

The Green Sheet



July 2010 - Volume 5 - Special Edition

Annual Employee Awards

Table of Contents

- 1 Raymond Roman
- 2 Group Achievement-RTKL Collaboration Project
- 3 Group Achievement-Philadelphia DO Mental Health Unit
- 4 Laura Treaster and Sherril Miller
- 5 Crystal Grice and Claudette Pickens
- 6 Norma McGinnis Candid Photos
- 7 Deb Basehore Candid Photos
- 8 Robert LaBenne Candid Photos

In May, the Board held its annual employee award ceremony to recognize the exemplary performance of employees in 2009. In her opening remarks, Chairman McVey stated how fortunate the Board is to have so many dedicated and talented employees who continually strive to perform at a high level. We commend these employees who represented the highest degree of performance and professionalism to meet the mission of the agency.

The Board's Employee Awards Program, which includes the Office of Victim Advocate and Sexual Offenders Assessment Board staff, is intended to recognize, award and motivate individuals for their personal and professional actions, conduct, contributions and service.

Michael M. Haduck Field Agent of the Year Award: Raymond Roman, Parole Agent, Allentown District

This award recognizes the outstanding performance of a Field Parole Agent employed by the Board.

Agent Roman demonstrates the pride he has in his work by his dedication to his job and the Board's Mission and was a natural choice for the Field Agent of the Year Award. He handles his caseload and coworkers with a great deal of proficiency and integrity and lends his bilingual talents in assisting other agents with their Spanish-speaking offenders. This has created a better working relationship between the offenders and the agents responsible for their supervision.



(from l to r): District Director Joseph Smith, Chairman McVey, Raymond Roman, Regional Director Deon Roth and Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub.

Agent Roman has a wealth of experience and maturity in dealing with difficult situations. He always goes the extra mile and is relied upon by other agents. Agent Roman continually promotes good working relationships not only within the Allentown District, but with local and state police entities. He has been deputized by the United States Marshal's Service and strives to enhance community and public safety.



Edward G. Rendell
Governor

Catherine C. McVey
Chairman

www.pbpp.state.pa.us

Employee Awards

Group Achievement - Special Project/Assignment Category, Right To Know Law Collaborative Project at Central Office

Emily Sanso, Legislative Aide, Office of Policy, Legislative Affairs and Communications; Linda Laub, Acting Chief Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel; John Talaber, Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel; Heidi Barry, Legal Assistant Supervisor, Office of Chief Counsel; Deborah Basehore, Administrative Officer, Division of Office Services; Amber Gratkowski, Administrative Officer, Division of Office Services; Sally Bistline, Purchasing Agent, Division of Office Services; Jeff Cushey, Budget Analyst, Division of Budget

This award is given to a group of individuals who participated in a program or project that was particularly significant to the Board.

Pennsylvania's new Right to Know Law went into effect January 1, 2009. The new law has significantly changed the burden of proof for Right to Know requests since almost all government records are now public unless proven otherwise. This has shifted the burden from the citizens to government offices.

These employees distinguished themselves during this award period through their thoughtful and deliberative responses to Right to Know requests, and by ensuring the smooth transition of the Board's full compliance with all requirements of the new Right to Know law. All files must be diligently searched to determine what information is in the agency's possession before a determination can be made as to whether or not it is a record and if it is a public record. State contracts are reviewed to determine if proprietary information must be redacted before being placed on the Treasury website. Each request must be considered in light of the exceptions that are noted in the law. If the deadline for a response is not met, the lack of timeliness could have an adverse impact on



(from l to r): Chairman McVey, Victoria Madden (former supervisor/nominator), Linda Laub, Heidi Barry, John Talaber, Emily Sanso, Sherry Tate (supervisor/nominator) Sally Bistline, Deb Basehore, Amber Gratkowski and Richard Dash, supervisor/nominator.

the agency. Untimely requests can result in an automatic appeal to the Office of Open Records and ultimately to Commonwealth Court where a decision by the court that a record is public could cause a change to the operations of the Board or impact security. This team also keeps the Board informed of Office of Open Records decisions and Commonwealth Court cases that may impact the Board. Further, all Board employees are informed when Right to Know requests are issued for specific employee public records.

