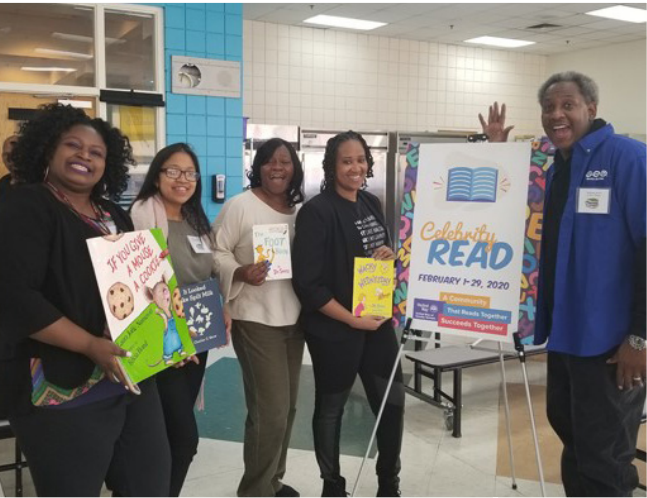


# GEO World

1ST QUARTER 2021

A GEO Publication for Employees and their Families.



**GEO Continuum of Care®  
Post-Release and Alumni Services  
Provide Support for Those  
Reentering Their Communities**

# Chairman's Letter

George C. Zoley, Chairman, CEO and Founder



**We are proud of the collective work of our operating divisions who have taken important steps to mitigate the risks of the novel coronavirus and have worked with our government agency partners to ensure the health and safety of all those entrusted to our care and of our employees.**

## To the GEO Family,

We end the first quarter of 2021 with renewed optimism despite what remains a challenging operational environment after a year of unprecedented circumstances due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to admire the strength and perseverance of our employees around the world, who make daily sacrifices to deliver high-quality services and humane and compassionate care to all those entrusted to our facilities and programs.

We are proud of the collective work of our operating divisions who have taken important steps to mitigate the risks of the novel coronavirus and have worked with our government agency partners to ensure the health and safety of all those entrusted to our care and of our employees. Our ongoing COVID-19 mitigation initiatives have included:

- Focus on increasing testing capabilities at our secure services facilities, including investing approximately \$2 million to acquire 45 Abbott Rapid COVID-19 ID NOW devices and testing kits. By the end of March of 2021, we had administered more than 100,000 COVID-19 tests to those in our care.
- Installation of Bi-Polar Ionization Air Purification Systems at select secure services facilities to reduce the spread of airborne bacteria and viruses, representing a company investment of approximately \$3.7 million.
- Providing continuing access to facemasks and personal hygiene products.

- Implementing social distancing pursuant to directives from our government agency partners.
- Working with our government agency partners and local health departments to make COVID-19 vaccinations available to those in our care and our employees.

We also remain extremely proud of our efforts to deliver enhanced in-custody rehabilitation programs and post-release support through our award-winning GEO Continuum of Care®.

GEO's Continuum of Care® (CoC) program of improved offender rehabilitation is our contribution to criminal justice reform. It provides a proven successful model on how the 2.2 million people in the criminal justice system can be better served in changing how they live their lives.

The CoC program is not in competition or in conflict with other national initiatives regarding offender sentencing reforms. In fact, we applaud these efforts. Our efforts seek to draw national attention to the many still incarcerated in need of a more structured and comprehensive approach to rehabilitation.

In 2020, our CoC sites completed approximately 2.6 million hours of rehabilitation programming and provided post-release support to over 3,600 individuals returning to their communities.

The many success stories of our CoC participants inspire all of us and validate our steadfast belief that we are at our best, when those we care for re-enter society as productive and employable citizens.

# Table Of Contents



**1ST QUARTER  
2021  
Volume 29**

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

Editor-in-Chief  
**Audra E. Birt**  
*abirt@geogroup.com*

Contributors  
**George C. Zoley**  
**Pablo E. Paez**  
**Chris V. Ferreira**

**Cover Story**

**02 GEO Continuum of Care® Post-Release and Alumni Services Provide Support for Those Reentering Their Communities**

**Articles**

- 09 Secure Services**
- 17 International Services**
- 22 GEO Care**

**Features**

- 15 Introducing Riverbend's First Emotional Support K-9: Chloe**  
Riverbend Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (RCRF) announced in December 2020 that Chloe was given the distinguished title of Emotional Support Animal (ESA) K-9.
- 17 Former Inmates Continue to Reach Out for Support During COVID-19**  
Men released from Ravenhall Correctional Centre in Melbourne, Australia were provided with more than 4,700 instances of telephone support and case management through its associated community reintegration centre, The Bridge Centre, during six months of 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns.
- 22 Eighty-Five Residents at ATEF Register to Vote**  
A voter registration drive at Alabama Therapeutic Education Facility (ATEF) took place during the 2020 election to assist those qualified to register to vote under the 2017 Definition of Moral Turpitude Act.

# GEO Continuum of Care® Post-Release and Alumni Services Provide Support for Those Reentering Their Communities

On any given Sunday, at approximately seven-o'clock, hundreds of men across the United States sit smiling in front of their computers and phones. As they greet each other, a voice says, "Good Evening Family." This is how each weekly GEO Alumni Services meeting begins.

In a year marked by COVID-19, GEO Alumni have had to find a way to remain positive and carry on the message of community and camaraderie. One of the most recent GEO Alumni meetings focused on giving back to the community, a cornerstone of GEO Alumni Services.

Good work is not always a planned event, sometimes it entails providing a ride to work, childcare for a job interview, or a much-needed push for treatment. The network of GEO Alumni works together to stay focused and moving forward.

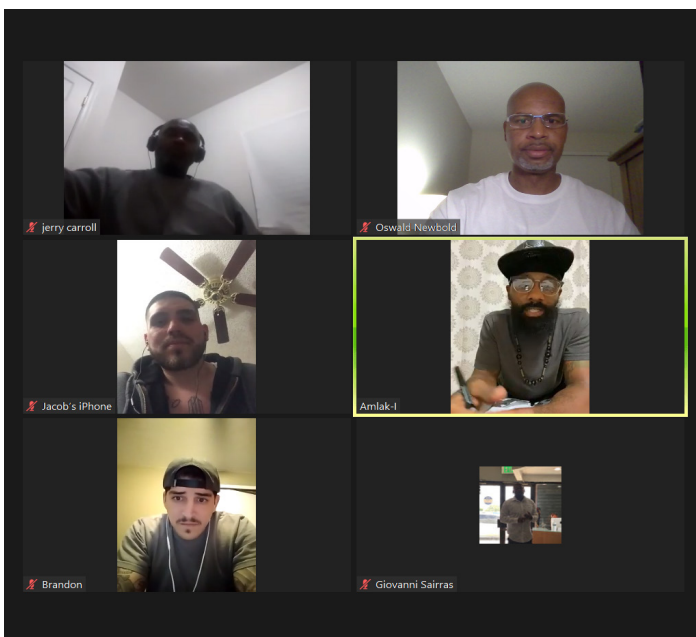
One of the main objectives of GEO Alumni Services is to share experiences to heal and transform lives. Alumni members Miguel Lopez and Amlak-I Foley take time every other Friday night to motivate the men and women at the Dismas House, which is focused on helping the homeless in Dania Beach, Florida.

"My Friday nights are filled with family, friends and focused on helping others succeed," says Mr. Foley. Mr. Lopez also encourages others to stay focused and keep the faith. "I rode a bicycle provided by GEO Post-Release Services to work every day, with a smile and a wink," he proclaims, "but I stayed focused, worked hard and now I have a brand-new car and am thankful every day."



Men and women transitioning from custody are met with numerous challenges, but current GEO Post-Release Services participants are dedicated to meeting those obstacles together as a family, and as a community, ready to lift up and support one another.

"GEO Alumni Services is the raft to help those drowning in the sea of despair, seeking to get to the other side of the ocean. Some days we are just like the coast guard," said Arthur Townes, National Manager of Alumni Services. Townes works tirelessly every day to ensure men and women are released with housing, and employment support.





GEO recognizes the importance of peer support as individuals prepare for release and the need for continued support after release. Alumni and Mentoring Services are designed to assist participants with a successful return to the community. Through these services, GEO provides on-going mentorship, connects individuals with a life-long support network, and helps transform individuals and families.

By establishing relationships during programming, mentors act as guides through treatment and beyond, offering their experience, strength, and hope to help others meet the challenge of a positive reentry.

GEO Alumni Services meetings, coupled with Post-Release Support Services, provide a strong foundation for individuals transitioning into the community. Post-release services provide unique and enhanced aftercare support for returning citizens in partnership with community agencies.

To assist individuals with a successful community reintegration, GEO partners with local community providers throughout the country, which allows Post-Release Support Services and GEO Alumni Services to refer individuals in need to available transition resources.

In 2020, a total of 3,656 individuals engaged in Post-Release and Alumni Services. In addition, GEO provided a significant financial investment using Funded Individual Support Packages (FISPs) to support participants as they progressed through the phases of reentry.

“The Post-Release Program paid for my rent for the first three months and helped me with food and clothes. My Post-Release Case Manager helped me create a resume and got me work boots to start my new job,” said Dennis G., a Post-Release Support Services Participant and another GEO Alumni member.





# Sip Your Way to Better Health

Written By **Susan Napolitano, Corporate**

If one of your goals is to drink more water, then you are on your way to better health! A steady supply of water keeps your circulation flowing smoothly, aids with digestion and weight loss, eases joint movement, and helps your body absorb nutrients. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has suggested that women drink around 9 eight-ounce cups and men around 12.5 cups of water daily.

