



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**June 23, 2017**

## **PA State Parole Graduates Nine New Agents**

**HARRISBURG** – Nine men and women graduated today from the 129th Basic Training Academy (BTA) of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and were assigned to various areas throughout the state.

“These new graduates have proven themselves ready to meet the challenges of today and are prepared to tackle the ever-changing challenges of the future,” said Parole Board Member Mark Koch.

The professional development curriculum is critical to developing the skills of probation and parole staff in achieving the mission of public safety and reducing recidivism. The training program now includes:

- EPICS: Effective Practices for Community Supervision is designed to further incorporate evidence-based practices within the confines of a typical offender supervision contact;
- Up-to-date training by medical professionals on infectious diseases, drug and alcohol addictions and recovery programs and mental health issues;
- Enhanced defense tactics to ensure the safety of the agent and the offender;
- Recognition of gangs and other security threat groups;
- Specialized case management of sex offenders;
- Using risk and needs assessments to assist with successful offender reentry into the community; and
- Training to help assess domestic violence situations and responses to *Protection From Abuse* orders.

When introduced in 1978, the agent training program was a basic skills course that lasted five days. Now, the training has evolved into a multi-faceted curriculum reflecting the unique nature of agents as part law enforcement officer, part counselor, part social worker, and part job counselor.

The board recognized Agent Steve Todd as valedictorian with the score of 97.25 percent.

Brandon Martinez, a parole agent with field supervision of parolees in the Pittsburgh district, earned the marksmanship award. Martinez was reassigned after the closure of SCI Pittsburgh.

PBPP Board Member Mark Koch was the keynote speaker. In addition, Greg Young, Director, Bureau of Training; Luis Rosa, Director of the Office of Reentry and Quality Assurance; and Christian Stephens, Director, Office of Field Probation and Parole Supervision, addressed the graduates.

Graduates and their new duty stations are listed below. They will report to their assignments on June 26.

- Sharon Cipriani - SCI Greene
- Brian Cuffaro - York Sub Office
- Kevin Hinton - Philadelphia South Sub Office
- Edward Jones - Philadelphia Northwest Sub Office
- Luke Knox - Harrisburg District Office
- John Kranz - York Sub Office
- Yvette Sanchez - Harrisburg District Office
- John Smyser - Lancaster Sub Office
- Steve Todd - Harrisburg District Office

In addition, Regional Director Louis Narvaez, Eastern Regional Office and Executive Assistant to the Chairman William Otis, Central Office, Harrisburg, also participated in several of the eight-week training sessions and graduated as honorary members of the class.

The ceremony took place at the Department of Corrections Training Academy in Elizabethtown.

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