Despite the fact that the number of Right to Know requests have more than doubled since 2008, this team continued to handle their other assignments without delay. Their dedication to the Board is illustrated by their commitment to the Board's compliance with the Right to Know law.

Employee Awards

Group Achievement Award - Public/Employee Safety Category, Parole Supervisor and Six Parole Agents in the Mental Health Unit, Philadelphia District Office

Mental Health Unit Parole Supervisor Karen Bornstein and Mental Health Unit Parole Agents: James Wesley, Justin Kennett, Vince Oaks, Nailah Johnson, Sean Finegan, and Richard Kwiatkowski

This award is given to a group of individuals who handled a situation in a manner that showed good judgment and concern for the well-being and safety of the group and others.

Since its inception in September 2006, the Mental Health Unit has continued to move forward in its purpose to keep the community safe and aid offenders struggling with acute mental health illnesses to successfully complete their parole and recognize the symptoms of their illnesses, seek help, and move toward a rewarding life.

The employees of this unit developed a framework for this specialized unit and continue to maintain that framework by educating themselves on the mental health illnesses that plague the offenders under their supervision. They continue to reach out to other counties, law enforcement groups, therapists, psychiatrists, counselors and other treatment centers to obtain the tools they need to help the offenders help themselves. As a result of this networking, these employees became aware of various training opportunities and have completed courses in Crisis Intervention, Basic Psychiatry, Issues in Treating Clients with Co-



(from l to r): Chairman McVey, District Director Dennis Powell, Deputy District Director James Poulos, Supervisor Karen Bornstein, Agent Richard Kwiatkowski, Agent Justin Kennett, Agent Sean Finegan, Agent Nailah Johnson, Agent Vince Oaks, Agent James Wesley, Eastern Regional Director Thomas Costa, Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub.

Occurring Disorders, and Intensive Case Management.

One of the most important functions of the Mental Health Unit is diverting offenders from the criminal justice system and into treatment facilities to get help and needed resources. The unit developed a rapport with the newly established Mental Health Court in Philadelphia. In addition, the unit also ensures that offenders are familiar with multiple agents in the unit to ensure a contact for the

offender at all times, especially while in crisis.

Of their own accord, the employees of the Mental Health Unit have gone above and beyond their normal duties. They are loyal and dedicated to the safety and well-being of the specialized offenders under their supervision and have earned the Group Achievement Award.

Employee Awards

Employee of the Year - Officials and Administrators Category: Laura Treaster, Communications Specialist, Office of Policy, Legislative Affairs and Communications, Central Office

This award is given to an individual who demonstrated personal integrity and loyalty to the Board, with regard to policy and procedure.

Laura Treaster consistently demonstrates personal integrity and loyalty to the Board in all aspects of her position. In addition to her normal duties, Ms. Treaster achieved many Board-specific goals during 2009. Most significantly, she was instrumental in completing the conversion of three websites from the current DSF format to Aqualogic, as directed by the Governor's Office of Communications. Through her dedication and impeccable work ethic, the Board's website as well as the Sexual Offenders Assessment Board and Firearms Education and Training Commission websites were converted and operational prior to the actual deadline. These new websites ensure improved services to Pennsylvania citizens with current information relating to the responsibilities of the state parole system and its contribution to public safety. Ms. Treaster is



(from l to r): Chairman McVey, Laura Treaster, Office of Policy, Legislative Affairs and Communications Director Sherry Tate (supervisor/nominator).

deserving of this recognition for her professionalism and commitment to excellence.

