



# DOCCS TODAY

## From the Desk of the Commissioner

Anthony J. Annucci

New York State Department of  
Corrections and Community  
Supervision



In this vein, I am reminded of the wintertime classic, “It’s A Wonderful Life,” which, thanks to the generosity of two of the movie’s original actors, who visited Attica in 2018, you may have seen the movie playing in one of our facilities or community supervision offices during this past holiday season. The movie’s message, though, rings true all year-round: you are important, the work you do touches more lives than you could ever know, and a fresh perspective can make all the difference in the world.

It is impossible to succinctly reflect upon the past two years or sum up all that has occurred within the Department since the last edition of *DOCCS Today*. At that point in time, we had no idea that the world as we knew it, would be upended and thrust into a new “normal”, that still very much affects us today.

Each and every member of this Department has been impacted by the pandemic—losing family, friends, colleagues and neighbors; missing graduations, weddings and holidays with loved ones; and experiencing isolation, frustration and burnout. It has been a challenging time of uncertainty; yet, day in and day out, our staff never ceased in carrying out the important work that helps keep our facilities and communities safe.

The pandemic wasn’t the only challenge the members of this Department faced in 2020 and 2021. We navigated legislative changes that posed significant challenges for both corrections and community supervision staff; assaults on staff have increased at alarming rates, though the population continues to decline; and the last two enacted budgets have led to the closure of nine facilities—the decision for which is never taken lightly—but nonetheless, each closure deeply impacts the lives of our staff and their loved ones, as well as the surrounding community.

If you are ever in doubt that one person’s actions can make a difference, I encourage you to read on and learn of the tremendous impact our staff and the incarcerated and parolee populations have made, both inside our facilities and offices, and within the surrounding communities. Though it was far more difficult to perform these acts of kindness in the midst of a global health crisis, our staff stepped up when it mattered most, and they managed to give back to those in need. I am continually in awe of all that the members of this Department are able to accomplish, and I look forward to seeing what 2022 has in store.

## Throughout the pandemic, the Puppies Behind Bars training graduations continued in DOCCS’ facilities

Here’s a photo from the most recent graduation at Fishkill  
Correctional Facility



# Commissioner Anthony Annucci Receives the Michael Francke Career Achievement Award

On Saturday, January 8, 2022, Commissioner Annucci received the Michael Francke Career Achievement Award at the annual Correctional Leaders Association (CLA) winter conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Michael Francke Career Achievement Award was created to recognize a CLA member who has given outstanding service to the agency in which they have served, in honor and memory of Mr. Francke, who was slain in the line of duty in 1989.

Governor Hochul nominated Commissioner Annucci for this award and, in her nomination letter, highlighted the Commissioner's progressive leadership throughout his career and significant contributions not only to the field of corrections, but to the criminal justice system in New York State. He has been recognized by a number of professional organizations throughout his tenure and truly embodies the spirit of the Michael Francke Career Achievement Award.



Throughout his tenure as Acting Commissioner, and his career with DOCCS, Commissioner Annucci has espoused and embodied the servant model of leadership and always put his staff first, recognizing that the Department could not accomplish its mission without each and every one of its employees. He constantly strives to improve staff wellness, give them the tools to be successful, and ensure that they know how much they are appreciated. He has maintained a steady course for the Department to achieve the mission he set forth to ensure public safety by operating safe and secure facilities, preparing individuals for release, and then supervising them to be successful when they return home from prison, while ensuring that staff safety and opportunity for advancement remain at the forefront.

# DOCCS TODAY

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NOVEMBER 2021

DECEMBER 2021

JANUARY 2022

## A LOOK BACK...

In 2021, we marked the 50th anniversary of the Attica Prison Uprising that took place in September 1971 and resulted in the deaths of 43 people, including 10 correction officers, most by New York state police gunfire during the retaking of the facility.



