducting the quarterly meeting and for all they continue to do for the betterment of LaSalle Parish.





## Montgomery Processing Center Brings May Flowers

Written By **Donna Blanton, Montgomery Processing Center**



The old saying, “April Showers bring May Flowers” has never been truer for the Montgomery Processing Center (MPC). May was a busy and exciting month for us!

We kicked the month off by celebrating National Correctional Officers and Workers Week. MPC honored our officers and staff with food, games, prizes, and ended the week with an on-site food truck. We are very proud of our MPC staff. They continually display commitment, dedication, and loyalty. Their hard work is always on display and is deeply appreciated by all who work and visit here.



In May, MPC also hosted a joint Supervisor Training Class with our neighboring facility, Joe Corley Processing Center. Training Administrators, Mary Kawar (MPC) and Merthia Glaze (Joe Corley Processing Center) planned, organized, and taught the week-long event that focused on the importance of soft skills needed to develop a variety of leadership styles.

MPC hosted a quarterly blood drive on May 10th. Fourteen donors from MPC, Joe Corley, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) all joined in to donate to the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center. This brings the year-to-date total donations to thirty-three units.

MPC also provided twelve scholarships to Conroe and Willis ISD graduating high school seniors. Several of the selected recipients have plans to study criminal justice and other law enforcement fields.

MPC ended the month with a lunch benefit to help a fellow officer as she battles a serious illness. MPC team members donated all the items needed to sell grilled burger and chili dog plates to MPC, ICE, IHSC, and Joe Corley Processing Center staff. A big thank you goes out to our Maintenance staff (J. Ellis, J. Batista, R. Talley) for setting up the pit area; our Kitchen staff (M. Kinsel, M. Heath) who prepped the food; to Admin (A. Sams, D. Moise, D. Henry, D. Eaton, S. Jarvis), HR (L. Washington, C. Shamsher), Program (A. Glaze, W. Martin), and Security (X. Hicks) who worked the serving line and delivered orders to line staff; and to Warden Tate and Matt Hallford for manning the pit all day. And finally, thank you to all who purchased a plate and made donations. GEO came through in a big way to honor and provide tangible support to one of our own!

# A Little Help Goes A Long Way!

Written By **Tasha Gray,**  
**Broward Transitional Center**

Thanks to contributions from all departments, Broward Transitional Center (BTC) successfully closed out its first Annual Easter Bag/Basket Drive for Tedder Elementary School, a local school the facility has newly partnered with. BTC came together as a team and provided Easter Baskets for over 300 students in grades kindergarten through third grade. Staff members went above and beyond in providing toys, candy, games, baskets, eggs, and coloring books to create 342 custom age appropriate bags.



Staff from each department filled large boxes placed in the facility's lobby, Administration building, Transportation Department and Contractor's breakroom. With so many items, a designated area was appointed for storage and assembly and every box was dumped and refilled at least once. Twelve additional baskets were handcrafted by Officer Jackie Sunkins to be awarded to students chosen by the school, to highlight special achievements. Vice Principal James Frye Jr. was there to meet the entourage of staff and receive the bags to be presented to his students. He was more than surprised to receive the twelve baskets designed by Sunkins as a bonus to students of the school's choosing.



A special thank you to Facility Administrator Cynthia Lawson-Swain for her support and giving the approval to assist our neighboring public school; Transportation Manager Anthony Resto and Sergeant Bruce Hale for loading and transporting the baskets to the school; Business Manager Alex Duarte for purchasing supplies and making sure this event was a success; Officer Jackie Sunkins for assisting in collecting donations and preparing the Easter Baskets; and Officers Sammiletta Prater and Tasha Gray, and PREA Investigator Melita Wilson, for coordinating such a special event for the children in our community. This was a beautifully executed vision that was only achieved because of BTC's team spirit and commitment.





## Restored Bench Seat Features in Hospital Garden

Written By **Lyndell Coutts, Fulham Correctional Centre**

The restoration of an old timber bench seat has given men at Fulham Correctional Centre the opportunity to utilise their woodwork and construction skills while working on a wonderful community project.

The bench seat was fully repaired and renovated by men working in the centre's Industry Learning Centre. In May, it was proudly donated to the Sale Hospital Oncology Ward for its Reflection Garden.