Employee of the Year - Professionals II: Sherril Miller, Parole Supervisor, Harrisburg District Office

This award is given to an individual who demonstrated personal integrity and loyalty to the Board, with regard to policy and procedure.

Parole Supervisor Sherril Miller is a true leader of the Board. She has served the Board for 24 years as both a Parole Agent and Parole Supervisor and possesses a tremendous amount of practical job knowledge and experience. During this award year, she co-facilitated several Cognitive Behavioral Therapy-Life Skills and Violence Prevention Booster Groups throughout the Harrisburg District. She volunteered for evening groups to fit the work schedules of offenders and routinely stayed after the conclusion of the groups to mentor at-risk offenders. Supervisor Miller serves as a role model and mentor to many of the Board's Parole Agents and her peers. She is especially talented in molding new Parole Agents into well-rounded, quality agents and future leaders of the Board.



The dedication and loyalty of Supervisor Miller is evident not only by her routine duties, but also in the active role she assumes in guiding and mentoring quality agents. She is a dedicated professional and exemplary employee of the Board.

(from l to r): Chairman McVey, Sherril Miller, District Director Lisa Moser (nominator), Central Region Director Deon Roth and Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub.

Employee Awards

Employee of the Year – Administrative/Support Category: Crystal Grice, Clerk Typist, Northwest Division, Philadelphia District

This award is given to an individual who demonstrated personal integrity and loyalty to the Board, with regard to policy and procedure.

Crystal Grice began her employment with Philadelphia's West Division in 1999 and has been the backbone of the Northwest Division for the past 5 years. In addition to having perfected her own job duties, she has taken the initiative to learn policy and procedure as it relates to the requirements for the agents' paperwork, and ensures the information is entered correctly.

Two of the units that Ms. Grice supports have received perfect audits. An important part of the audit process is ensuring accurate information and documentation. Ms. Grice adapts to the constant change of the office and gets the job done. She willingly takes on additional work without complaint.



(from l to r): District Director Dennis Powell, Chairman McVey, Crystal Grice, Rosalyn Cofer (supervisor/nominator), Regional Director Tom Costa, Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub.

Ms. Grice is deserving of this recognition for consistently exceeding standards and the commitment to excellence she demonstrates daily.

John W. Perkis Award for Courageous and Significant Service: Claudette Pickens, Parole Agent, Chester District

This award recognizes an employee who demonstrated courageous and significant service to the Board despite extraordinary odds.

Parole Agent Claudette Pickens was involved in an auto accident while on duty and sustained significant physical injuries. As a result of those injuries, Agent Pickens was on extended medical leave from her position for one year. She enthusiastically returned to work in August 2009 despite continued medical issues. Agent Pickens



(from l to r): Chester District Director Mark Carey, Chairman McVey, Claudette Pickens, Regional Director Tom Costa, Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub.

quickly familiarized herself with new and revised policies and procedures and conducted case reviews with other agents and her supervisor. She worked many days and nights in the field making home visits and collateral contacts to bring herself up-to-date with her caseload. In November 2009, a short time after her return to work, Agent Pickens was instrumental in the arrest of an offender and the recovery of drugs and a weapon. Despite the inherent danger of the situation, Agent Pickens maintained control of the situation. The perseverance and performance of Parole Agent Pickens is in the true spirit of this award.

Employee Awards

Vicki D. Weisel Institutional Agent of the Year Award: Norma McGinnis, Parole Agent, SCI Rockview

This award recognizes the outstanding performance of an Institutional Parole Agent employed by the Board.

Agent McGinnis began her career with the Board in the clerical field, and has spent the last 6½ years as an agent at SCI Rockview. She is deserving of the Institutional Agent of the Year award due to her professionalism, dedication and loyalty to the Board and her job. During this award period, Agent McGinnis was instrumental in uncovering a drug operation at SCI Rockview. Her keen observation and quick response to suspicious activity on the grounds of the facility resulted in the arrest of a female visitor at SCI Rockview. In addition, two inmates also involved in the drug scheme and already serving life sentences were moved to the Restrictive Housing Unit. Although the incident occurred on her day off, Agent McGinnis took the time to follow up on her observations and notify appropriate officials.