## WANT AN EVENT POSTED ON DOCCS SOCIAL MEDIA?

For posting on social media, send your  
submissions to:

[nicole.sheremeta@doccs.ny.gov](mailto:nicole.sheremeta@doccs.ny.gov)

[rachel.connors@doccs.ny.gov](mailto:rachel.connors@doccs.ny.gov)

[thomas.mailey@doccs.ny.gov](mailto:thomas.mailey@doccs.ny.gov)



## WANT AN EVENT INCLUDED IN *DOCCS TODAY*?

Send your submissions for publishing in  
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[nicole.sheremeta@doccs.ny.gov](mailto:nicole.sheremeta@doccs.ny.gov)

[rachel.connors@doccs.ny.gov](mailto:rachel.connors@doccs.ny.gov)

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Get your *DOCCS TODAY*  
submissions in by \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please ensure all photo submissions are  
not scanned and are of staff adhering to  
COVID protocols, such as mask wearing.**



# DOCCS Highlights

Wende Correctional Facility took a brief 'pause' to provide treats and say thank you to staff for their hard work, dedication and commitment during these unprecedented times.



The Department commends eight Western New York Parole Officers who have saved three lives while on duty



The Bronx District Attorney's office sponsored an Anti-Violence Town Hall and Reentry Resource Fair, which was held in Belmont Park within the confines of the 48<sup>th</sup> precinct.

Supervising Superintendent Dennis Breslin is honored by NAAWS as Warden of the Year presented by Executive Deputy Commissioner Martuscello



Lakeview Shock Incarceration Correctional Facility staff, along with Chautauque County Sheriff Quattrone, members of law enforcement from Fredonia and several Special Olympians all participated in the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run



## Woodbourne Correctional Facility's Employee Appreciation





# DOCCS' Donations

Sullivan Correctional Facility Coat Drive



Shawangunk Correctional Facility participated in an emergency food drive, to assist families impacted by COVID 19. Over 100 lbs. of nutritious food was delivered to the food pantry at St. George's Episcopal Church

Woodbourne CF's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) donated over 1,000 lbs of food to the Hurleyville Methodist Church



Five Points EAP Committee linked up with PAWS, which stands for **P**atient & **K**ind, **A**cademic Excellence, **W**ork Together, **S**afe & **I**n Control, to collect and distribute items to needy families and homeless individuals around the city of Geneva, NY. Five Points organized "A Good Neighbor" clothing drive and collected five boxes worth of clothing to donate

Gowanda Correctional Facility's Vocational Building Maintenance class built new dugouts for Youth Baseball & Softball League fields that are located on facility grounds. Phase II of this project will include construction of sides and backing. Staff also raised over \$1100.00

Groveland Correctional held a golf tournament which raised \$1000.00 and raffled off a Yeti cooler which raised \$1630.00. The \$2630.00 and a donated picnic table went to the Hart Comfort House (Hospice house) in Wellsville, N.Y.





# DOCCS' Donations Cont'd



The Riverview Correctional Facility Horticulture program harvested over 1,100 pumpkins which staff delivered to Pre-K, Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms at Kennedy Elementary, Madill Elementary, Lisbon Central, Heuvelton Central, and Morristown Central Schools.



The Riverview Correctional Facility's Make A Difference Day Committee conducted a "Fill the Bus" donation drive and donated school items including pens, pencils, bookbags, coloring books, lined paper, notebooks, crayons, and stickers, to the Ogdensburg Boy's and Girl's Club.

"Trunk or Treat" event at Clinton Correctional Facility



Green Haven's Local NYSCOPBA donated to assist students who are struggling to make tuition. — at Holy Trinity School.

Wyoming Correctional Facility's "Make a Difference Day Committee" held their annual "Angel Tree" event to provide families in need with gifts for Christmas. The committee also collected over 50 gifts and cards for those less fortunate in Wyoming and Genesee Counties.



NYSDOCCS leads the nation with 12 gardens having supplied 77,414 pounds of vegetables to 29 different food shelters and organizations covering six counties in New York State that help assist families. Facilities who participated: Albion, Bare Hill, Cape Vincent, Cayuga, Five Points, Franklin, Gouverneur, Lakeview, Mid-State, Ogdensburg, Riverview, Ulster, and Willard.