General Manager Natalie Greenfield said the project was the result of a partnership with The Ninety Milers community organization, who have been fundraising to renovate the garden.

"We had an old bench stored off-site and realised this was a great opportunity for some of the men to apply the skills they attained in their Cert II Construction course to restore it back to its former glory," Ms. Greenfield said.

The men also had to apply project management skills as part of their work and have taken great pride in being able to create something meaningful for patients at the local hospital.

Being able to provide vocational skills training to the men in our custody is an integral part of their rehabilitation and post-release reintegration into the community.

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# New Role to Focus on Staff Wellbeing

Written By **Lyndell Coutts,**  
**Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Ravenhall Correctional Centre is leading the way in enhancing and prioritising its focus on staff mental health and wellbeing and has appointed GEO's first Staff Wellbeing Coordinator, Grace Kithikii, to maintain and build upon current initiatives.

The Centre's Human Resources Manager, Natalie Hansen, said its REACH peer support program, Ravenhall Employee Assistance Confidential Help, and Mental Health Matters committees were established in 2019 and 2021, respectively.

These initiatives provide guidance, support, resources, and a confidence boost to individuals who are experiencing challenges, either work-related or personally. However, we were keen to do more in light of the ever-changing landscape of our community, particularly with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the challenges of our work environment.

In March, Grace Kithikii joined GEO as Ravenhall Correctional Centre's new Staff Wellbeing Coordinator. Her role will focus on supporting the continued development of a positive workplace culture and the growth, development, and wellbeing of our staff.

## ***Reflections from Grace***

"I recall my first day in a new role and an unfamiliar setting, wondering if I had made the right decision given the colourful depiction prisons are given in the media. I, admittedly, was pleasantly surprised to be greeted with an environment that teleported me back to my campus days."

"Traffic to get through COVID-19 screening was so organised and calm despite it being peak time, and my misconstrued view of how inmates run (manic) was quickly nullified. I was at peace with my decision."



Staff can call on Grace when they need help with activities such as welfare checks, exit interviews, initiatives to support staff wellbeing, or just as a sounding board.



## Delaney Hall Celebrates Mother's Day

Written By **Kristin SanFilippo, Delaney Hall**

In May, Delaney Hall hosted a Mother's Day celebration for its female residents. The event was organized by newly promoted Recreation Specialist, Lamar Dutton, and facilitated with the assistance of various staff members. The recreational group rooms were decorated with balloons and signs. Tables were covered with pink tablecloths and centerpieces were crafted utilizing artificial flowers. Residents first participated in a 'paint & sip' event; each resident was provided with multiple canvases featuring nature scenes and given the opportunity to bring them to life. The residents then enjoyed a soul food luncheon, complete with tres leches cake for dessert, and ended the afternoon with a dance party. As Henry Ford once stated, "coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is a success." Recreation Specialist Dutton put together this Mother's Day program in the hopes of facilitating an opportunity for Delaney Hall's female residents to come together to celebrate, but his ongoing mission is to encourage them to stay together and ultimately work together in order to achieve their common goals.



# Spring Event at Long Beach Community Reentry Center

Written By **Tisha McAfee,**  
**Long Beach Community Reentry Center**

In April of 2022, the male community reentry program (MCRP) at the Long Beach Community Reentry Center (LBCRC) held their annual Spring Event for participants and their families. The facility decorated the back yard with Spring and Easter decorations. The Easter Bunny came to greet all in attendance and take photos with families, bringing joy to the faces of the children and their parents and creating lasting holiday memories. GEO Reentry Family Services donated the treats and baskets for the children in attendance. Each received one easter basket and plenty of candy.

Participants helped set-up and were excited to see their families. Families engaged in games, egg coloring, family bonding, and an Easter egg hunt. Children searched around the back yard to fill their baskets with prize filled eggs. Eggs were filled with candies, toys, and three golden tickets. Three children won the golden tickets, and the number one prize was an Amazon Fire tablet. Children were excited as they ran around the yard with joy, searching for eggs. Most of all, the children and their fathers were grateful for the opportunity to celebrate Easter with each other.





## ISAP's Earth Day Cleanup

Written By **Amber McMahon, ISAP Southeast Region**

ISAP's environmental efforts over the last few years are certainly remarkable. The program is nearly paperless, with innovation in our systems that enables us to complete and maintain most documents electronically. The program has also significantly reduced carbon emissions by developing advancements that provide technology-driven alternatives to in-person contacts with program participants.