(from l to r): Chairman McVey, Institutional Parole Manager Darlene Zelazny (nominator), Norma McGinnis, Regional Director Deon Roth, Deputy Executive Director Cindy Daub and Parole Supervisor Ed Burke.

Agent McGinnis was named “Employee of the Week” by the Department of Corrections for her role in uncovering this drug operation. She also earned this title early in 2009 for her outstanding performance working with Department of Corrections staff, other criminal justice professionals, as well as inmates, in developing stable reentry plans for successful offender transition back into the community.



Employee Awards

Chairman's Achievement Award: Deborah Basehore, Administrative Officer, Division of Office Services, Central Office

This award recognizes an employee who, through his or her performance and accomplishments, both on and off the job, has done the most to advance the mission of the Board during the past award year.

Deborah Basehore was hired by the Board in 2004 and serves as the Director of the Division of Office Services. This Division is responsible for providing a safe and secure working environment for Board employees, including office space, state-issued vehicles, and safety and communication equipment. During this award period, Ms. Basehore has been instrumental in effectively managing several important scheduled office relocations as well as the forced relocations of several offices. Her ability to change direction and reevaluate critical situations ensured the Pittsburgh District Office, York Sub-Office and Philadelphia Regional and District Offices were quickly relocated and functioning with minimal disruption to the daily activities of staff.

Despite the budget freeze, Ms. Basehore effectively manages the Board's vehicle fleet and ensures that staff has the needed resources available to them. She continually streamlines work processes to establish more



(from l to r): Chairman McVey, Deb Basehore, District Director Dennis Powell, Director of Administrative Services Richard Dash.

accountability for inventory, guides and directs staff through various contract and purchasing issues, and has devoted countless hours to a statewide agent radio system.

Ms. Basehore's commitment to excellence is evident in her work performance and management of effective and efficient operations of the various facets of the Board's resources.



Employee Awards

Excellence in Leadership Award: Robert LaBenne, Parole Agent, Erie District Office

This award signifies an employee's excellence in agency and mission leadership.

Agent LaBenne assumed the duties of an Assessment Sanctioning and Community Resource Agent (ASCRA) in December 2007. Despite the ASCRA agent being a new concept in reentry efforts, Agent LaBenne creatively shaped the position to benefit the Erie District Office and the Board. Through his strong work ethic, approachability and willingness to assist, he has set the standard for ASCRA agents and has become an important member of the Erie District supervision team.

Agent LaBenne's duties include coordinating and facilitating various offender groups including Life Skills for new releases and violators, Violence Prevention Booster groups and Employment groups for chronically unemployed offenders. He reviews difficult cases with other staff and develops supervision options to enhance the adjustment of offenders back into the community.

Through his commitment to excellence, Agent LaBenne strives to establish and maintain relationships that benefit the Board and the offenders under agent supervision. He is a member of the Group of Offender Employment, a local committee comprised of criminal justice agencies for collaboration on increasing offender employment opportunities in the



(from l to r): Board Members Michael Green, Matthew Mangino, Jim Fox, Chairman McVey, John Tuttle, Jeff Imboden, Robert LaBenne, Judith Viglione, Ben Martinez, and Lloyd White.

Erie area. His involvement in this committee led to the establishment of the Job Club, a combined effort of the Erie District Office, Erie County Adult Probation and Federal Probation. Agent LaBenne worked diligently with the Erie County job developer to design the curriculum focusing on the development of an individual employment plan for each referred offender. Through this relationship, he has also assisted in writing a federal grant to assist county and state offenders in obtaining job training.

Agent LaBenne is deserving of the Excellence in Leadership award through his professionalism, leadership abilities and commitment to the Board's reentry efforts.