# DOCCS' Donations Cont'd



Bare Hill Correctional Facility's "Make A Difference Day Committee" sponsored two gift drives, one for local elderly in need of every day assistance and one for children in need through Toys for Tots.

PEF and staff members donated items to the elderly including wall clocks, candy, ceramic paint art projects, markers, coloring books and large print word searches which were delivered to the Alice Center. NYSCOPBA raffled off a Yeti cooler to raise \$1,853.22 and donated additional items for Toys for Tots.

Altona Correctional Facility participated in the "Make A Difference Day" Toy and Food Drive. Staff collected 450 pounds of food and 77 toys, including two bicycles with helmets.



Gouverneur Correctional Facility's "Make A Difference Day Committee" raised approximately \$500.00 to provide snacks for children in need throughout Gouverneur Elementary School.



Altona CF participated in the "Make A Difference Day" Toy & Food Drive. Staff collected 450lbs of food and 77 toys, including two bicycles with helmets. The toy value was approximately \$825.00. All donated items went to benefit the local food pantries and Altona families in need



# DOCCS' Donations Cont'd

The Care Center, located in Liberty, NY, provides residential and day services to adults in need. During these winter months, there is a high demand for cold weather accessories for those at the Center. Woodbourne CF's Make a Difference Day Committee, in coordination with the Needle Wizards, were happy to assist in providing over 25 knitted blankets, hats and other winter clothing to support the Adult Care Center.



Collins Correctional Facility teamed up with Gowanda Central School District to bring holiday joy to three local families in need through their "Adopt A Family" fundraiser. Staff raised and donated over \$4000 in gifts including toys, clothing, beds with bedding and gift certificates for Shop N Save grocery store and Big Lots.

Woodbourne CF's Make a Difference Day Committee donated toys and clothing to over 50 children who attend the Sullivan County Head Start Program. The program is a grassroots organization that provides a comprehensive interdisciplinary program that fosters development, supports school readiness, encourages self-confidence and self-discipline, assists in the development of the child's social, emotional and physical wellbeing and acts as a referral service for children and families in Sullivan County who are at, or below, poverty level, or have developmental disabilities.





# Diversity and Inclusion Committee



Altona Correctional Facility held an informational session at their QWL where Deputy Commissioner Osbourne McKay discussed the Mission of Central Office's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The purpose of this session was to raise awareness and initiate activities with employees to promote cultural awareness, education, understanding, and appreciation. Participating staff stated that they acquired a deeper respect for one another when sharing their culinary dishes which reflected upon their ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds. This exercise helped everyone in feeling comfortable about sharing their own stories of traditions and diversities.



Corrections  
and Community  
Supervision



# Domestic Violence Awareness & Breast Cancer Awareness



The Brooklyn Region management staff participated in the Domestic Violence Awareness months' Statewide day of observance- **#PURPLE THURSDAY** – to shine the light on domestic violence by wearing purple.

*Left to right (front): Seated: RD Squillacioti, BC McCleary, ARD Jean-Baptiste, AREM Hall*

*Standing: BC Jefferies, AREM Jones, REM Thompson, BC Granum*



Woodbourne Correctional Facility's EAP Committee provided a Domestic Violence informational resource table for all staff. Purple Ribbons, masks and pamphlets were provided to raise Domestic Violence Awareness.



The Brooklyn Re-Entry team along with region staff, came together in participation of the Statewide observance day to shine the light on and celebrate the survivors of domestic violence.