Your heart is constantly working, pumping about 2,000 gallons of blood a day. By staying hydrated – that is, by drinking more water than you are losing – you are helping your heart do its job.

## Mayo Clinic Physicians Support Drinking Plenty of Water

What if you were told, drinking one glass of water before going to bed can help you avoid a stroke or heart attack?

If you are wondering why some people need to urinate a lot at night, then doctors say this is because gravity holds water in the lower part of your body when you are upright (causing legs to swell). When you lie down your lower body is more level with the kidneys, making it easier for the kidneys to remove the water.

## Timing is Everything

Did you know there are specific times throughout the day when drinking water can actually boost your overall health and cognitive functioning? Cardiac Specialists have shown that by drinking water at optimal times throughout the day, you can actually absorb more health benefits and improve your internal processes.

Drinking water at the following times can be optimal for your health:

- Two glasses of water after waking up - helps activate internal organs
- One glass of water 30 minutes before a meal - aids digestion
- One glass of water before taking a bath or before going to bed - helps lower blood pressure and lower the risk of heart attack and stroke.

## Easier than you Think

Drinking plenty of water will help keep you in good physical and mental shape all day. Maintain your healthy balance mindfully and remember to drink up with these easy tips!

- Need some flavor? – add fruit or a splash of fruit juice
- Eat more fresh fruit and reduce sugary packaged snacks – some fruit and vegetables are more than 90 percent water; such as cantaloupe, strawberries and watermelon
- Take sips of water during meals – this helps you eat more slowly; pausing between bites

Drinking water may also help avoid a trip to the Emergency room. GEO employees incurred more than \$4.1 million in claims related to emergency room, urgent care, and hospitalizations due to diseases of the circulatory system, such as heart attacks and stroke, in 2020.

So fill up a glass of water right now and get in the habit of doing so for a healthier future.



## 2020 Diversity in Leadership Award Recipient – Thatiana H. Tavarez, ISAP Program Manager II, Miami ISAP Office

Congratulations to Thatiana H. Tavarez on being selected as one of the two 2020 Diversity in Leadership Award Recipients. Ms. Tavarez has dedicated her time, skills, and experience to GEO for 10 years, as noted in the testimonies of several of her peers.

The scope of her leadership and strength in her abilities allows her to outshine others as she works creatively with the diverse population found in the Miami, Florida area.

During her tenure, Ms. Tavarez has obtained five Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) that establish long-term connections with GEO and community partners.

In 2018, by working with ISAP leadership, Thatiana ran a pilot program called “Know your Rights.” Due to its success, the program was adopted nationwide by 53 other ISAP locations and ultimately written into the next ISAP contract by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In 2020, Ms. Tavarez’s compassion for program participants, led her to help launch a brand new congressionally funded program for ISAP known as Wraparound Services. Through this program, participants who have suffered significant trauma are able to connect with community providers and receive resources.

To ensure the success of the program she also provided training to three other offices which led to approximately 100 individual referrals. Thank you, Thatiana, for your leadership and for furthering the GEO mission!



## 2020 Diversity in Leadership Award Recipient – Jamie Flores, GTI Transportation Manager, Western Region Detention Facility

Congratulations to Jamie Flores on being selected as one of the two 2020 Diversity in Leadership Award Recipients. Her most noteworthy achievement was evident during a recent contract renewal when her leadership was noted as one of the primary reasons for renewing the contract.

Jamie is also a huge supporter of needy children. It is a well-known fact in her neighborhood that she maintains an open-door policy for any child who is hungry or may need a place to spend the night.

In 2019, Ms. Flores opened her home to a senior year high school student who required assistance. She provided guidance, a place to sleep, a loving home, and food.

Graduating high school as a single parent, Ms. Flores continued her studies and went on to obtain a college degree in Criminal Justice with a minor in Corrections.

Even in her everyday life, Ms. Flores has mastered the art of transportation. By choice, due to expensive housing and real estate in San Diego, Ms. Flores resides 123 miles away from her place of employment, the Western Region Detention Facility.

Her daily commute starts at 3 a.m., and at the end of the day, she makes the 123-mile trip to return to her husband and family. Thank you, Jamie, for your leadership and dedication!



## GEO Corporate Conducts Annual Toy Drive for Boys Town

Written By Eileen Roth, Corporate

Every year, GEO Corporate engages with Boys Town of South Florida to coordinate an annual toy drive. Boys Town of South Florida provides an array of life-changing youth care and health care services that meet each child and family exactly where they are, so they get the right kind of care, at the right time, in the right way. In 2020, Daniela Mesquita, Development Director for Boys Town, informed GEO that due to the pandemic, the organization would only be giving children gift cards for Christmas.

As we engaged with employees, the response was overwhelming, and GEO Corporate was able to provide gifts and toys for 140 children in need. Representatives from Boys Town met with GEO's Chairman, CEO and Founder, Dr. Zoley, to receive the gifts and toys. Every year, the Boys Town toy drive provides an opportunity for employees in the GEO Corporate Office to give back to the community while helping children in need.

Thank you to all those who participated and helped in ensuring that the children in our community had a normal, toy-filled Christmas!





# GEO Continuum of Care Alumni Give Back to the Community for the Holidays

●●●●●●●● Written By **Angela Geisinger, Corporate, Continuum of Care** ●●●●●●●●

In 2020, South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility Alumnus and President of Dignity Speaks, Inc., Elmo Golden partnered with The Life Center, GEO Continuum of Care Leadership, and local Alumni to feed over 150 families in West Palm Beach during the holidays. Dignity Speaks, Inc. is a non-profit founded by Mr. Golden that makes positive changes in communities through faith and character-based mentorship.

GEO Alumni Services members often play an important role in the success of others as they transition to community life. Alumni members now leading a positive lifestyle in the community voluntarily reach out to those in transition, acting

as mentors to assist with helpful information for reentry, such as employment and education opportunities, housing, food pantries, shelter, and local resources.

Mr. Golden cares that those who are newly released have a chance to rebuild their lives and establish a positive lifestyle, just as he has. In addition to his volunteer Alumni activities and running Dignity Speaks, Inc., Mr. Golden also participates in a reentry podcast entitled "Death or Prison."

Thank you, Elmo, for your inspiring work with those reentering society and for being an example of how the GEO Continuum of Care can give you a second chance!



## GEO Continuum of Care Alumni and Peer Mentoring Services

The GEO Continuum of Care Division provides alumni and mentoring services designed to assist participants in successfully transitioning into the community. Alumni services are available to both pre- and post-release participants.

Members voluntarily join the alumni services program to mentor current participants and provide support and guidance as individuals develop pro-social skills and support each other.

Mentors are available for the following services:

- Substance Use and Recovery
- Academic & Vocational
- Faith & Character
- Youthful Offenders
- Long term Offenders

While in custody, individuals learn how to meet reentry challenges from established alumni staff/members who share resources and personal experiences.

Prior to being a Peer Mentor, participants will complete the following:

- Individual and Group Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Sessions
- Leadership Skills Training
- Business Etiquette Training
- Presentation Skills Training
- Character Counts Case Studies
- Weekly Wisdom Meetings

Angela Geisinger, GEO's Senior Director of Programs, said "Participants are encouraged to attend alumni meetings as part of their reentry programming where they are introduced to other alumni members. Alumni members return to their community as living proof that positive goals can be achieved. We are especially proud of our robust and growing network of alumni and peer mentorship services."



## Project EHRIN: Electronic Health Records Implementation Project

Written By **Steven Salbe, Director, PMO, Corporate**

In January 2019, GEO commenced Project EHRIN; Implementation of Sapphire at GEO-run medical facilities within GEO Secure Services. As of January 2021, 10 facilities are using Sapphire and over 340 medical personnel are actively using the EHR in the rendering of care to over 6,200 patients.

Integrations with GEOtrack, Correct Rx, Lab Corp, Spectrum, TridentUSA, CMMS and CompuMed automate patient maintenance and provide electronic access to prescriptions, lab results, radiology and EKG studies.

Over 300 GEO medical forms and nursing assessment protocols are now completed electronically. Form responses drive auto-scheduling of tasks and appointments within mandated timeframes for both internal and external providers.

External appointments, are routed electronically to the Site Medical Director and Regional Medical Director for review and approval. Documents are electronically attached to patient charts and routed to providers for signoff.

Under the guidance of GEO's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. John Christakis, GEO's Chief of Nursing, Jason Wright, RN, GEO's PMO Director Steven Salbe, Liz Burson, BSN, Maria Gonzalez, RN and the dedicated Sapphire team, we look forward to ongoing successful rollouts.

We thank the facilities and our vendors for their involvement and recommendations.



# GEO Alumnus Earns Degree and Achieves Magna Cum Laude

Written By **Karen Collins,**  
**South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**

It is fulfilling for us to provide programming that changes lives, that in turn has the potential to help countless others."

In addition to his educational accomplishments, Mr. Newbold leads and facilitates a weekly online alumni meeting, is one of thirteen voting members seated on the executive committee of the Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force, and maintains a non-profit organization mentoring youth and young adults in personal development.

When Mr. Newbold's last grandparent passed away while he was still at SBCRF, he declared "The world I left will not be the one I know when I come out. That's when I realized I needed to sustain on my own, so I enrolled in programs. South Bay staff always encouraged us to continue our education post-release."

Following that advice and putting what he learned from his GEO programming to work, Mr. Newbold enrolled in college. Currently, Mr. Newbold is writing a book and planning career goals that offer endless possibilities. Let the sky be your limit!

A big congratulations to Oswald Newbold, peer mentor and GEO South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (SBCRF) alumnus, for earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from the Catherine T. MacArthur School of Leadership, at Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Mr. Newbold graduated with Magna Cum Laude honors, placing him at the top level of his graduating class.

