DIGITAL SOLUTIONS
Pilot program aims to modernize Correctional Staff Training Academy.

FISCAL DEVELOPMENTS
The NJDOC identifies opportunities for increased operational efficiency.

CORRECTIONS CONFERENCE
Acting Commissioner Hicks meets with county jail wardens to discuss correctional trends.

PICTURE THIS
The NJDOC honors volunteers with Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony.

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Cover photo: Albert C. Wagner Youth Correctional Facility
INSIDE WORD
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At the NJDOC, we have the enormous responsibility of keeping the public safe and ensuring the safety of those in our care. This task is possible thanks to the support of the volunteers who selflessly give their time to assist in rehabilitating offenders. Volunteers educate, counsel, offer spiritual guidance and share their experiences and their kindness.

We are grateful for the hundreds of volunteers that support our efforts across 13 facilities. Their service makes a profound difference in the lives of the incarcerated, changing lives, changing perceptions, giving hope and laying the groundwork for the way forward.

The energy, commitment and care our volunteers bring is not only inspirational and impactful, it’s the cornerstone of successful reentry into society. Though we cannot fully convey in one evening our profound appreciation for all they do, we happily celebrate our volunteers through an annual Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony. Additional details about the event are located on page 11 of this edition of Inside Corrections.

Those looking for a rewarding volunteer experience making a difference in the lives of individuals and communities are invited to visit NJDOC.Gov/SubSites/Volunteer/.

Sincerely,

Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq.
Those moving to Garden State will have access to vocational opportunities, including carpentry, welding, drywall installation, mechanical repair and more. The metal shop, which trains individuals in various welding and metalwork at Wagner, will also transfer to Garden State.

Garden State Youth Correctional Facility, which houses incarcerated individuals between 18 and 30 years of age, currently has a population of 1,200 with the capacity to serve 1,900. NJDOC will reopen temporarily closed housing units at Garden State to house the incoming population from Wagner to maintain the current person-per-cell ratio.

The remaining two buildings at the Wagner site, which house approximately 300 individuals, will serve as a satellite facility for Garden State.

The consolidation process will begin immediately and is expected to be completed by the second quarter of FY20.
Leaders across the United States and Canada vested in thwarting the scourge of gang violence assembled earlier this month in Atlantic City as part of the annual East Coast Gang Investigator’s Association (ECGIA) conference.

Co-hosted in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) and others, the event brought together members of the intelligence community from across the United States and Canada.

The association marked its 20th anniversary by returning the gathering to New Jersey after a seven-year hiatus.

The event, designed to share the latest in gang intelligence, covered topics such as systemic trends that identify threat activity, the evolution of criminality, best practices in addressing gang violence and member rehabilitation in both communities and correctional settings.

Panelists included ECGIA President Edwin Torres, New Jersey State Police Deputy Superintendent Geoff Noble, New Jersey State Commission of Investigation Executive Director Lee C. Seglem, National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association President Chuck Schoville and NJDOC
Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq. Each delivered remarks reinforcing the importance of these gatherings to address gang activity.

The event also included training topics related to human trafficking and the evolution of gang activity. To broaden the perspective at the conference, the Mid-Atlantic Greater Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MA-GLOCLEN) brought in several out-of-state speakers, including those from California, New Mexico, Nevada, Connecticut and New York.

“While today’s headlines are about the opioid epidemic, gun violence and human trafficking, people seem to forget that gangs are active participants in all of these heinous activities,” said Torres. “It is through our partnership with agencies like the NJDOC that ECGIA is able to provide training and create networking opportunities so that officers have the tools necessary to do their jobs.”

During the event, members paid homage to ECGIA founder Wes Daily. Prior to his recent passing, Daily served as a member of the New York Police Department and was instrumental in developing the association. He left behind a legacy of dedicated people to continue his mission of ensuring safe communities.

A memorial video recognized founders, past presidents and award winners during the awards luncheon. Those recognized included:

- Ron Holvey, a retired Principal Investigator of the NJDOC Special Investigations Division Corrections Intelligence Center, was recognized for 20 years of service to the ECGIA.
- Dalton Price, a recent retiree from Paterson Police Department, won the ECGIA Humanitarian Award.
- Leslie Anderson, Assistant District Attorney and Deputy Chief of Suffolk County’s gang section, won the ECGIA Integrity Award.
- Rachel Dukes, an Analyst from the Delaware Intelligence and Analysis Center, won the ECGIA Information Sharing Award for an individual.
- The Camden County Juvenile Detention Facility won the unit ECGIA Information Sharing Award.
- The New Jersey/New York Fugitive Task Force won the ECGIA Investigative Partnership Award.
- Richie Norcross, former Commander of the Camden County Prosecutor’s Office, received the first ECGIA Lifetime Spartan Award for his significant contributions to the intelligence field.
- Patty Borrelli, Executive Director of MA-GLOCLEN, received the Presidential Excellence Award for her commitment to both the organization and law enforcement.

Approximately 200 law enforcement intelligence professionals, representing federal, state and local agencies, participated in the training, emphasizing the importance of learning and improving the intelligence profession through a collaborative, teamwork approach.
CORRECTIONS CONFERENCE
NJDOC, County Jails Discuss Correctional Trends

By Liz Velez

The New Jersey County Jail Wardens Association celebrated its 60th anniversary this month during the organization’s 22nd annual training conference in Atlantic City.

According to Eugene Caldwell, Warden of the Gloucester County Department of Corrections and President of the association, the event is designed as a vehicle for members to exchange ideas on topics and initiatives of mutual interest in the area of corrections.

