

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

NORTON RECEIVES AWARD IN JOHNSON COUNTY

At its annual Christmas luncheon, the Johnson & Somervell Counties Community Supervision and Corrections Department honored **Diane Norton** with the Employee of the Year Award.

A graduate of Sam Houston State University with a bachelor's degree in criminology, Norton supervises a caseload comprised of felony offenders in the department's Johnson County office. During 2006 she recognized a need for better employment services in the department. She began a job posting service in the lobby of the department to assist probationers in finding jobs. She also implemented a collaborative effort with the Texas Workforce Commission and Project Rio to provide in-house services to the department's offender population.

Norton began employment with the Johnson County CSCD in August 2002. She is a member of the Texas Probation Association.

OFFICERS RECOGNIZED IN DALLAS COUNTY

On October 20, 2006, several community supervision officers employed with the Dallas County Community Supervision and Corrections Department were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the department by receiving quarterly awards. Employees are eligible for the awards by being nominated by their co-workers and/or supervisors.

Stacy Bradford received an award for the quarter ending March 2006. She is a Dallas native and graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington, where she earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. She currently works in the department's Intensive Intervention Program. Prior to that she worked in the Sex Offender Unit. Bradford voluntarily participated in the development of the successful SAFPF Re-Entry Court initiative and has been very involved in the implementation of evidence-based practices in the department.

Also receiving an award for the quarter ending March 2006 was **Jennifer Leslie**. Leslie possesses a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Southwest Missouri State University, as well as a master's degree in counseling from Amberton University. Currently assigned to Court #3, she has received numerous commendations for her work in that court. Additionally, she has established herself as an expert in dealing with sex offenders, becoming the go-to person when someone is needed to testify in court regarding sex offender matters. Leslie is also a foster parent and child advocate.

For the quarter ending June 2006, **Trina Willis** was honored with an award. She began her tenure with the department in May 1997. In 2001 she was instrumental in implementing the first re-entry court in Texas. She has received special recognition from the Governor's office and has assisted other probation departments with the development of programs. A graduate of Grambling State University, Willis is a member of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and the Texas Association of Drug Court Professionals.

Marquetta Smith received another award for the quarter ending June 2006. She began employment with the Dallas County CSCD in June 2004. In that short time she has stood out as a facilitator for the "Thinking for a Change" program and a volunteer for the Compass pilot program. She will soon join the Intensive Intervention Program team. Smith is a 2004 graduate of Wiley College, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice.

Veronica Deavilla, a technician with the department, was also presented with an award for the quarter ending June 2006. She has been with the department since 1999 and works in the misdemeanor unit. She is responsible for providing orientation to new probationers receiving misdemeanor community supervision. She also supervises an indirect caseload. She obtained a legal assistant certification from Central Texas Commercial College.

Serving the department since January 1994, **Teresa Zarate** received a quarterly award for the quarter ending September 2006. She has worked in various capacities in the department but is currently assigned to the south office. She is known to be the first in line to help new officers learn the job or to help absent co-workers keep up with mail or computer checks. A native of New York, she is a graduate of Assumption College in Worcester, Mass.

Serena McNair received the other award for the quarter ending September 2006. While still in college, McNair served as an intern for the department. She currently works in Felony Court 14, but has also served as a trainer and caseworker in Dallas County's Divert Court. She is a 1987 graduate of East Texas State University, where she earned a B.S. degree in criminal justice.

TEXANS PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS

On November 22-24, 2006, two Texas corrections leaders participated in the IV Penitentiary Congress at Kalisz, Poland, at the invitation of Adam Mickiewicz University, the University of Gdansk, the Probation Officers Association of Wielkopolska, and the Central Board of the Polish Prison Service.

Dan Richard Beto, Chair of the Governing Board of the Texas Regional Center for Policing Innovation, and **Doug Dretke**, Executive Director of the Correctional Management Institute of Texas, along with **Donald G. Evans**, President of the Canadian Training Institute, delivered papers at the conference.