"Oswald has inspired so many, and this is just another example of how and why," said Angela Geisinger, GEO's Senior Director of Programs. "We are extremely proud of his accomplishments.



## HTCF – Roll Up Your Sleeves to Stop COVID-19

Written By **Selina Lewis, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility**

As front line workers, the job we do is essential to the safety and security of our communities and as such, does not come without the risk of possible exposure to COVID-19. Heritage Trail Correctional Facility (HTCF) hosted its first COVID-19 Vaccinations Clinic on Saturday, January 10, 2021 with the Indiana Department of Health on site to provide information, answer questions, and administer vaccines. Participation was voluntary and at the end of the day, 85% of HTCF staff rolled up their sleeves to receive their first injection in hopes of helping to prevent the spread of this horrible disease.

# Relief Through Tough Times

Written By **Tiffany Hartley, Western Region Detention Facility**



Let's just say it: 2020 was such a crummy year! COVID-19 really threw a wrench in our programs here at Western Region Detention Facility (WRDF). We've encountered many obstacles along the way and needless to say, it's been quite challenging to continue recreational programs and activities.



We decided that a blowout purchase of brand-new recreation games was the way to go. We invested in three foosball tables, one of which is 8 feet long, and two air hockey tables. These iconic games, along with our current ping-pong table, have really created a fun-filled atmosphere. We host daily tournaments which have noticeably enhanced the overall mood.



In addition to new recreation games, our Recreation Specialist, Elsa Monterrey, has come up with a handful of new programs and activities to help ease emotions during this time. One such program is called 'Family First.' Each week, Ms. Monterrey hosts an arts/crafts activity for the population to complete and to send home to their child(ren) using a complimentary, prepaid envelope supplied by the Facility.



With the pandemic still on-going, it has become a top priority to be innovative with activities to keep the population busy and to ease the overall tension that is often prevalent. From games, tournaments, and weekly word puzzle packets to a comprehensive library that includes a plethora of new books and resources, we strive to provide healthy and fun recreational opportunities.



## NCCF Makes Special Bond with Local Elementary School

Written By **Myra Strobel, New Castle Correctional Facility**

New Castle Correctional Facility (NCCF) has created a special bond with a special group of kids – those attending Wilbur Wright Elementary, specifically those on the Public Relations Leadership Team. Facility Administrator Mark Sevier made financial contributions to all ten local elementary schools, but when he heard that the poverty rate of the students at Wilbur Wright Elementary is a staggering 70%, he decided to do more. Two donations were made in the Fall of 2020, and he plans to continue partnering with them in 2021.

School Principal Jean Ann McAllister wrote a heart warming thank you note stating, "Your donations will allow us to contribute to each of our school's leadership teams and support our students with their initiatives to improve and change our school's culture." She also relayed that students are taught, on a daily basis, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" as listed in the book *Leader in Me* by Stephen Covey, and that "your donation will help us keep this program alive and active for every student." In addition, the school was also able to introduce a new program, a violin club. NCCF looks forward to supporting these wonderful programs going forward.

# 2020 A Challenging Year Indeed

Written By **Ed Stubbs, GTI**



With the year 2020 finally behind us, we are reminded that each year, GTI is faced with new challenges to overcome in order to continue providing safe and secure transportation services. GTI's primary challenge in 2020 was how to provide uninterrupted transportation services, safely and efficiently, during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Once again, GTI rose to the occasion, prevailed, and without pause or interruption of service, responded to the challenge.

As a government service provider, GTI was deemed an essential workforce and continued providing critical transportation services throughout the pandemic.

GTI personnel worked closely with Facility Staff, Facility Managers and Regional Managers to ensure all transport missions were conducted efficiently, safely and in a timely manner for our Federal, State and County government agency partners.

The division met the COVID-19 challenge head on by establishing new safety protocols governing the proper use of PPE and established new vehicle sanitation requirements.

Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, GTI closed out the year with an astonishing safety record. In 2020, GTI drove more than 14 million miles in the U.S. and internationally, while successfully and safely transporting more than half a million passengers. GTI's transport missions for the year were all accomplished without a serious incident, while safely managing COVID-19 related issues

A job well done to our nearly 450 GTI staff members and congratulations from the GTI Corporate Team. Your commitment to excellence honors our motto of "Delivering safe and secure transportation, with service second to none."



## COVID Care Packages

Written By **Kathryn Catino,**  
**South Louisiana**  
**ICE Processing Center**

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in quarantine or isolation, things can be downright daunting.

So, the staff members at the South Louisiana ICE Processing Center (SLIPC) came up with the idea to provide care packages for staff members during their time spent either in quarantine or in isolation recovering from the virus.

It is important to give our staff and community these care packages because we need to let them know that we understand that this is a difficult and stressful experience for them.

The care packages contain masks, chapstick, soup, cough drops, hard candy, gloves, assorted teas, hot chocolate, antibacterial soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, a spiritual meditation book, and an uplifting get well card signed with warm sentiments.

Our mission here at SLIPC is to see that every staff member receives this uplifting kit. We hope that this reminds the recipient of happier times and offers items that will make them a little happier wherever they are self-quarantined.

## Kingman CRF Partners with Veterans Support Group to Provide Housing for Vets

Written By **Lisa Black, Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**

Kingman Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (KCRF) offers six vocational training programs in construction trades. These programs include live projects in which participants apply what they have learned to build various items. Finished products are issued to various charity organizations, which typically are sold or raffled off to raise funds.

Last year, KCRF partnered with the Jerry Ambrose Veterans Council (JAVC) to assist the organization with their goal of reducing the number of homeless veterans in Mohave County. Through this partnership, KCRF agreed not



just to build a few items for a veteran's home, but KCRF also went a step further and offered to build an entire house!

Work on this large undertaking began last summer, when Vocational Training Instructor David Gellings donated an old, stripped out trailer to the program. The project was called "Tiny House".

KCRF has been working closely with the Jerry Ambrose Veterans' Council and has hosted many fundraisers for them. This is our most intensive project, as participants built this house from the 'trailer' up.



Another positive feature of this project has been the donations of items needed for construction by local businesses. Pat Farrell, President of JAVC (and a retired GEO employee) and Mr. Gellings led an effort to publicize the project.

As local businesses learned what staff and inmates were doing for a veteran, businesses donated items such as lumber, windows, doors, lights, fixtures, etc. to join in this project. The teamwork, selflessness, and community spirit have been incredible!



## HTCF Business Manager Jennetta Archer Celebrates 20 Years

Written By **Selina Lewis, Heritage Trail Correctional Facility**

Jennetta Archer, Business Manager at Heritage Trail Correctional Facility (HTCF) recently celebrated 20 years of employment with The GEO Group. Jennetta began her career as a Correctional Officer at Rivers Correctional Facility before transferring into a position in the Business Office as a Payroll Clerk. Then she began her pursuit of a secondary education, first obtaining an Associate's Degree in Computer Information Systems, followed by an Accounting Certificate, a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, and a Masters of Business Administration and Human Resources.

In 2011, Jennetta transitioned into a new role as Human Resources Specialist and from there was promoted to Assistant Business Manager. Then in 2018, Jennetta accepted the position of Business Manager at Heritage Trail Correctional Facility.

"What Jennetta brings to the table in knowledge and experience is matched only by her commitment, professionalism and quiet inspiration," stated Angela Reaves, HCTF Facility Administrator. Jennetta continues to pursue professional development by continuing her education. Her next goal is to become a Certified Accounting Manager (CMA).



## Intensive Leadership Training at South Louisiana ICE Processing Center

Written By **Sgt. Hilda Jones M. Ed.,**  
**South Louisiana ICE Processing Center**

Supervisors at South Louisiana ICE Processing Center (SLIPC) were recently given a rigorous examination consisting of several tests with over 150 questions. The process was aimed at determining what knowledge, skills, and abilities SLIPC leaders should have in order to be successful at their jobs.

Being a leader is not about walking around with a cup of coffee, it is about dedication and loyalty. Not every leader uses the same leadership style and different strategies work for different people. We strongly commend our supervisors

in upper management for providing mandatory leadership development classes for sergeants and lieutenants. Training is the key for success!

“The ultimate goal of this exercise was to ensure all supervisors have the knowledge needed to effectively and safely conduct their job duties as a team and not as individual shifts. Knowledge is power, and there is power in teamwork. As long as we have supervisors thirsting for knowledge, we will continue to grow as a team and be successful,” said Major Wolfe, of SLIPC's security team.

## Eagle Pass Detention Facility Volunteers at Local County Food Bank

Written By **Monica Reynaga, Eagle Pass Detention Facility**



The South Texas Food Bank, a non-profit organization based in Laredo, Texas, announced on Monday, February 22, 2021 that it was hosting a free food distribution for Maverick County residents on Thursday, February 25, 2021, at the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) Student Activity Center.

The South Texas Food Bank, in collaboration with the City of Eagle Pass, Maverick County, Eagle Pass Independent School District, and the Maverick County Emergency Operation Center, distributed 3,628 food items and

served approximately 7,404 adults and 3,237 children. Considering the number of food item distributions, the county had a significant need for volunteers.

The Eagle Pass Detention Facility (EPDF) formed a team of six volunteers that ran an entire lane of distributions and alleviated some of the traffic of residents driving through the event. Volunteers from the Eagle Pass Detention Facility, the local VFW, the Knights of Columbus local chapter, and the HEB Grocery Company all contributed to making this food bank distribution a success.

# GEO Facilities Collaborate for Inmate's GED Success

Written By **Dr. Cheralee Morgan,**  
**South Bay Correctional  
and Rehabilitation Facility**

*"Never give up, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn."* - Harriet Beecher Stowe. These prophetic words must have resounded in Eric Reese's mind on the morning of Tuesday January 19, 2021.