We were proud to further our commitment to the environment by conducting cleanup activities at several locations on April 22, 2022, nationally recognized as Earth Day. Seven offices and nearly 50 employees participated in the cleanup events. The teams collected trash around their offices, at local parks, and nearby Florida beaches.

Our staff truly enjoyed getting outside and helping clean up the environment in honor of Earth Day. Ben Angeles, Administrative Assistant from Atlanta ISAP, rallied his team to participate and commented, "clean air gives us the best quality of life." Likewise, Miami ISAP's Program Manager, Leslie Camacho, remarked on the Earth Day efforts, "Today is the Earth's day, so we make a way to bring her joy and give her love."

The ISAP locations that participated in this year's cleanup activities overwhelmingly commented on how gratified the staff were to get out and do something so positive for the environment. Our team is excited to expand this activity across all ISAP locations next year and continue recognizing Earth Day annually.



## Community Service at Scranton

Written By **Gardnia Simeon, Scranton RRC**

Scranton Residential Reentry Center (RRC) residents continue to assist the community through community service activities. In June, residents volunteered for to the Blue-Chip Animal Refuge in Dallas, Pennsylvania. The residents enjoyed providing assistance and engaging with the animals.



# Nashville DRC Bucks Incentive Program

Written By **Adrienne Corlew, Nashville DRC**

The Nashville DRC created an innovative program in collaboration with our customer, the Tennessee Department of Corrections. This program is designed to aid in creating a system to produce measurable degrees of separation from program resistance to the evolution of active participation and program compliance.

The DRC Bucks program incentivizes behaviors and pro-social actions that benefit the participants as they engage in activities and programming during the various phases of the reentry program. Participants earn DRC bucks and are then able to spend those "bucks" to purchase prizes from a store, which includes items that range from children's toys to wireless headphones.

The DRC Bucks program has provided measurable outcomes in the following areas:

- Productivity in reaching their incentive prize goals.
- Higher class morale. Participants enjoy being rewarded and encouraged for doing their best.
- Friendlier office teamwork, as many incentives encourage cooperation and collaboration.



# Mental Health Awareness Ride

Written By **Arthur Townes, New Jersey Alumni Services**



Several alumni members during the pandemic turned to cycling as a healthy way to get out of quarantine. Now more than two years later, alumni members Fred Austin, Benjamin Smith, Stephen Rainey, Arthur Townes, and other alumni still ride with the Trendsetters Bike Crew. In May of 2022, they joined another local cycling group for a 20-mile ride to bring awareness to mental health. The members of the Trendsetters set out to uplift and empower the community.

Stephen Rainey, an active member in his church and alumni since his release, says that "it's important for us to show society another side, instead of the often negative narrative, while improving our own physical and mental health." Benjamin Smith adds "that a lot of our brothers transitioning out suffer from mental illness. Hopefully our presence allows for them to contemplate seeking assistance." The ride was hosted by the Bike 4 Life cycling club. The ride started with information being shared on ridding yourself of the stigma of mental health and several community riders speaking about mental illness and how it affects their personal lives. Arthur Townes said, "I dusted my old bike off in April of 2020 and haven't gotten off yet. It has helped me deal with the stressors of the pandemic, as well as stay fit."



## Alumni/GEO Staff Participate in Walks For MS

Written By **Arthur Townes, New Jersey Alumni Services**

On April 24, 2022, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society hosted Walk MS: West Orange at Clipper Pavilion, where an estimated 800 people showed up, and raised more than \$170,000 to go towards finding a cure. This was the first time since the pandemic that Walk MS was in-person.

The walk presents a unique opportunity for friends, loved ones, and co-workers to gather and fundraise, connect, and advocate for people affected by multiple sclerosis. Arthur Townes, Alumni Manager, is one those family members, as his wife has been battling the disease since 2014. Arthur organized Team "Bowen-Townes" and several New Jersey alumni members and GEO staff proudly and gladly joined him for the one-and-half-to-three-mile walk.

The day was filled with optimism for a cure, as the energy was vibrant and filled with music, food, and games for kids. Jason Zimmerman, a Delaney Hall alumni and former Recovery Services Coordinator for GEO, says he and his wife were ecstatic to have participated and plan to rejoin the team next year.