Beto, who led the North American delegation, spoke on "correctional leadership: a return to the basics," while Dretke's presentation dealt with "private prisons: promises and perils." Evans addressed the issue of "correctional treatment regimes and the need for consistency."

In addition to Poland, the United States, and Canada, countries represented at the conference included Great Britain, Germany, France, the Russian Federation, and the Czech Republic.

Following the conference, members of the North American delegation toured two prisons, a high security juvenile facility, and an orphanage. In addition, they visited the court in Poznan

and the probation office there. They also conducted meetings with representatives of Adam Mickiewicz University and spoke to a class.

During their time in Poznan, members of the delegation were hosted by **Piotr Burczyk**, President of the Probation Officers Association of Wielkopolska, **Irena Szostak**, Chief Probation Officer, and **Anna Kosterkiewicz-Kwiatkowska**, a probation officer. Also serving as hosts in Poznan were **Piotr Stepniak**, Head of Penitentiary Studies, and Dean **Wieslaw Ambrozik**, both of Adam Mickiewicz University.

Beto is a past president of the National Association of Probation Executives and the Texas Probation Association, and Dretke is a past president of the Texas Corrections Association. Evans is a past president of the American Probation and Parole Association and the International Community Corrections Association.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES HELD IN ANGELINA COUNTY

On December 15, 2006, the Angelina County Community Supervision and Corrections Department held its annual Christmas luncheon, during which several activities were held. First, the employees of the department enjoyed a White Elephant gift exchange.



Nikiy Lewis seems surprised by her gift during the White Elephant gift exchange

Throughout the holiday season the CSCD held a door decorating contest. The contest winners were announced during the luncheon and prizes were awarded by new Angelina County CSCD Director **Rodney Thompson**. The first prize winner was **Sandra Owens**, who won dinner and a movie for two. Second place went to **Sandra Daugherty**, who took home dinner for two. Finishing up in third place was **Sherry McConnell**; she won a gift certificate.



From left to right, Sandra Daugherty, Sandra Owens, and Sherry McConnell

THOMPSON RECOGNIZED FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EFFORTS

Prior to moving to Lufkin to assume responsibility as the director of the Angelina County Community Supervision and Corrections Department, **Rodney Thompson**, a former supervisor for the Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department, was recognized as the Volunteer of the Year for Tarrant County by the Chisholm Trail Chapter of the American Red Cross. The award was announced in September 2006.

Thompson has served the American Red Cross for many years. During this award period, he assisted with shelter operations in Fort Worth for Hurricane Katrina. He was also sent to Mississippi and Florida to assist with disaster operations for two weeks. He served as a team captain for local disaster action teams in Tarrant County, providing assistance to families needing assistance after fires.

HIDALGO COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT HIRES NEW OFFICERS

During the past three months the Hidalgo County Juvenile Probation Department has hired the following probation officers:

Rodrigo Guzman, whose prior experience including serving as a youth substance prevention specialist. He is a graduate of the University of Texas Pan American in Edinburg, earning both a bachelor's degree (2000) and a master's degree (2006) in sociology.

Robert Tovar, Jr. is a former juvenile detention officer with the Hidalgo County Juvenile Probation Department. He possesses a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Texas Pan American.

The Hidalgo County Juvenile Probation Department wishes to congratulate these individuals for choosing to make their professional careers as juvenile probation officers.

PROMOTIONS AND AWARDS ANNOUNCED IN TARRANT COUNTY

In October 2006 the Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department announced the promotion of four staff members to the position of Supervisor. The new supervisors are **Bryan Taylor**, **Christopher Murphy**, **Deanna Hurst**, and **Kelli Stevens**.

Additionally, at its annual Christmas party, the department presented awards to various staff members. The awards and recipients were:

Supervisor of the Year
Director's Award
Line Officer of the Year
Rookie of the Year
Support Staff of the Year
Unit of the Year

Stacy Pickett
Geoff Collins
Kessah Ellis
Jessica Olson
Brigitte Rucker
South Unit
(**Leta Cook**, Supervisor)