He was scheduled to be released on Sunday January 24, 2021, just a mere six days away, but was confronted with a monumental task. He needed to pass three readiness tests and GED exams to achieve his high school diploma before end of business on Friday.

This became even more daunting when he was told, that GED testing was only scheduled Tuesdays through Thursdays, and the GED Proctor was scheduled for vacation on Thursday, and the GED Administrator needed an exception to test alone.

He eagerly sat through the RLA Readiness test on Tuesday morning, and later in the afternoon sat and failed the GED exam by two points.

He was told that he would have to complete the tests elsewhere because it was not possible for him to complete the three readiness tests and three GED exams in just two days.

Mr. Reese refused to be held back, and he lobbied for the opportunity to complete his exams. Within minutes, approval for an exception for the GED Administrator was obtained and Friday was cleared for him to take the third readiness test and GED exam. An administrator was made available to conduct the final exam on Friday afternoon, pending Mr. Reese's success in passing the other two GEDs.

Mr. Reese took his readiness test and GED in Math and Science on Wednesday and Thursday respectively, and passed. The retake for his RLA was on Friday. Everyone waited with bated breath and the atmosphere was charged with anticipation when the phone rang with the message that he had passed the readiness test.

Despite numerous challenges, Mr. Reese passed his GED and obtained his High School Diploma. His teacher, Miss Monlouis, was ecstatic. South Bay Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility's motto, "Changing Behavior, Changing Lives" was on full display throughout. South Bay's Continuum of Care philosophy stood tall and strong.



## PLUS Offenders at NCCF Continue to Give Back

Written By **Damon L. Keough, New Castle Correctional Facility**



Giving to others is always meaningful but today it just feels more urgent. For various reasons, many families struggle to keep food on the table. One reason being the pandemic's negative effect on their employment. Simultaneously, the need for the utilization of food pantries has soared. As such, it is safe to say that there is no greater time for generosity than now.

Enter the PLUS program, which cultivates generosity by creating an avenue for members, to donate to worthy causes. Even non-members who live in PLUS units and are inspired by its atmosphere, sometimes contribute to these efforts. This aspect of the program, combined with today's tremendous need resulted in helping families to avert food scarcity. PLUS inmates, on behalf of the New Castle Correctional Facility, donated fifty-five boxes of beans, rice, ramen noodles, cereal, peanut butter, sweets, and more, totaling 1,134 pounds of food, to God's Grain Bin, a local food pantry.

This generous donation is a remarkable accomplishment when one considers the pandemic's unfortunate capacity to disrupt lives. It is the perfect way to celebrate the holiday season and an even better illustration that it is better to give than to receive.





## Introducing Riverbend's First Emotional Support K-9: Chloe

Written By **Timothy Johnson,**  
**Riverbend Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**

In December 2020, Riverbend Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (RCRF) announced that Chloe was given the distinguished title of Emotional Support Animal (ESA) K-9.

Riverbend has been a training host and partner with the Baldwin County Animal Shelter since July 2015. The dogs come from a local shelter and are brought to RCRF, where they are partnered with pre-selected inmate-trainers. The dogs spend approximately 4-5 months living with their trainers, as they receive basic obedience training, and in some cases, rehabilitation of behaviors that prevent them from being successfully adopted.

Because of this program 55 dogs that would have otherwise been killed, have been adopted into great forever homes.

Chloe's story has resulted in a different, but no less wonderful outcome. Chloe was living with an elderly gentleman in Baldwin County, as his Emotional Support Animal (ESA), where she served him faithfully for over five years. Sadly, her person became too ill to care for himself or Chloe, and he was placed into a care facility. When no one stepped up for Chloe, she was surrendered to the Baldwin County Animal Shelter.

It was soon discovered that she suffered from separation anxiety, which would make it difficult for her to find the right home. Chloe is now almost nine years old and is in excellent health. She still experiences some symptoms of separation anxiety if left alone too long, but she has made tremendous progress.

Chloe recognizes her job and enjoys scouting the Veteran's Dorm day room for anyone who looks sad or upset. She will approach and place her head gently on a knee, looking up at the person to determine whether they need her. She proudly wears her ESA K-9 harness and special tag, identifying her and her special contribution.



### Employee Profile: **Larry Lee**

**Heritage Trail Correctional Facility**

Larry Lee is known as a compassionate, creative and trusted confidant, committed to supporting others in achieving their aspirations.

As a facilitator and instructor for Individual Cognitive Base Therapy at Heritage Trail Correctional facility in Plainfield, Indiana, he leverages over two decades of experience in corrections, working with youths and adults in the criminal justice system over his career.

Larry began his career in the criminal justice field as a Youth Counselor, and over the past 20 years, he has fulfilled his passion for supporting others in Indiana as a Probation Officer, Thinking For A Change Facilitator, Community Corrections Supervisor, and in Nashville, Tennessee, as a Police Officer and Drug court Case Manager for the mentally challenged.

Larry earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from Indiana University. Larry is also an accomplished percussionist, with more than 30 years of experience. Outside of work, he enjoys listening to a vast array of music, and has earned his first-degree black belt in Tai Kwando.



## Christmas Donation for CASA

Written By **Deborah Lucas-Stevens, South Louisiana ICE Processing Center**

The South Louisiana ICE Processing Center (SLIPC) was happy to contribute to CASA this Christmas season for children in the child welfare system. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) programs provide support and advocacy for abused and neglected children who are under the protection of the juvenile court. In mid-November SLIPC started a Toy Drive and was able to collect over 100 toys to contribute to the children’s Christmas. Also, through ice cream sales, raffles, and other fundraisers, the staff was also able to raise \$2,000 as a monetary donation for CASA, along with a gift package for each of the residents at the Basile Senior Care Center. SLIPC staff are looking forward to getting started on fundraising for next year with the hopes of surpassing this year’s accomplishment.



## Christmas in the Community

Written By **Marlene Womble-Williams, Alexandria Staging Facility**

In December 2020, staff members from the Alexandria Staging Facility (ASF) visited Naomi Heights Nursing Home to deliver Christmas gift bags to the residents. Each gift bag had a pair of non-skid socks, shower gel, lotion, and a few sugar-free caramels.

Next, staff members from ASF delivered gifts to The Hope House. The Hope House is a member agency of the United Way of Central Louisiana and provides safe shelter and essential services to homeless families. Staff from ASF made monetary donations and were able to purchase two items for each member of these families.

Both Naomi Heights and The Hope House staff were very appreciative for the gifts donated. ASF staff raised monetary donations from a challenge between the security and administrative staff to see who could raise the most money. The competition helped get everyone in the giving spirit and took their minds off COVID-19 momentarily.



## My Greatest Achievement

Written By **Kevin Shields, Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility**



John Schneider is currently housed at the Blackwater River Correctional and Rehabilitation Facility (BRCRF). Mr. Schneider recently achieved his GED High School equivalency certificate after four years of perseverance, commitment, and dedication.

At the young age of 11, he found himself without a steady family support system, which led to him shifting between various foster care facilities. At age 13, it was determined, through testing conducted by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), that John had a learning disability and required special education classes.

Thirty-five years later, Mr. Schneider requested to be enrolled in the Adult Literacy Program at BRCRF because at the age of 50 he found himself unable to read and write. He was enrolled in our program and placed with Ms. Thalia Mitchell. With over 500 hours of practice, individualized tutoring with inmate education aides, and the assistance of GED instructors, Mr. Schneider reached GED level comprehension and successfully passed all subject areas of his high school equivalency tests. Mr. Schneider sincerely credits the academic staff at BRCRF of Mr. Savage, Ms. Byrd, and Ms. Mitchell for their consistent encouragement and dedication.



## Former Inmates Continue to Reach Out for Support During COVID-19

Written By **Lyndell Coutts, Ravenhall Correctional Centre**

Men released from Ravenhall Correctional Centre in Melbourne, Victoria were provided with more than 4,700 instances of telephone support and case management through its associated community reintegration centre, The Bridge Centre, during six months of 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns.

The Bridge Centre offers men the opportunity to continue their rehabilitation once released with the support of post-release case-managers, clinicians, and community partners.

GEO National Director of Rehabilitation and Reintegration, Dr. Sarah Gray emphasized that COVID-19 significantly impacted the way post-release rehabilitation and reintegration services could be delivered.

"While ideally we would be meeting with the men face-to-face, we had to move our operations to phone and video-based services," Dr. Gray said.

In the six months from June 2020, an average of 790 instances a month of telephone support and case management were provided. "There was a high level of support provided to the men on how to manage their rehabilitation and reintegration during lockdown," Dr. Gray said.

From June to December 2020, the following support was provided:

- 812 individual men received 4,734 instances of phone support or case management.
- 164 family members were provided with 222 instances of support.
- 119 men were provided with 342 instances of support from The Bridge Centre Clinician.

Dr. Gray said, "Since opening in late 2017, The Bridge Centre has supported hundreds of men with the rehabilitation journey they began in prison and while they reintegrate into the community. Take up of the services offered is voluntary, but the high level of support being pursued demonstrates the importance of continuity of care for people exiting custody."



## Staff Embrace New Wellbeing App

Written By **Lyndell Coutts, GEO Group Australia**

A new wellbeing app to support GEO staff with the management of their physical and mental health was rolled-out across Australia in late 2020.

Director of Correctional Services, Dom Karauria said staff wellbeing was a key priority for GEO and with the challenges of living and working through COVID-19 this year, it was timely to provide everyone with a new wellbeing tool.

