



SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

COMMON GROUND

APRIL 2023 ISSUE

MEET DEPUTY BILL FARRELL
OF THE SCSD EAP PROGRAM

READ ABOUT SCSD ADDICTION RECOVERY &
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMMING

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SUPPORTING OUR EMPLOYEES BY PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

SHERIFF'S MESSAGE

APRIL 2023

Greetings,

I am pleased to welcome you to the latest edition of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department (SCSD) newsletter, the Common Ground. This newsletter serves as a platform to provide valuable information and updates on the initiatives and programs aimed at assisting those in our care and custody, and our dedicated staff.

With the month of April chosen as both National Stress Awareness Month and Alcohol Awareness Month, we are including content about these two topics of great significance that affect virtually everyone in some fashion in order to help raise awareness about the dangers of alcoholism and the importance of managing stress effectively.

The Centers for Disease Control reports that excessive alcohol use leads to over 140,000 deaths each year. In this edition, we focus on the community-based care and resources available to those within our facilities and in our communities who may be struggling with alcohol use disorder. By providing continual care to the men and women in our care and custody, we can help to reduce recidivism rates and assist individuals in their recovery.

We remain committed to the safety and well-being of all those in our care and our staff and we recognize that working as a corrections professional can be a high-stress environment that can sometimes lead to anxiety, PTSD, depression, and substance and alcohol abuse. To aid members of our staff who may be coping with these or other mental health concerns, the Department offers the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), a confidential service available to all Department employees aimed at providing support and resources to those facing life stressors, including stress management, substance use disorders, compulsive gambling, domestic or financial problems, family violence, and critical incident stress. To this end, we share a profile of Deputy Bill Farrell from our EAP to help illuminate some of the ways in which we offer assistance to Department employees.

I hope that you'll enjoy reading these and other stories in this issue, and I look forward to bringing you more insight and information about the form and functions of the Department in the issues to come.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

ABIEZER AYUSO - SPECIAL SHERIFF
PETER VANDELFT - EDITOR
CLAIRE LEBLANC - EDITOR
DAVID HILL - PHOTOGRAPHER
VONEL LAMOUR - DESIGNER

SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
PHONE .617-704-6688
VISIT US ONLINE
WWW.SCSDMA.ORG

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A LOOK INSIDE: COMBATING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

Learn more about substance use treatment available to the men and women in our care and custody.

MEET DEPUTY BILL FARRELL:

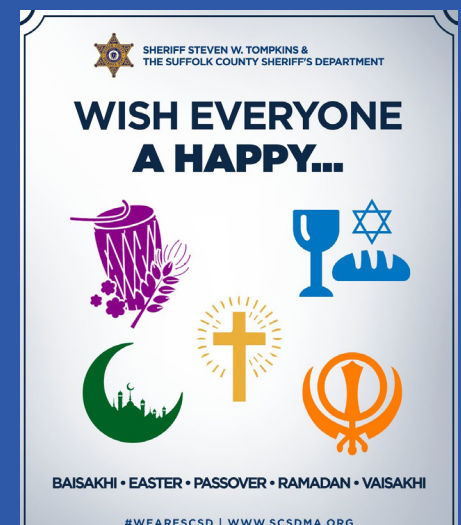
Deputy Bill Farrell sits down to talk about his time at the Department, his role in the Employee Assistance Program, and the ALPHA Course.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PRIORITIZES MENTAL HEALTH, EMPLOYEE WELLBEING:

Read about the Employee Assistance Program, a free and confidential program offered to all Department employees.

AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY:

In this month's trip Around Suffolk County, we showcase the officers who have assisted in the Department's recruitment efforts and recognize Graduates from the Community Work Services Program.



A LOOK INSIDE: COMBATING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER



April is recognized as Alcohol Awareness Month, a time dedicated to educating people about the dangers of alcohol abuse and addiction. It is an opportunity to raise awareness and reduce the stigma around alcohol addiction, as well as to highlight the importance of individuals seeking treatment and support.

Offering substance use treatment in a correctional environment is crucial to addressing some underlying reasons behind criminal behavior. A considerable number of incarcerated individuals have reported ongoing substance and alcohol use disorders.

This month, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department highlights treatment programs available to the men and women within our facilities, including the OASIS (Opioid and Addiction Services Inside South Bay) treatment program offered inside the House of Correction and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).