*Seated: PO Hibbert, PO Roberson, BC McCleary, PO Washington, AREM Hall; Left side to middle standing: PO Felix, PO Gary, SPO Taylor, SPO Murdocco, SPO Bell, SPO DeJesus, PO Banks, PO Fernandez; Middle to right side standing: PO Martindale, PO Guelbart, PO Blanding, PO Brown, REM Thompson, PO Wright, E. Yee, PO Ayala, BC Granum, AREM Jones, J. Licht, BC Jefferies*



*Left to right: Administrative Assistant Lisa Kruszkeski, Regional Director Jeffrey Kirker, AREM Christine Robinson-Cooley, Program Aide Amanda Eckert, Administrative Specialist Christie Deppa, AREM Laurie Rockenstyre and Assistant Regional Director Herminia Delgado.*



Riverview and Ogdensburg Correctional Facilities' EAP joined together to raise money for the St. Lawrence Valley Renewal House in Canton, New York. Raffle tickets were sold for a chainsaw carved bear that was donated by Terry McKendree of Buck Ridge Chainsaw Carving. A total of \$1,510.00 was raised and presented to St. Lawrence Valley Renewal House which provides services and shelter to local families facing domestic violence.



# DOCCS' Celebrations & Memorials



Clinton Annex Correctional Facility Veteran's Residential Treatment Program (VRTP) gathered on their dorm to celebrate Veteran's Day and honor our fallen, missing and imprisoned military service members



The Honor Guard from Groveland Correctional Facility took part in a 9-11 service at the Mt. Morris Veterans Park. A mural was dedicated in Honor of First Responders.



Former Board of Parole Commissioner William Walter Smith Jr. retired in July 2021 as the longest serving person in the history of the Board with over 24 years of service. He was also the first Commissioner previously employed at the NYS Crime Victims Board (now the Office of Victims Service) and brought an important perspective to the parole process.



Commissioner Annucci, members of his Executive Team, and Sing Sing Supt Capra recognized Arthur Wolpinsky for his 50 years of service to the Dept and the State of New York

Blue Mass for the Diocese of Ogdensburg was held at Notre Dame Church in Malone, New York



DOCCS honored Correction Officers Corey & James Debien & Sgt. Scott Startup with Medals of Merit for courageous actions





# Remembering Those Lost Throughout the Pandemic

Queensboro & Edgecombe had a Memorial Service for five employees who passed away from COVID





# Canine Training Program: New Additions

Meet Duke and Scooby! These two pups are the newest arrivals to the Canine Training Program at Hale Creek Correctional Facility. They will work with teams of incarcerated individuals over the next few months to learn training and socialization skills that will eventually help them find their forever homes.



Approximately 37-47% of all household in the United States have a dog, however more than 3.9 million dogs enter shelters annually. Many reasons contribute to why these animals end up in a shelter. Common myths are that the dog has something wrong or is aggressive or ill. In fact, people surrender their dog for many reasons - not able to afford to care for the animal, not having enough space, or not being able to have a pet when they move.

In order to give a second chance to sheltered dogs and strengthen the possibility that some of them get adopted, a program was developed to train and socialize them using incarcerated individuals as trainers.

The program teaches incarcerated individuals valuable marketable job skills, saves canine lives, and gives eligible incarcerated individuals an opportunity to obtain a feeling of satisfaction and self-worth by providing foster care and basic obedience training to sheltered dogs while enhancing the incarcerated individual's social and employability skills. Additionally, it gives the incarcerated individuals an opportunity to return something positive to the community – a healthy and well socialized dog.

Partnering shelters provide dogs and certified dog trainers to instruct the incarcerated individual on how to properly care for and train the dogs. For the duration of the training, the dogs are socialized through interaction with people and other animals. Each dog is taught obedience skills such as how to heel, sit and stay.

The shelter dogs are placed within the prison for approximately 8 weeks of 24/7 obedience training and socialization provided by the trained incarcerated individual.

# Hudson Valley Women in Corrections and Community Supervision

Every year, Hudson Valley Women in Corrections and Community Supervision (HVWICCS) hosts a training which selects a local charity to donate proceeds to. This year's selected charity was Bottomless Closet. Bottomless Closet embodies the philosophy of women helping women, and in doing so, creates a safe and welcoming environment for women to receive the resources needed to help them succeed in the workplace. Some resources include providing appropriate interview attire and attending workshops that boosts their confidence to interview and present themselves professionally. Thanks to HVWICCS' participants, they were able to raise \$4,000 for Bottomless Closet's program.