"I commend the efforts of every individual in ensuring all of the additional health and safety protocols introduced in GEO's Centres are adhered to, and we can be proud of the lack of spread of COVID-19 among staff and inmates," he said.

"However, there is no doubt staff — especially those living in Melbourne who were subjected to the toughest lockdowns — were having a tough time managing so many restrictions at work and at home," he said.

The app, developed by Springday, includes resources such as workouts, relaxation videos and recipes, as well as information on goal setting and financial and emotional wellbeing.

# Australia Boosting Health Service Delivery

Written By **David Grace, GEO Group Australia**



While GEO Australia Health Services staff will mostly remember 2020 for their role in the management of the global COVID-19 pandemic, they should also remember the year for the many and significant enhancements achieved in health service delivery.

GEO Australia has introduced enhanced clinical governance processes; commissioned state-of-the-art health care facilities; and focused on delivering health services to not only meet, but exceed, the key performance expectations of its clients.

The Australian clinical governance model process is entrenched in planning, continuously evaluating and also promoting accountability in the delivery of safe and effective health care. In addition to the existing GEO Australia national clinical governance processes, facility-based Health Service Safety and Quality Committees were introduced in 2020 across Australia's Centres — to focus on local quality improvement processes.

David Grace PSM, National Director of Health Services said, "Each jurisdiction within Australia has slightly different expectations for the delivery of health services. Where we can make quality improvements at a national level, we do. However, the new Health Service Safety and Quality Committee at each Centre allows us to be more responsive to the local requirements of the client and health needs of the Centre's specific population."

David chairs each Health Service Safety & Quality Committee meeting to ensure local lessons from each site are passed on to other Centres. The use of video conferencing has greatly assisted this process, given COVID-19 travel restrictions and the vast distances between GEO Centres in Australia.

Health staff in both Junee and Fulham Correctional Centres moved into state-of-the-art health care facilities. These include consulting rooms, dental clinics, dispensaries, medical imaging, and improved staff amenities. The new Fulham Health Centre also includes six medical observation beds, which reduces the need to transfer patients off-site for health care.

Julie Bond, Health Services Manager at Fulham Correctional Centre, said, "The Centre allows us to deliver health care more efficiently and afforded us the opportunity to make changes to certain systems and processes."

Junee Correctional Centre also commenced a new Management Agreement in 2020. The contract includes 12 health-related key performance indicators that focus on health screening, timeliness of service delivery, chronic health care planning, immunisation, and discharge planning.

Kim Blinkhorn, GEO Australia's Director of Governance and Continuous Improvement, stated, "The accomplishments in 2020 by GEO health services staff demonstrates GEO's commitment to continuous quality improvement. We are also working on the health services action plan for the next three years to build upon the successes of 2020 and further strengthen our position, into the future, as the leader in Correctional Services in Australia."

Health staff acknowledge the significant role other departments within the centres played in helping them achieve the accomplishments of 2020, including the General Managers, custodial, rehabilitation and reintegration, and administrative staff. In reality, it has always been and continues to be a true team effort.

# National Day of Recognition for Corrective Services Staff

Written By **Lyndell Coutts, GEO Group Australia**

Thousands of GEO Australia staff participated in National Corrections Day celebrations on January 15, 2021, to recognise the efforts of individuals and teams in supporting inmates towards a successful reintegration post-release.

In line with this year's theme — Working together to reduce reoffending — staff delivering health services at Fulham Correctional Centre in Victoria were specifically recognised after almost a year of additional responsibilities in managing the health risks of COVID-19.

GEO Australia's General Manager of the Fulham Correctional Centre, Natalie Greenfield, said, "Today we recognise the outstanding efforts of all of GEO's correctional staff, who are working to make a difference in the community — supporting inmates towards a better future and helping keep the community safe."

Health Services Manager, Julie Bond has worked at Fulham Correctional Centre since 2003, and her dedicated team of professional health services staff — which includes doctors, nurses, a dentist, physiotherapist, podiatrist, psychiatrist, and optometrist — work around the clock to support inmate health and wellbeing.

"By helping improve an inmate's physical, mental and emotional health, we are giving them the best possible chance of leading a healthy and productive life when released." Ms. Bond said.

Activities included the planting of two roses in the 'Garden of Meaning' at the entrance to the Centre, a special morning and afternoon tea, and staff created a video describing how their teams contribute to reducing recidivism.

Case workers at the Ravenhall Correctional Centre, Victoria and its associated community reintegration facility, The Bridge Centre, were recognised with activities that included a barbecue and an awards ceremony.

GEO Australia's General Manager of the Ravenhall Correctional Centre, Col Caskie said, "The role case workers play is critical in ensuring inmates are guided and encouraged through personalised interventions."

"In addition to keeping the community safe, GEO's Centres are about working to improve the future of those in-custody post-release. The strong collaborative approach between our custodial and rehabilitation and reintegration staff is core to our success."

The Senior Leadership Team at Junee Correctional Centre, New South Wales, cooked breakfast for all staff — those ending night shift, as well as staff beginning their day. The Human Resources Team also developed a video featuring different departmental staff discussing recidivism.





# Support for the Local Community during COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown

Written By **Joe Mearns, Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre**

Dungavel House was originally a 19th Century hunting lodge and summer retreat of the Dukes of Hamilton and is set in rural South Lanarkshire, close to the East Ayrshire border in Scotland. Its closest town is Strathaven, which is approximately six miles north of the Centre.

The Dukedom of Hamilton is the premier peerage in Scotland (with the exception of the Dukedom of Rothesay, which is held by the Sovereign's eldest Son). The peerage dates back to April 1643. The Ducal family name was originally Hamilton and later changed to Douglas-Hamilton. The final resting place of Lieutenant Alfred Douglas-Hamilton, a Scottish Nobleman and Naval Officer, lies within the boundaries of the Centre and his grave is maintained by The GEO Group UK Ltd.

The Centre and surrounding area are steeped in history and battles dating back to the Reformation in the 17th Century.

Dungavel House was sold to the National Coal Board in 1947 and was later converted into an open prison. Agnes Curran served as Governor of HMP Dungavel, and she was the first ever female Prison Governor of a male prison. HMP Dungavel was closed in 2000 and repurposed as an Immigration Removal Centre in 2001.

The majority of our staff have been recruited from the local area, and as a result of this, we have close ties with our local community and charitable organizations. The GEO Group UK Ltd. has always taken its Corporate Social Responsibilities seriously, and we regularly engage with our staff and



***Dungavel House in 1957***

local community to provide support and assistance with deserving projects.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns made this year more of a challenge, but this did not prevent us from continuing with our ethos of giving back to support our local community. Centre Manager Sarah Lynch engaged with our staff to identify good causes that could benefit from our support during this difficult time, and staff responded enthusiastically.



*Dungavel House in 2021*

With many people unable to leave their homes, the Centre provided food hampers to residents in Hamilton Drive, which is a street next to the Centre itself. They were very well received, and in return, we received some heartwarming thank you notes. Many other organizations and groups also received gifts:

- NHS Trust Hospitals - Ayr Hospital and Crosshouse Hospital in Kilmarnock received gifts of biscuits, sweets and toiletries and vouchers.
- Graigend Nursing Home received hampers.
- Glennie House Care Home received crates of biscuits and sweets.
- Lady Flora, which is a sheltered housing complex in nearby Newmilns, received a crate of food hampers.
- St. Ninians Church, operating a food bank in Stonehouse, received a £700 food hamper.
- Residents of Collins Court, which is a sheltered housing complex in nearby Darvel, received a crate of food hampers.

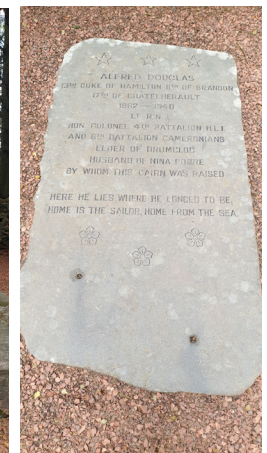
Probably the most heartwarming story of the donations was for a vulnerable, elderly couple from a nearby village. The couple had fell upon hard times and were too proud to seek help and therefore would have likely refused charity if it had been offered to them. Instead, they were informed that they had won a raffle prize, and they received the following items:

- 2 food hampers and a bale of towels
- A £25 meat voucher for a local butcher
- Double bed, headboard, orthopedic mattress, duvet covers, pillows and pillowcases
- Canteen of cutlery and a dinner set
- A 32-inch television

All of the food hampers that were donated throughout the community had a complimentary greeting slip from The GEO Group UK Ltd. placed inside them.



**Duke of Hamilton's grave at  
Dungavel House Immigration  
Removal Centre**





## Dr. Latoya Lane Barber Recognized in Corrections Today for Authoring Reentry Books for the Family

Written By **Karen Collins**, GEO Care Communications

Dr. Latoya Lane Barber, Vice President of GEO Reentry In-Prison Treatment Services, recently received recognition in Corrections Today's January/February 2021 issue for her children's books about the challenges of having an incarcerated parent and of family reunification.

The magazine, which is a publication of the American Correctional Association, drew attention to Dr. Lane Barber's two newest works, *Daddy's Coming Home* and *Mommy's Coming Home*. She co-authored these books with Dr. Bahiyah M. Muhammad, professor of Criminology at Howard University and founding director of Policing Inside Out and founding facilitator of the College in Prison Program.

In the books, Dr. Lane Barber acknowledges that reintroduction of a parent into the family unit following incarceration can present as many challenges for children as the initial absence of that parent, so it is important to prepare kids for the transition. Her message focuses on the

importance of patience and of making the delicate adjustments essential to re-building family relationships.