As Mrs. Townes, escorted by her son, approached the orange arch marking the completion of the 1.5-mile lap, she was greeted by a cheering crowd and faithful supporters. Alumni member,

Altatrice Frazier said, "a feeling of love and support came over me. She is like a sister to me and this shows how our alumni family really supports one another through life, and for life." Mr. Frazier, who has been an alumni member out of Talbot and Tully Halls for sixteen years now, has his own nonprofit, Parents Engaging Parents.

Arthur Townes says, "it's something I can't explain. You must experience it for yourself. You'll finish the walk empowered and inspired to keep moving toward a world free of MS. This is great to have some of my brothers here supporting."

Fredrick Austin, a Bo Robinson alumni of 1998 and former Supervisor at Delaney Hall and Logan Hall, states, "that's my family, we are family. Arthur is in my upcoming wedding and I was his best man at his; of course, I'm supporting my sister."

All participating alumni members had similar sentiments, stating that the GEO facility they were in focused on getting away from self-centered behaviors and caring and empathizing with another's struggle as successful tools to positive reentry. This was fully on display this Sunday morning in April.



## Male Community Reentry Program Hosts Fellowship Event

Written By **Tisha McAfee, Long Beach Community Reentry Center**

Recently, three Male Community Reentry Program (MCRP) sites in the Los Angeles California area gathered for a fellowship game of basketball. All three LA-MCRP sites participated in a 5-on-5 inaugural basketball tournament in the city of Carson. The event was focused on helping participants address criminogenic risk factors while establishing positive self-image, learning positive competitive skills and teamwork, and building camaraderie among the participants.

The event started in a large circle where each participant stated their name and what their future goals are after completion of the MCRP program. Participants and staff also shared some incredible motivational words. Throughout the event coaches, players and fans exhibited sportsmanship while cheering on all teams. The event was not open to the public; however, it was live streamed so that families could watch their loved ones compete.

The excitement displayed on the live stream was awe-inspiring. Winners of the tournament received a large trophy to proudly display at their respective reentry site. The Long Beach Community Reentry Center took home the gold. The GEO Team went 2-0, with wins against The Amity Foundation and Health Right 360. Participants played their hearts out and learned prosocial ways to compete.

It was evident by the smiles, sportsmanship, positive competitive spirits, and camaraderie across the teams, that everyone enjoyed the inaugural event. Each participant was served lunch, and then we had a reward ceremony for each team. Each team also received one Top Performer medal. The Long Beach Community Reentry Center team took home a trophy for bragging rights, and GEO participant Carnell Smith was named MVP. Events like these encourage, motivate, and reinforce participants to embrace and enjoy their positive path of rehabilitation.



## Community Alternatives of El Paso County Business Manager Mike Schwamberger Promoted to Colonel in the Army Reserves

Written By **Sharon Ross, Community Alternatives of El Paso County**

Mike Schwamberger started his military career with the U.S. Navy in May, 1989. After graduating boot camp, he went to schooling in Pensacola, Florida and received an assignment with Commander 7th Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan.

From there, the fleet was moved to the Middle East as part of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, returning home in April 1991. From the high seas to the high plains, his next assignment was with U.S. Space Command in Colorado Springs.

Discovering he liked mountains better than oceans, Mike was offered and took advantage of a two-year ROTC scholarship with the condition he transfer from the Navy to the Army. In 1996, he was commissioned in the Colorado Army National Guard as a Field Artillery Officer.

After joining the Colorado National Guard, he served in Afghanistan as an embedded trainer for Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2009, he was promoted to Major and switched to the U.S. Army Reserves as a Logistics Officer.

The Reserves offered opportunities like serving at Fort Bliss, training and supporting military from all branches deploying or returning from Iraq/Afghanistan/Guantanamo Bay/and Horn of Africa.

His next duty station was as a Battalion Commander in California for the 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. This was the largest battalion west of the Mississippi and responsible for providing ammunition, fuel, water, and transportation for over 800 troops on an as-needed basis.

Mike's perseverance and dedication to the military led to the fulfillment of his goal of attaining the rank of Colonel before he retired. On March 23, 2022, he was notified of his promotion and the ceremony was held on May 19, 2022. Colonel Schwamberger is currently serving as the Support Operations Officer for the 451st Expeditionary Sustainment Command in Wichita, Kansas. Less than 2% of all officers who are commissioned are promoted to this rank.