The OASIS program provides intensive treatment for pretrial and sentenced men who struggle with addiction by offering a range of services, including group and one-on-one counseling. The goal of OASIS is to divert people struggling with substance use issues out of the corrections system and into treatment. The program is designed to ensure that everyone's needs are assessed, and services are delivered to them pre- or post-adjudication.

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department offers treatment and rehabilitative services to both men and women within our custody. The Department's Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program provides FDA-approved medications for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) along with counseling to support recovery.

After completing assessments, patients are screened by medical staff for suitability for MAT as well as enrolled in treatment groups. Discharge planners coordinate follow-up appointments with community-based treatment teams for individuals before release.

Assistant Deputy Superintendent (ADS) Rachelle Steinberg stated, "Anyone who comes into custody with a substance use or alcohol use disorder can enroll themselves into programming and groups to assist in their recovery. We encourage everyone to take advantage of the treatment offered within our facilities, whether it is medication-assisted or not."

ADS Steinberg manages medical and mental health services, women's program services, treatment services, including the OASIS and Medication Assisted Treatment programs, and grant management at the House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail.

"While there is no direct cure to addiction, I think any work being done towards recovery is beneficial for the individual," said ADS Steinberg. "Many of the programs offered to our population operate within the community and allow individuals to continue their treatment once released."

Department staff collaborates with local community providers for pre and post-release support services, including DPH (Department of Public Health), DMH (Department of Mental Health), Boston Medical Center, Mass General Hospital, Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program, the Boston Public Health Commission, North Suffolk Community Services, Spectrum Health Systems, and others, to ensure continuity of care for patients once released and reduce the likelihood of recidivism.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: DEPUTY BILL FARRELL

In May of 2007, Deputy Bill Farrell began his career at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. His career in corrections stemmed from his desire to support himself and his family during a time of economic crisis.

For the past 16 years, Farrell has shown a desire to assist those within the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. In 2015, Farrell began his work as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Officer. This role allows Farrell the opportunity to help his coworkers and their families through life's stressful situations, addictions, or trauma.

"With 35 years in recovery, I understand addiction and trauma. I've experienced those things in my life," Deputy Farrell said. "As an EAP Officer for

the Department, I help to provide resources for someone in need. This role allows me to interact with individuals and give advice through my own experiences to individuals that can help them or change their perspectives on a situation. I find it rewarding to help members of our department and their families."

"As an EAP Officer, you must be approachable," Deputy Farrell continued. "The individuals that we are helping must be able to trust you to maintain confidentiality as they share what is going on in their lives. Early in my recovery, I read a quote by Brennan Manning that said, 'In every encounter we either give life or we drain it. There is no neutral exchange.' This quote helped me to realize that every day when I meet someone, ordering my coffee or just passing them by, I have an opportunity to build them up or break them down through my actions, words, and even something as simple as my facial expressions, like a smile or a frown. Every day, I try my hardest to build up, and not break anyone down. Some days, that is not easy."

"There are so many life stressors that individuals may experience, stemming from the job, addiction, trauma, family issues, or financial issues. The Employee Assistance Program is offered to the entire Department to help individuals remain functional and productive. We are all in the same boat, trying to get through the day. We all have our own issues, but don't have to face them alone."

Farrell acknowledged changes within the corrections industry over the years stating, "Facilities are different now. Individuals within our care have more opportunities to better themselves. If someone is serious about making changes in their life, there are resources available; however, individuals must take advantage of them. As many as 80% of jailed offenders struggle with a substance use disorder, including addiction, dependence, or abuse. Individuals in our care must find a way to be able to move past the trauma, guilt, and shame of their previous decisions."

To assist individuals in taking responsibility for their actions, Farrell introduced the ALPHA Course at the House of Correction, and after 12 years, it came to fruition. This 8-week program teaches individuals about the spiritual side of addiction.

"Many recovery programs reference a 'higher power.' No matter what you call it, the connection between spirituality and recovery is huge. Many times, it is the key to a massive transformation in people."

Farrell stated, "Part of the ALPHA Program is reminding participants that they are loved, have worth, and have a purpose for their lives. People don't hear that enough or have never heard that in their life. Something amazing happens when you realize what the higher power thinks of you. If you make the connection between addiction and spirituality, something unbelievable can occur."