*Daddy's Coming Home* and *Mommy's Coming Home*, both published in Fall 2020, are written in an upbeat style and contain lively illustrations while offering useful information for both parents and children. The books also remind families that successful reunification depends on everyone communicating and working together, and that change requires time and mutual understanding.

"These books start the conversation on the parent's return," said Dr. Lane Barber. "Things will be different after incarceration. It is a time of new beginnings for the parent and child. We saw the need for this resource that helps family members know what to expect and establish a plan together."

*Daddy's Coming Home* and *Mommy's Coming Home* are Dr. Lane Barber's second books, and she is planning to write a third. Both books are available through Amazon.com.

## Eighty-Five Residents at ATEF Register to Vote

Written By **Naomi Rabago**, Alabama Therapeutic Education Facility

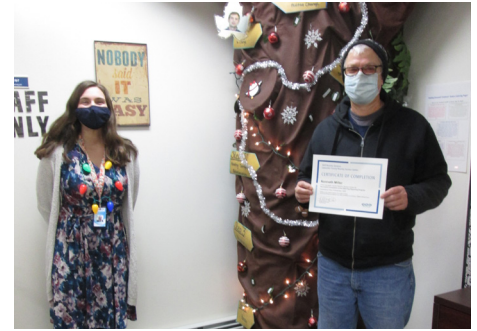
A voter registration drive at Alabama Therapeutic Education Facility (ATEF) took place during the 2020 election to assist those qualified to register to vote under the 2017 Definition of Moral Turpitude Act. This new law meant that a total of 214 residents were now eligible to register to vote, and a total of 85 of them registered.

"Alabama Secretary of State Merrill was proud to work with bipartisan members of the Legislature to define the crimes of moral turpitude and restore the voting rights of those who had previously been disqualified," said Cam Ward, Director of the Bureau of Pardons and Paroles. "Just because someone has been incarcerated doesn't make them any less a person or any less capable of participating in the democratic process. I worked on clearing up the definition of moral turpitude because the right to vote should not be one that has people confused or afraid to engage in the system of government, we live in. We all make mistakes in life but that does not make us less human or any less worthy to participate in our election process," said Secretary Merrill in a statement.



# Lancaster RSC Hosts "Drive Through" Transition Ceremony

Written By **Karen Collins,**  
**GEO Care Communications**



Participants and staff at the Lancaster Reentry Service Center, a non-residential reentry center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, recently took part in a unique "drive through" transition ceremony, which had been modified to accommodate social distancing restrictions.

"Each participant recognized during this ceremony has made a commitment to themselves, their families and their community to make a lasting change," said GEO Reentry Pennsylvania Area Manager John Hogan.

"Reentry programs aren't easy to complete and require a lot of hard work and reflection. We're inspired by the accomplishments of these participants and humbled to be part of changing behaviors and changing lives."

The RSC graduated 37 participants, who received certificates of completion for finishing approximately nine months of programming, which included Cognitive Behavioral Treatment, Batterers' Intervention, substance abuse treatment, employment services, anger management and individual case management.

Four graduates were noted for their accomplishment during the ceremony. One participant completed the program after one year followed by six months of workforce training, had landed a job after facing roadblocks to employment.

Another participant had started college to pursue a degree in counseling to work with at-risk youth. Two other participants are currently studying for their CDL license after being guided by Lancaster staff to seek out job opportunities on CareerLink.

"We are so pleased to hold an inspiring graduation that had so much to celebrate, as a result of the hard work by staff and participants," said Program Manager Kim Reichenbach.

At the drive-through graduation ceremony, RSC staff set up stations that participants could visit upon entering the building: a welcome station, a program station, a gift bag station, and a gratitude station, where they were asked to write down an inspirational message for new participants. Congratulations, graduates!



*Naomi Rabago organized the voter registration drive for eligible residents currently housed at ATEF.*

*During the voter registration drive, two ATEF residents became registered voters for the first time.*



*After being educated about the Definition of Moral Turpitude Act (2017), residents participated in the voter registration drive at ATEF.*



## Grossman Center Chef Retires After 10 Years

Written By  
**Tammy Jones,**  
Grossman Center

Deborah Garey came to the Grossman Center in November 2010 as a cook. She has enjoyed preparing breakfast for staff and residents, and seeing staff every-day come in for cup of coffee.

After 10 years of service, Ms. Garey's family has convinced her that it is time to slow down and take care of her health and enjoy life.

Ms. Garey decided to listen and enjoy time at home with family. Ms. Garey enjoys traveling and spending time with family. As a farewell, the staff took donations and gave Ms. Garey a farewell gift to remember us by at the Grossman Center. We wish her well!

## Serving Our Participants and their Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Written By **Yadira De Santiago, Santa Ana DRC**

2020 was such a different year than what we imagined it would be, and a total plot twist in many ways, including for our participants. The Santa Ana DRC Team, along with our customer and community partners bravely continued serving our residents during the holidays.

The Parenting Group, assisted by CBT Facilitator, Ms. Hernandez, was surprised by beautiful Halloween Baggies that she put together. The baggies contained a variety of educational items such as: educational toys, puzzles, math flashcards, coloring books and crayons, and, of course, delicious sweets. Since Halloween was canceled in our area due to COVID-19, sharing a Halloween bag filled with educational items was a great way for our participants to practice a pro-social, in-house activity and practice the skills being learned with their children.

The Santa Ana administrative team, in coordination with the Southern Region of the Department of Adult Parole Operations (DAPO), collaborated in arranging for a day of gratitude and giving back to the parole population we serve. This event included the hand-delivering of 40 Winter Kit Bags. Case Worker, Mr. Sherzada, and Transitional Housing Placement Coordinator, Mr. Hernandez, proudly handed out a bit of warmth and gratitude all in a bag. The Winter Kit Bags included a beanie, mittens, scarf, instant hand and feet warmers, and snacks. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit our communities very hard, but that has not stopped us from serving one of the most vulnerable populations in our county.

Additionally, the Santa Ana DRC Program Manager partnered with Ms. Alba Ramiro, the Volunteer and Parish Ministry Coordinator from the Catholic Charities of Orange County, for a special Christmas delivery. Our Program Manager first met Ms. Ramiro at a reentry mass event at the Catholic Crystal Cathedral where families learned about the different services available in Orange County for those who had been affected by the criminal justice system. Annually, this ministry serves thousands of families in Orange County. Ms. Ramiro saved ten spots for the Santa Ana DRC parenting group families to receive a Christmas Basket filled with gifts for their family.

The Santa Ana DRC is grateful for all staff members and community partners, who are always a phone call away to help our population in many different ways. The COVID-19 pandemic has made all of us collaborate together, bring out our creative ideas, and find ways to help out our participants.



## Casper Reentry Center Staff Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

Written By **Kellie Doran & Karen Collins,**  
**Casper Reentry Center**

Lori Saunders, Health Services Administrator, became the first staff member from Wyoming's Casper Reentry Center (CRC) to receive the COVID-19 vaccine on December 29, 2020. Ms. Saunders, a Registered Nurse, decided to get the shot after her son (also a nurse) convinced her to get the vaccine when it became available. She received both doses of the Moderna vaccine.

CRC is located in Natrona County in Wyoming, which recently began receiving shipments of the new Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccines are being allocated throughout the state according to the Wyoming Department of Health Vaccination Priority guidelines. Under the state's distribution schedule, healthcare workers and correctional officers were some of the first groups eligible for the new vaccines.

Ms. Saunders described the process as a straightforward trip to the local Health Department where she received information about the vaccine, completed paperwork and then waited for her turn to be vaccinated. After a brief observation period to make sure she had no adverse reactions, she was on her way.

Ms. Saunders, who runs the medical department for the Therapeutic Community at CRC described how COVID has affected her department. "Many processes have changed, more steps have been added to procedures to accommodate for isolated or quarantined residents, and my entire staff was out of work at one time leaving just me," said Ms. Saunders.

The facility began routine 100% weekly COVID testing in October 2020, which is also managed by the medical team. All staff and residents in the ACC program are tested on Mondays. The TC program staff and residents are tested every Thursday.

## SWICC Holds Successful New Employee Orientation

Written By **Lori Moore and Karen Collins,**  
**Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center**

GEO Reentry staff at the Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center (SWICC), held new hire Orientation Training for ten new employees on September 21 - October 3, 2020. Orientation is a purposeful event, and is held as a way to welcome new team members, provide a company overview, and establish a path for employees to feel at ease with their new surroundings and fellow employees.

The management team headed by Lori Moore, GEO Program Director at the In-Prison treatment program, with Assistant Directors Warren Johnson and Norma Miles, Program Coordinator Bruce Morrison, Clinical Manager Margaret O'Connor, and Clinical Supervisors Tommie Anderson, Paula Butler, Roderick Goff, Keaunna Jett, and Sonya Thomas participated in the orientation to welcome their new colleagues.

Dr. Latoya Barber, Vice President, Reentry In-custody Treatment, gave the introduction courtesy of Microsoft Teams, and Korri Hicks, Central Region Training Specialist, Continuum of Care Training Institute, presented on GEO's Culture.

New topics to the orientation include the practice of precautionary measures – taking temperatures upon entering, social distancing, wearing PPE, and cleanliness of work areas, as well as working from home. General orientation topics included safety, clinical documentation, and the Therapeutic Community (TC).



## NJ Alumni Help the Newly Released

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Communications**



Members of New Jersey Alumni Services are always ready to do what they do best, which is to help individuals transition into the community and offer them help with basic needs. In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in New Jersey prisons, Governor Murphy signed an emergency health care bill in December 2020, which allowed the early release of 2,200 individuals. GEO Alumni were prepared that day to meet those individuals returning to their communities.