When asked about his service time and employment with The GEO Group, he said, "I have a strong love for our great nation and providing the volunteer force with my service to enable everyone to live free and enjoy the lifestyle enabled by our Constitution. After 33 years of service, I have experienced both personal and professional growth that has enabled me to be successful in both my military and civilian careers. I had the opportunity to travel the world and help others in lands that don't have the opportunity to experience the freedom that we take for granted."

"I have seen how people are treated in other countries for committing crimes. They do not always have the opportunity of being reformed and definitely are not given any kind of treatment to better themselves. Working at GEO has given me an opportunity to see the progression of those who have made wrong choices and still have an opportunity to work through them to build a better life. The dignified and respectful approach that is taken by GEO towards our residents should be commended. I am proud to be part of the team at Community Alternatives of El Paso County, where I serve as the Business Manager."

# Perth Amboy Community Resource Center Achieves 100% Program Completion Rate

Written By **Peter Conerly**, Perth Amboy Community Resource Center



The New Jersey Perth Amboy Community Resource Center (CRC) is off to a great start this year. The CRC has achieved a 100% program completion rate for the first quarter of 2022. All nineteen participants successfully completed their program requirements. This follows a very successful 2021, in which the CRC achieved an 86% program completion rate, with 64 out of 74 participants completing the program.

Pete Conerly, Program Manager, noted that this auspicious start is due primarily to the efforts of the program staff who interact well and genuinely engage with the participants. "This is a team effort with Case Managers working together and with guidance from the Supervising Case Manager," said Conerly.

Staff regularly confer with colleagues and the Parole Liaison Officer to address and resolve issues before they adversely affect a participant's progress in the program.

The CRC also eliminated the required 30-day blackout employment period. This has encouraged more individuals to participate in the program.

Furthermore, Conerly believes the current contract provisions permit services that are more tailored to an individual's needs and allow flexibility with the scheduling of client services.

"Moving forward in 2022, the New Jersey CRCs will implement a more client-focused orientation phase, which we anticipate will positively impact future participant outcomes," added Conerly.

# First Annual Father/Child Dance

Written By **Tisha McAfee, Long Beach Community Reentry Center**

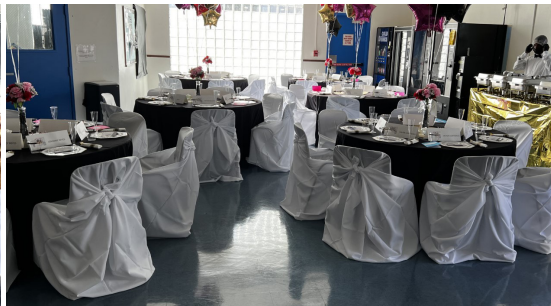
The Male Community Reentry Program at the Long Beach Community Reentry Center recently hosted a Father/Child Dance. This event was one of many family reunification events to reconnect father and child. Approximately fifteen children, between the ages of 5 to 17 attended the event. Fathers greeted their children with a rose boutonniere or hand corsage and escorted them down the red carpet to their assigned seat in the reception area. The formal reception featured a three-course dinner, memory books, entertainment provided by a DJ, and a special father/child dance.

Each father read a heartfelt, personalized letter to their children and presented them with a keepsake necklace. The message on the heart shaped pendent read, "To my daughter, I can't promise to be here for the rest of your life, but I can promise to love and support you the rest of mine. Love, Dad." The dog tag pendant read, "To my son, I might not be with you, but know that I believe in you. You were and always will be the best thing that ever happened to me. Love, Dad."

The reception ended with each family memorializing the event by creating and decorating a scrapbook, which included a family picture and a copy of the letter written to their children.

Several participants were selected to assist with setup and table service at the event. Lead server Tim Hagler said, "It was such an honor to be allowed the opportunity to be part of such a special event. Dressing up and trying my best to provide the best service was my top priority. All in all, it was a beautiful experience to see the joy on the kids' faces when they got to spend quality time with their dads."

The event was a positive experience for everyone involved and created a space where young children and their fathers were able to focus on the importance of a healthy, strong family relationships.







