



Common Ground



The Newsletter of the Suffolk County
Sheriff's Department
Steven W. Tompkins, Sheriff

**Sheriff Tompkins, Department Host U.S. AG Loretta Lynch
for Discussion About Reentry, Criminal Justice Reform.**



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United States Attorney Loretta E. Lynch was welcomed to the Suffolk County House of Correction by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins for a daylong discussion about reentry, recidivism and criminal justice reform.

Joined by a multitude of representatives from partnering organizations and agencies that have helped to shed a national spotlight on the Department's key reentry programs, Sheriff Tompkins introduced U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch and spoke about the purpose of her visit.

"It's a very exciting day for us at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, and we are honored to have such an esteemed guest here with us," said Sheriff Tompkins. "United States Attorney General Lynch came to meet with us to talk about what we do and how we do it, and to see whether our programs can be replicated across the country."

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February 2016



Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins
& The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department
cordially invite you to:



A Conversation with

The Women of the Boston City Council

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (*Doors open at 5:30 p.m.*)

Hibernian Hall

184 Dudley St, Roxbury, MA 02119



Panelists include:

Ayanna Pressley – *City Councilor At-Large*

Michelle Wu – *City Council President*

Andrea Campbell – *City Councilor for District 4*

Annissa Essaibi-George – *City Councilor At-Large*

This event is **FREE and open to the general public.**

To register online visit www.scsdma.org/forum.shtml or to receive more information about the forum, call:

Nadia Lovinsky at (617) 704-6656 or email nlovinsky@scsdma.org



Life Writing College Preparatory Class Readies Inmates for College, Future Success

“I’m done talking, the rest is in my writing,” an incarcerated individual at the Suffolk County House of Correction declared to his instructor and classmates. He begins reading aloud a draft of his analytical essay about a work of art created by John Wilson, a native Boston artist.

The instructor, Peggy Rambach, listens on with her students, noting the symbolism and metaphors presented in the paper. As a collective, the students dissect the smallest details within the painting, and connect them with their own experiences, giving feedback and ideas for the writer to jot down and apply to his essay.

The half-dozen men in the group sit around a table within the Education Department’s Life Writing College Preparatory class, a course provided to inmates that offers instruction and practice in writing styles relevant to job and college applications, and the college experience at large.

“This class is really intended for those individuals who have college aspirations,” Rambach says, detailing the process of presenting actual college admission essay questions to her students.



Instructor Peggy Rambach stands with literary publications containing works by program participants at the House of Correction

Three days per-week for 12 weeks, Peggy Rambach teaches the men in her class at the House of Correction intensive writing, revising and editing. Students enrolled in the class study the art of creative nonfiction writing, focusing on various genres, such as: personal essays, nonfiction, persuasive essays, personal statements and analytical papers.

In addition to individual meetings with Rambach, students also actively participate in peer critiquing. This process is useful for not only checking the quality of the work, but improving that quality.

At the conclusion of the course, inmates have the choice of placing their literary pieces into a quarterly bound book that is then accessible to all male and female inmates at the House of Correction library. Some of the works in the books are even used in the creation of the Department’s “Not Beyond Hope” magazine, a publication of artwork, poetry and prose that is produced by inmates and detainees at the Nashua Street Jail and House of Correction.

For more information about programming at the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department, visit: www.scsdma.org.

Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Begins New Class of Officer Recruits



This month, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department welcomed Correction Officer recruits for day one of their Correction Officer Training Academy Class 15-06.

In their journey to become members of the Department's custody staff, officer candidates will endure a rigorous 12-week training that will test them physically and mentally as they complete instruction in subjects that include ethics and professionalism, suicide prevention, the use of force continuum, fire-arm safety and handling, inmate education and programming, contraband control, courtroom testimony, CORI and inmate rights and responsibilities, fire safety, CPR, sexual harassment, cross-gender supervision

and report writing, evacuation plans, general conduct, CPR, interpersonal communications and more. Cadets also receive physical training and are schooled in multiple defense tactics.

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has also recently implemented the practice of mandatory continuous training and retraining on the use of force, to ensure that officers are well prepared for the atypical nature of the position.

The 9,500 square foot Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) facility, run by the Department's Training Division, is housed in Chelsea, MA.

On behalf of Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the staff of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, we wish all of the cadets the best of luck and hope to see them at the end of their 12 weeks.



"We have the unique opportunity and ability to shape and changes lives in a positive way."

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins



To learn more about our training division or to learn more about becoming a Correction Officer with the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department please visit:

www.scsdma.org

and look for the "Divisions" and "Careers" tabs.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE:
Charles J. Abate, Senior Legal Advisor

Senior Legal Advisor Charles J. Abate, Jr. began his service to the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department in March of 1989.



Senior Legal Advisor Charles J. Abate Jr.

First hired as a legal advisor, Mr. Abate has worked the three decades in a variety of positions, growing and evolving much as the Department has over the years.

During the 27-year span over which he has worked at the Department, Mr. Abate has excelled in his various posts, which have included such titles as: Assistant General Counsel, General Counsel for Employment Relations, Assistant Deputy Superintendent of Custody Assessment at the House of Correction, Senior Legal Advisor for Personnel, Administration and Human Resources, among other designations.

Abate's tasks have included the handling of worker compensation cases involving department employees, litigating cases under the auspices of the City of Boston's Worker's Compensation Service, completing step-two grievances, participating in collective bargaining, drafting changes to contracts, and handling bargaining with all unions present within the Department.