A group of Alumni members contributed food items and clothing donations, bus tickets, and their own knowledge and experience to help make the transition to the outside a little easier. Vincent R., released from GEO Reentry's Bo Robinson Treatment Center in Trenton, was met with a coat and bus ticket, and received assistance with obtaining a phone from the government, and instructions to apply for social services.

"We know it can be challenging to reenter the community, and it is even more difficult without basic needs," said Arthur Townes, Manager of NJ Alumni Services. "We are pleased to support these individuals, and be part of their transition to help ensure a fresh start."

New Jersey will continue to release individuals who are eligible and within close proximity to their release date through March 2021. Individuals were extremely grateful to be met by Alumni who once were in their shoes.

## ADAPPT Reentrants Help with Community Service

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Communications**



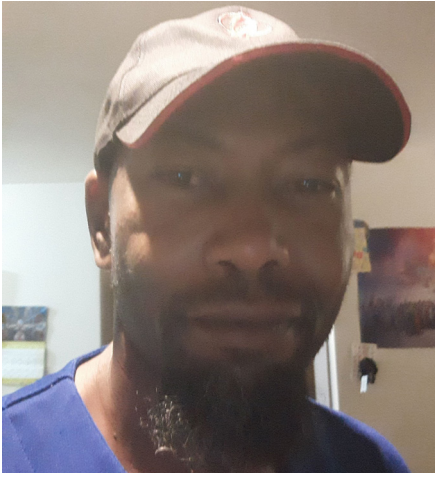
Kudos to the hard-working reentrants from ADAPPT in Reading, PA, for their continued work at the College Manor Pool. They worked on this community service project over the year, starting in the Spring of 2020 with a thorough cleanup, maintenance chores during the Summer, and closing the season with another cleanup of the pool and grounds. The relationship with the community pool in the local area has brought many rewards to all staff, reentrants, and community members involved.

As the team wrapped up the project for the year, a leak was discovered in the foundation of the pool, which required breaking up the concrete. ADAPPT volunteers had to dig down three feet to fix it. The reentrants went to the pool on several occasions to complete the difficult task. In addition, the ADAPPT team mowed the lawn, cleaned the kitchen, and secured the pool area to endure the Winter.

"The commitment demonstrated by our reentrants to create a safe, clean, and uplifting atmosphere for families gives me hope that those we provide reentry programming to will believe that their own future can be redirected by positive activity," said Michael Critchisin, Director of ADAPPT.

Dawn Martin, Assistant Director of ADAPPT, has coordinated community service activities at the center for several years and sees reentrants responding favorably to programming.

"We are grateful to have successful community service events. It is a great way to reinforce our reentry programming," said Ms. Martin. "Through community service, reentrants have a direct experience of how pro-social activities support others and enjoy the rewards of hard work."



## Nathan T., SWICC Alumnus and CAAP Graduate, Starts 'Humanity First'

Written By **Karen Collins,**  
**GEO Care Communications**

GEO Reentry Services is proud to provide reentry programming that helps those transition from custody to contributing, productive members of the community. Nathan T., an alumnus of the GEO Reentry program at the Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center (SWICC) in East St. Louis, has picked up the toolkit of reentry services and turned his life around! He has become an entrepreneur, starting an organization called "Humanity First," that helps the homeless in his community.

Starting at SWICC as an unwilling participant, over time Nathan decided to embrace the programming offered to him and began to believe that people and life can change. He jumped in and embraced the reentry program, entering the Certified Associate Addictions Professional (CAAP) program offered at SWICC. He passed the test to become a certified addictions professional. Completing programming, he left SWICC with a new outlook and hope.

He credits KaShena McDonald, Certified Associate Addictions Professional (CAAP) Program Trainer at SWICC, for keeping him on his toes and seeing him through. "Nathan exemplifies the success of the CAAP program," said Tim O'Boyle, Manager of Alumni Services for GEO Reentry. "We are so gratified to see him applying the principles he learned in reentry programming and taking it out into the community to help others."

Nathan's success has been demonstrated by his outreach to the community. His organization "Humanity First," collects donations of sleeping bags for the homeless. He began his recovery by volunteering at shelters and helping those struggling in the community to get a new start.

"Take it slow, don't get discouraged," says Nathan. He constantly reminds others of the importance of asking for help, and of giving back to others. His idea of success is doing "more good than harm," in the world. Nathan is dedicated to his recovery, grateful for living and sharing tools of reentry with others who need help.



## Away in a Manger – Residents Make Animals for Local Church Nativity

Written By **Sara Grissom,**  
**Cordova Center**

In December 2020, Cordova Center received a request from one of our Probation Officers for the residents to make animals for a local church nativity. There was one condition, they needed them in ten days! We had eight residents participate, and one staff member who joined in to give suggestions and direction for building the animals from discarded cardboard boxes.

Each day, we made progress and the creativity of the residents was amazing. There was a sense of fulfillment and of pride and joy in what they managed to accomplish in such little time. We were successful and dropped the animals off to the church within ten days. The pastors of the church were delighted. Their manger now had not only animals but a Mary and Joseph too!



## Casper Reentry Center Residents Donate to Local Youth Organization

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Communications**

Members of Casper Reentry Center's (CRC) Resident Council were able to make a donation of nearly \$70 to Mimi's House, a community organization that helps homeless youth. CRC made the donation in late 2020, to help Mimi's House provide services to eight homeless teenagers for the provision of housing and life skills to establish a structure for building self-sufficient lives and support a positive transition to adulthood.

"This is another example of the philosophy of changing behavior, changing lives being passed on through our residents to the greater community," said Joshua Brown, Director of CRC.

CRC residents, understanding the value of the services they are receiving from GEO Reentry Services, agree on the importance of reaching out to young people to provide life skills early on. Residents can identify with the support system provided by Mimi's House, and they were extremely willing to donate in the hopes of helping young individuals with a positive path at this early stage.

Mimi's House is an organization whose mission is to help homeless teenagers with a place to call home and provide services that help them transition to adulthood. Young residents help with cooking, cleaning, and daily chores, and are surrounded with a family-like atmosphere to help them with a positive start.

CRC's Resident Council is proud of their work helping the youth of the community. Mimi's House was grateful for the contribution from CRC!



## SWICC Staff Uphold a Decade of Christmas Tradition

Written By **Maggie O'Connor and Karen Collins, Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center**

GEO Reentry Services staff at Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center (SWICC) in East St. Louis, participated in a socially distanced version of Secret Santa. Staff were committed to uphold their decade long tradition and not let the COVID-19 virus interfere with their Secret Santa event, while they maintained protocols to protect themselves and those in their care from the virus.

"It is important for our staff to acknowledge each other's hard work, especially during this challenging time," said Lori Moore, GEO Reentry Program Director at SWICC.

Counseling staff are dividing their time between working on-site and working from home on separate shifts, in order to maintain social distancing protocols. The split schedule assures that most of the staff do not interact with one another as they once did. To make sure that the holiday tradition could still be maintained, staff who wanted to participate were able to draw names and provide wish lists online for their Secret Santa.

Each participant included a clue about their identity in the packaging and took a picture of their gift. Participants also submitted the name of the individual they guessed was their Secret Santa. The organizer, Clinical Manager O'Connor, provided the Santa Reveal and photos via email. All enjoyed the celebration, and SWICC staff managed to uphold their tradition and acknowledge fellow co-workers with a bit of holiday joy!

# GEO Reentry NJ Alumni Members Share Gratitude

Written By **Karen Collins,**  
GEO Care Communications



In 2020, a group of GEO Reentry New Jersey Alumni Services members partnered with New Jersey's, "Joi's Angels," to help feed needy families for the holidays. The group was proud to announce they helped feed more than 200 families. Joi's Angels, a non-profit group helping the disadvantaged in several New Jersey counties, helped provide turkey and trimmings during Thanksgiving.

The event was coordinated by Arthur Townes, New Jersey Alumni Manager, and Juan V., a longtime Alumni member. The Alumni members moved through the town of East Orange on foot, distributing holiday food goods to those in need.

"It is rewarding for us to 'give thanks' by helping those in need with a holiday meal," said Arthur Townes, New Jersey Manager of Alumni Services. "We received another chance that began with GEO Reentry programs, and we are grateful to pass along a message of hope to those who are less fortunate."

New Jersey has an active Alumni Services group that continues to volunteer for community service at numerous events throughout the year. Many members willingly participate in an effort to honor their recovery from addiction and carry on their mission of selfless service, after completing GEO Reentry programming that gave them a new start.

An annual tradition, Alumni Services have donated Thanksgiving foods to lift the spirits of others for many years running. Other volunteer activities include holding Back to School supply drives, toy drives, clothing drives, and participation in community events to raise funds and awareness, as a demonstration that recovery is possible.



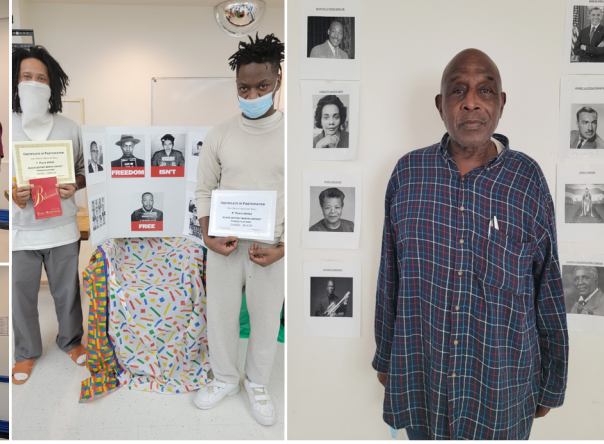
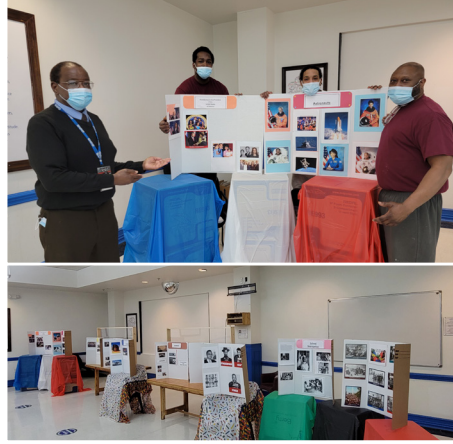
## Luzerne RSC Gives to Needy Children During the Holidays

Written By  
**Karen Collins,**  
**GEO Care**  
**Communications**

The Luzerne RSC, located in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, joined the Luzerne County "Ugly Holiday Sweater Dress Down Day," in December 2020, hosted by Valley Santa, and were able to raise a contribution of \$130 for the organization to purchase toys for the children.