Invitees included law enforcement professionals and the network of county jail wardens across New Jersey and neighboring states. Participants shared best practices and correctional trends.

During his keynote address, New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq., discussed NJDOC’s efforts to maintain its mission of ensuring the safety of all those in the Department’s custody while preparing offenders for successful reentry.

Acting Commissioner Hicks said his philosophy for managing the ever-changing field of corrections focuses on humane treatment and rehabilitation of the whole person, in contrast to the traditional mentality of essentially locking up offenders and forgetting about them.
until they are eligible for release. His approach is grounded in vocational and educational training, coupled with behavior modification and the support for those suffering from substance use disorders.

Although the NJDOC does not provide daily oversight of county prisons, trends and best practices on critical issues are routinely shared.

“Our working relationship with Acting Commissioner Hicks and the state Department of Corrections has been outstanding,” said Caldwell, who was invited to serve as the guest speaker at the NJDOC’s Correction Officer Day ceremony in July.

The Wardens Association collaborates with the NJDOC on such initiatives as Medication Assisted Treatment, suicide prevention and changes to the New Jersey Administrative Code, as well as the NJDOC’s annual inspections of county jails.

“We make sure the lines of communication are open at all times,” Caldwell said. “That doesn’t mean we’ll agree 100 percent of the time, but we’ll respect one another, and we’ll work together for the common good.”

Corrections has evolved since he entered the profession more than three decades ago, Caldwell noted.

“Today, there are more educational opportunities, rehabilitative services and programming available than ever before,” he said. “The staff is made up of well-trained correctional professionals, and that is how it should be. After all, we’re in the business of correcting inappropriate behavior.”

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MONTH

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. NJDOC’s Office of Victim Services adorned Its building with purple ribbons in honor of the victims and hosted a series of events to raise awareness on this issue among the incarcerated community.
The New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) received funding to purchase 300 Chromebooks for the Correctional Staff Training Academy (CSTA) as part of a series of information technology modernizations recently planned by the Department. The project, similar to the major technological overhaul proposed for the Central Transportation Unit, is scheduled to begin early next year.

The new training platform proposed by the Department will be made possible by an operational improvement grant received from the New Jersey Office of Information Technology.

CSTA conducts basic training for state correction officers with a curriculum and instructors certified by the Police Training Commission. Training classes include arrest, search and seizure, criminal law, first aid, weaponry, unarmed defensive tactics, intensive physical conditioning, security concepts, human relations and professional development.

The NJDOC training facility is located at the National Guard Training Center.
changes to a paper curriculum is inefficient and prone to errors.

“All paper materials have to be kept and catalogued for both historical and legal record retention reasons,” added Keith Mercantante, Assistant Director of the NJDOC Office of Information Technology. “The result takes up a large amount of real estate and staff time that could be used for other purposes.”

With the Chromebooks, all aspects of the classroom curriculum will be stored in one location, Mercantante noted.

The use of Google Classroom will help make the curriculum easier to update and administer, more streamlined for recruits and storage of files for historical and litigation purposes will become more cost efficient and accessible.

“Implementing a digitized solution rather than keeping the antiquated paper-based system, will meet today’s generation’s current learning methods and bring CSTA into the forefront of technology for many years to come,” Mercantante said.

“Overall, this solution will improve the operations, security, accountability and training for the Department,” Erven added.

in Sea Girt. The programs offered are designed to develop and enhance the skills of employees and prepare them for future advancement, while presenting a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to training. To augment the staff, adjunct instructors are utilized from state correctional facilities as well as various law enforcement agencies.

The Office of Training has standardized the curriculum and expanded the content and duration of basic training. After completing the required courses, each officer receives a basic training diploma from the NJDOC and certification from the Police Training Commission.

The Standards Unit within the Office of Training develops, implements and oversees guidelines, curriculum and standards for basic training.

The upcoming operational improvements will help simplify those efforts by reducing operating costs and merging various tasks into one digital platform.

“There is a need to modernize the way our Correctional Training Staff operates,” said Aaron Erven, Director of the NJDOC Office of Training. “We operate training classes of up to 300 cadets three times a year. The process is currently handled entirely on paper, the way it has been done since the inception of the Department.”

Erven pointed out that creating paper curriculum materials for each cadet is time consuming and costly. Additionally, changes to a paper curriculum is inefficient and prone to errors.

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“Overall, this solution will improve the operations, security, accountability and training for the Department,” Erven added.
NJDOC Honors Its Volunteers

On September 24, at the Patriot’s Theater, the New Jersey Department of Corrections celebrated volunteers as part of its annual Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony. Collectively the volunteers have devoted more than 125 years of volunteering through chaplaincy services, educational and vocational instruction, counseling, education and more in support of the rehabilitation of the incarcerated. The work they do is impactful and inspirational. Thank you to our volunteers!

Acting Commissioner Marcus O. Hicks, Esq., greets Elder Minnie Lincoln who volunteers at South Woods State Prison.

Keynote speaker Reginald Gaines discusses the impact volunteers have on those who are incarcerated.

The Rev. Sharon Housman of Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility receives a Volunteer of the Year award.

Helen Grygiel of East Jersey State Prison receives a Volunteer of the Year award.

The Volunteer Services team coordinates hundreds of volunteers throughout 13 facilities.

Rosalind Preston (second from left) and Thomas Wilson (third from left) receive Critical Incident Stress Management Awards.