**Left to right – Stephanie Melgar and Victor Melgar**

“I know I speak for all the fathers here at the MCRP when I say that the Father/Child Dance here in Long Beach was a great experience! For me, this was my first of many dances to come with my daughter. These types of events at MCRP have given me a greater bond with my daughter and family. Thank you, GEO, and on a more personal level, I want to thank Director McAfee and the staff here at Long Beach for putting the event together for us.” -Victor Melgar



**Left to right – Jovanny Reyes and Haley Reyes**

“This year, I was fortunate to come to MCRP. In the last two months that I have been in this program I have gotten to know my daughter, Haley, and I got to experience the Father/Child Dance. That day was the most nerve wrecking experience for me, but the moment I walked in to see my daughter I felt at ease. To see her face light up as we walked into the decorated visiting room and seeing her face as I put on her corsage was remarkable. Everything about the event was perfect. My daughter has not stopped talking about it and wants to know when the next dance is. This is so vital in my rehabilitation, and I am grateful.” -Jovanny Reyes



**Left to right – Joseph Bunkley and Jaaliyah Vinson**

“This dance definitely helped me solidify a tighter bond with my daughter by engaging in hands-on activities such as, creating a memory book with her, taking pictures, dancing with her, which all led to the most important part of the night, standing before her communicating how proud I am and how much I love her, which made her feel special.” -Joseph Bunkley



**Left to right – Jordan Love and John Love**

“My most memorable moment of the dance was when the Director allowed me to teach my son how to fold and put on his first tie. I will never forget the look of pride on his face when he walked into the multi-purpose room feeling like a young man.” -John Love

# Grossman Center Employee Appreciation Week

Written By **Tammy Stout, Grossman Center**



Employee Appreciation Week at the Grossman Center was celebrated from May 9th to May 13th. Most staff got involved and participated in the week full of events. We started the week off by providing biscuits and gravy on Monday. On Tuesday, staff were treated with Chick-Fil sandwiches. On Wednesday, we had an ice cream social with all the toppings for sundaes. On Thursday, all staff were in attendance for the monthly staff meeting/training where breakfast to order was a big hit. Staff were served omelets, pancakes, hash browns, sausage and fruit. After the meeting, employees received a 12-pack of pop or water and their favorite pie or cookies. To finish off the week, on Friday, we had donuts and all staff were approved to wear jeans and their favorite baseball shirt. To be able to dress down for a day was the best part of the week.



A few months before May, Brian Baker, Sunshine Wiggins, and Tammy Stout started brainstorming ideas to prepare for Appreciation Week. We then coordinated with Director Zych to schedule a week of events for the staff. We want staff to know they are very much appreciated and their hardwork does not go unnoticed. The Grossman Center has 30 staff members, small enough that we can get to know each other and be more like family than just co-workers. Employees just seem to come together when they are needed, whether we are preparing for an audit, have a last-minute call in and need a shift covered, or are having troubling times. With a new Wellness Policy in place, we have gotten to know more about each other and how to help one another get through troubling times. Out of the 30 staff employed at Grossman, 23 have been here longer than a year.



# Grossman Center Employee of the Quarter, Sunshine Wiggins



Sunshine Wiggins has been chosen as the Grossman Center's Employee of the Quarter. Sunshine was hired in August of 2014 as a full-time security monitor. After a few months, she was assigned to teach a drug and alcohol class part-time, while also learning American Correctional Association (ACA) standards.

In 2015, she was promoted to Job Developer, assisting the residents with finding employment, and helping them to get their state identifications or driver's licenses. In 2018, Sunshine was promoted yet again, to Accounting Tech, where she was responsible for billing, ordering supplies, and consolidating purchase cards. While this position is very demanding, Sunshine is also the ACA coordinator for the facility.

Sunshine has volunteered to do mock audits to help other facilities. This year, Sunshine will be going to Texas for her first audit in another facility.

Born and raised in Kansas City, in 2015, Sunshine moved to Leavenworth so she could raise her kids in a smaller town. Sunshine has four kids and a family dog. She enjoys swimming, taking walks in the park, writing poetry, and being with family. Sunshine very much enjoys helping people. She is familiar with several organizations in the community that she reaches out to for assistance to help with resident needs. One of Sunshine's goals is to see the ocean; she has never gotten the chance to travel far, but she has that on her bucket list for the near future.

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