"We are honored to serve Luzerne County by helping participants improve lives with the provision of our reentry programming inside the center, as well as extending our help on the outside into the community," said Stacey Velez, Program Manager at Luzerne RSC.

It was a happy holiday season at the Luzerne RSC, despite the pandemic. Thanks to the staff who came together to give needy children a toy for the Valley Santa group!



## Residents Show Creative Ability for Black History Month at Delaney Hall

Written By **Kristin SanFilippo and Karen Collins, Delaney Hall**

In honor of Black History Month, staff and residents of Delaney Hall in Newark, New Jersey decided to put their creativity to good use and came up with numerous learning activities to educate residents about black history and its message of persistence and change being possible.

Case Manager Eugene Nazareth established a letter writing campaign that was sent to young residents at the youth house in Essex county. Mr. Nazareth believes that "the greatest power on this Earth is people sharing love and caring for one another in helpful ways, regardless of race, creed, or color." Delaney Hall residents wrote encouraging letters to the young individuals, as a way to reach out and help improve their lifestyles and decision-making processes.

Delaney Hall also honored Black men and women who have made significant contributions throughout history. Mr. Nazareth and several Essex county residents developed a Black History portable "museum." This museum depicted important events in Black history, such as the fight against school segregation and anti-literacy laws, and celebrated those who fought for freedom and equality.

"The Black History museum displayed an extraordinary pictorial," said Case Manager Nazareth. "The achievements that came from the struggles for equal and fair education helped to positively shape America. A diversity of caring and courageous people built a strong foundation, proving that education is freedom and freedom is for everyone".

Furthermore, participant John S., took the initiative to write and share several poems. His poem, The Door Remains Open For You, drove home a powerful message, and was a demonstration of his creative ability.

To complete the celebratory month, Program Counselor Shante McLoyd hosted a game titled, "Who Am I?" Each resident chose an influential figure, such as Frederick Douglas, Jesse Owens, Maya Angelou, and they were provided with fact sheets on their influential figures. The residents presented facts about each figure to the audience, who had to guess who the famous figure was.



# Family Services Celebrates Holiday Card Campaign

Written By **Frank Gonzalez and Karen Collins,**  
**Delaney Hall, Tully House, and Community Alternatives of the Black Hills**



Frank Gonzalez, National Manager for GEO Reentry Family Services, adopted the idea for a holiday card campaign that would allow residents to write cards to their families.

Delaney Hall and Tully House, residential reentry centers in Newark, New Jersey, as well as Community Alternatives of the Black Hills in Rapid City, South Dakota, held successful holiday card campaigns.

## A message from National Family Services Manager, Frank Gonzalez:

Traditionally, the holidays are a time of reflection and gratitude for all that we have achieved, endured, and conquered in the past year. It is typically a time to be together with family members and say thanks for all their efforts. Since 2020 has been different in every possible way, our aim has been to bring residents together with their families in an old-fashioned format.

By sponsoring facilities in the "Holiday Card Campaign," the Family Services Program has brought together residents and

families in an old fashioned way through holiday cards and letter writing.

## A message from Tully House:

"Family Services at Tully house were able to cheer up our residents and their families this year by sending out 88 Christmas cards and 29 gifts for children. The residents were very grateful to be able to reach out to their families for the holidays, especially during the pandemic. A special thank you to Mr. Gonzalez for providing the cards and all materials necessary for the event, and our intern Ms. McAllister, for her dedication to working with the residents."— Ms. Pascale Jean-Simon, Family Services Coordinator.

## A message from Delaney Hall:

"This campaign was particularly important this year, to keep residents connected to their children since there have been no visits since March 2020 due to COVID-19. They wrote heartfelt, personalized messages and some even created drawings in the cards."— Danielle Tramutola, Family Services Coordinator.

## A message from Community Alternatives of the Black Hills:

"Several residents were willing to participate in the Holiday card campaign as a way to reach out to their families. It was a great way for our residents to feel connected during the holidays, and to be able to send a note of personal expression home to their families in this year of the pandemic and social distancing."— Joan Freiberg, Social Work Coordinator.

Great job to staff and residents at Delaney Hall, Tully House, and Community Alternatives of the Black Hills for carrying on the tradition of holiday cards to families! Residents enjoyed having a creative outlet and an opportunity to send a message of love to their families.





## Tim O'Boyle, GEO Reentry Alumni Manager Presents at Illinois Professionals Organization

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Communications**

GEO Reentry's Manager of Alumni Services, Tim O'Boyle, conducted two continuing education workshops at the Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association conference: "Successful Rehabilitation, Recovery and Reentry for Pre- and Post-Release Criminal Justice Clients" and "Clinical Charting."

The conference was held virtually and attended by substance abuse treatment providers from across the state, as well as professionals from the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Viewed by 188 criminal justice professionals, the first workshop, "Successful Rehabilitation, Recovery and Reentry for Pre- and Post-Release Criminal Justice Clients," discussed the importance of risk and needs assessments and featured an in-depth discussion of potential post-incarceration barriers to employment, housing, education, transportation, obtaining identification and accessing clothing and food.

During the presentation, Mr. O'Boyle also provided information about local community

providers, 12-Step programs and mental health support resources.

For his second workshop, "Clinical Charting," Mr. O'Boyle teamed up with Dona Howell, former Program Manager at Big Muddy Correctional Center in Ina, IL. Ms. Howell has 30 years of experience in program development, program efficacy evaluation, and training and clinical supervision of inmates and substance abusers.

The virtual presentation, dealt with the importance of having efficient assessments to develop individual treatment plans; screening that addresses educational level, disability, abuse history, language and general health; and the importance of documenting or "charting" an individual's progress so it adheres to an original treatment plan or assessment.

"These workshops are important because they help practitioners better understand the unique barriers that returning citizens face in their reentry journey," said Mr. O'Boyle. "I'm grateful for the opportunity."



## ISAP Gives Back

Written By **Amber McMahon, Jackson, MS ISAP**

For several years now, ISAP offices have completed an annual service activity to give back to the community. Our offices created their own service events with their community partners by holding toy drives, food drives, clothing drives, and adopting families for the holidays. In 2020, our strength in ties to the community was truly an area where ISAP shined. Some of our offices were able to complete contactless service activities with their local community partners, and Jackson ISAP was one of them.

Our Jackson ISAP team has a strong relationship with their local food bank, who expressed that they were really struggling to find volunteers during the busy holiday season. The staff worked with the organization to prepare over 100 food boxes and distributed many boxes directly to families during their service activity. Our staff were also able to give out Christmas presents to the families along with the pantry items. Jackson ISAP Senior Case Specialist Curtis Young explained, "The smiles were priceless. The families were overjoyed with the holiday spirit; some even requested pictures to capture the moment for memories."



## NJ Alumni Members Bring the Holidays to Families

Written By **Karen Collins, GEO Care Communications**



New Jersey Alumni Services members signed up to volunteer for both the 2020 Northern New Jersey Annual Thanksgiving Community Giveback and the Annual Community Holiday Giveback. In November 2020, Alumni members helped families of those who are currently residents in New Jersey GEO Reentry Services centers with a basket of food for the Thanksgiving holiday. In December 2020, Alumni members gathered toys and gifts to donate to families in need.

Alumna Tia R. is now employed with “All of Us or None,” an organization that focuses on working with inmates and their children. Ms. R. coordinated the events that allowed for twenty current residents in GEO Reentry centers to receive a large basket filled with foods for Thanksgiving. Alumni members donated many baskets filled with food, and wrapped and decorated them beautifully. Ms. R. then delivered the baskets to the families.



In December 2020, Alumni members also organized a toy drive and other gift donations for the children who have a loved one in GEO's reentry centers. Residents currently in Bo Robinson's Women's Unit, Tully House and Delaney Hall's Parole unit, and Delaney Hall's Women's Unit who are parents were the recipients of the toy drive to help ease the hardship of being apart from their loved ones.

“I am very proud of all our members, who give so generously for the holidays to those in need,” said Arthur Townes, Manager/Coordinator for NJ Alumni Services. “We also hope to carry the message that reentry services work, life can get better, and giving back to community is meaningful.”

2020 was a most difficult year for all, and life is always hard while having a loved one incarcerated. Being away from family can create financial hardship and emotional trauma, especially during the holidays. Alumni members joined together to support those currently in GEO Reentry programming, making life a little easier for the families by knowing that someone is thinking and caring about them during this difficult time.

Residents and their families were most grateful to receive the baskets filled with food, and the many, many toys donated. Alumni members were gratified to enjoy the holiday season knowing they gave back to others and helped families enjoy the holidays!

---

**GEO WORLD MAGAZINE**  
**1st QUARTER 2021**  
**Volume 29**  
**Issue 1**

---