As Abate points out, the breadth and diversity of the work that he has done throughout the course of his career in the Department has helped him to continue successfully in his current position.

"Throughout my years here, I've had to become familiar with many areas of the institution, and this helps me greatly in my present role."

In that current role, as Senior Legal Advisor for the Department, Mr. Abate advises state workers compensation attorneys in ongoing litigation, including Department employees; handles situations in which employees may require special accommodations based on health restrictions; drafts disciplinary letters for both the House of Correction and the Jail; works with the policy review committee to assess the Department of Corrections regulations once a year in accordance with standards and compliance, making the necessary changes; serves as the Department liaison with the retirement board; and fulfills many other responsibilities.

In reflecting upon his job, Abate stated, "I believe that the thing that has kept me motivated the most throughout all of these years with the Department is that there is never a dull moment. That, and the fact that I really enjoy the people I work with and those with whom come into contact with."

(Department Hosts U.S. AG Lynch, continued from Page 1)

Along with Department staff and current and former inmates, others in attendance included United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts Carmen Ortiz, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, Middlesex Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, Nantucket County Sheriff James Perelman, Reverend Jeffrey Brown and numerous other community stakeholders.



U.S. Attorney General Lynch greets a C.R.E.W. participant at the HOC.

Following a roundtable discussion, U.S. Attorney General Lynch held a question-and-answer session with providers and partners of the Department, and spoke about the need for criminal justice reform and the importance of reentry programming.

on reentry outcomes. It's not just an area of great importance for the Department of Justice or the Attorney General's Office, but the entire administration up to and including President Barack Obama."

According to Attorney General Lynch, since the passing of the Second Chance Act by the United States Congress in 2007, the administration has given away more than 750 Second Chance grants totaling approximately \$400 million dollars – \$53 million of which were spent last year alone.

Speaking about the experiences gained during her visit to the House of Correction, Attorney General Lynch thanked Sheriff Tompkins for his hospitality and praised the Department for its reentry programming.



U.S. AG Lynch addresses a gathering of providers and partners during her visit.

I want to thank Sheriff Tompkins and his staff for having us," Attorney General Lynch said. "The United States Department of Justice is a proud and committed partner with our Sheriff and his colleagues. I've had the pleasure, privilege and, frankly, the honor to meet with several former and current participants of some very important groups. BRI, CGI and CREW – these programs aim to reduce recidivism and prepare people to return to society."



U.S. AG Lynch with Sheriff Tompkins and BRI Director True-See Allah

"What I was struck by was how graciously [program participants] shared their stories and their pasts and how their paths were really very similar," she continued. "They've found people here who believe in them and have helped them to build a foundation, people with whom they've essentially formed a family here inside this institution. They've helped them to move back home, move back with families, move back with communities and move back into life."

For more information about U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch and the United States Department of Justice, visit: www.justice.gov.

Sights of the SCSD



An officer takes a photo of a senior woman as part of the Department's Senior I.D Program.



A cadet listens on as a member of the Training Staff delivers instructions.



Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins stands with U.S. Marshal for the District of Massachusetts John Gibbons, President of the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts Darnell Williams and Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian.



A table with Safety Tips for Kids, badges and crayons at a community event.



Members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard.



Students listening on as Lt. Abiezer Ayuso delivers a history of the Sheriff's Department before entering the Nashua St. Jail.



A group of students entering the House of Correction for a tour.



Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins with Governor Charlie Baker, leadership of the Twelfth Baptist Church, Boston City Councillors Tito Jackson and Ayanna Pressley

Sheriff's Statement Steven W. Tompkins

In this issue, you've no doubt read about some of the programs, training and outreach that we offer to staff, inmates and detainees, and residents of Suffolk County.

For our officers, we provide comprehensive training to ensure that they're prepared to perform their essential functions, which are to maintain the care, custody, and control of inmates in accordance with Departmental policies and procedures. As public servants, officers employed by Suffolk County must conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both on and off duty and they must know and scrupulously observe the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's standards of employee conduct.



For the people incarcerated in our institutions, we provide more than 80 educational and vocational, addiction recovery, life skills and parenting programs designed to help them return to society better able to care for themselves and their families, and live a more positive and successful life.

With respect to community outreach, we travel throughout the neighborhoods of Suffolk County to deliver a multitude of services that include our Senior Identification Program, which provides participants with a secondary form of ID that includes vital emergency medical information about the holder, each of whom also receives valuable information about senior safety; the Choice Program, which sends specially-trained officers into our public schools to promote civic responsibility and the importance of education; our Ident-A-Youth Program, which provides parents with materials that can assist external law enforcement agencies in the unfortunate event that their child should go missing, and numerous other public health and safety information.

Everything that we do at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department – from outreach, to program services, to training of staff, and education for those in our care and custody – is done with the greater goal of helping to make our society healthier, safer and more vibrant for all its citizens.

The Common Ground Newsletter is made available monthly for Department employees by the Office of Communications and External Affairs at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. The newsletter is available to staff and external audiences and may be viewed at www.scsdma.org. It is printed as part of an inmate rehabilitation program at the South Bay House of Correction.

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is committed to becoming the national model for providing effective offender supervision and re-entry services that ensure public safety. The Department serves the cities of Boston, Chelsea, and, Revere and the town of Winthrop. Employee suggestions are always welcome.



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Steven W. Tompkins**

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