Farrell, a former Marine, is motivated to serve his fellow officers and the population at the House of Correction stating, "I get to assist others in reaching a better place. It is rewarding and much needed. While the job can be difficult, a simple reminder that we can help people rejuvenates you into moving forward and continuing to do the work necessary to make positive change."

SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OFFERS SUPPORT FOR STAFF

As April is recognized as both National Stress Awareness Month and Alcohol Awareness Month, the Common Ground newsletter is dedicated to showcasing the Department's commitment to supporting the health of its staff. The Employee Assistance Program is a key initiative, as it provides a safe and confidential space for staff members to seek support and guidance on any personal issues they may be facing.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is a full-service program that includes referral and counseling for issues such as stress management, substance use disorders, compulsive gambling, domestic or financial problems, family violence, and critical incident stress.

EAP is a valuable resource available to both custody and non-custody staff to ensure all individuals have the necessary tools to handle life stressors. All services rendered by EAP are confidential and free to employees.

Currently, there are four EAP Officers and six Peer Support officers available 24/7 to assist their peers in a crisis situation. All officers are certified in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and are willing to help individuals through any personal issues that may affect their job, family, and health.



The primary goal of EAP is to maintain and restore an individual to a position where they are reliable, well-motivated, productive, and able to perform their job duties. Through EAP, the Department aims to prioritize the well-being and mental health of its staff members.

EAP is currently overseen by Assistant Deputy Superintendent (ADS) Walter Vasile who stated, "Whether you wear a uniform or not, life stressors can affect us all in similar ways, and it's important to know that you don't have to face these challenges alone. The Employee Assistance Program is here for you and your family, providing a safe space to discuss any issues you may be experiencing. Our EAP officers are carefully selected, entrusted, and trained to support you through any situation. Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength."

If you need support or guidance, don't hesitate to reach out to an EAP or Peer Support officer for assistance. EAP Officers serving the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department include Sergeant Joe Bearne, Deputy Bill Farrell, Sergeant Matt Hicks, and Sergeant Romara Pearsull. Peer Support Officers include Deputy Kenny Sheehan, Lieutenant Kylie Wilhoite, Lieutenant Sharon Corbin, Deputy Shawn O'Brien, Deputy Tom Maguire, and Deputy Joe Zoccola.

"EAP Officers are committed to ensuring that you receive the support you need, no matter where you turn for help," said ADS Vasile. "If you don't feel comfortable speaking with the EAP at the Sheriff's Department, please know that they can refer you to other trusted resources, including Employee Assistance Programs at the Boston Police Department, Boston Fire Department, and Boston EMS."

**Not all Employee Assistance Program Officers are pictured above.*

OFFICER OF THE MONTH:

To recognize the exemplary performance of our custody staff, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has instituted the Officer of the Month award. This award is granted to staff members who consistently demonstrate excellence, professionalism, and integrity while carrying out their duties.



We are pleased to announce that Officer Eric Strong has been honored as the recipient of the Suffolk County Jail Officer of the Month. Strong's nomination was based on his reliability, professionalism, and hard work. According to his peers, Strong never complains and played a critical role in establishing procedures for newly required protocols.

Superintendent of the Suffolk County Jail Michael Colwell stated, "Eric has been instrumental in supporting our operations during the most critical times. Eric oversees vital aspects of our Booking/Intake Division. His ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment allows him to successfully navigate a complex environment. Eric enjoys universal respect among his colleagues. We are thrilled to support his nomination."

We are pleased to announce that Mirlande Philogene has been honored as the recipient of the Officer of the Month Award for the Suffolk County House of Correction.

Superintendent of the Suffolk County House of Correction William Sweeney stated, "The multiple nominations we received for Officer Mirlande Philogene detailed the same dedication, hard work and positive attitude that we have seen ourselves and heard about from her supervisors. While Mirlande has only been an employee for less than two years, her energy and compassion have made a positive impact on staff and inmates. I am incredibly proud of Mirlande's work, and I expect she will have a great career with the Department"



The selection process involves peer nominations and evaluation by the Command Staff. This initiative was launched in February 2023 to highlight the dedication and hard work of our staff. The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department encourages all our employees to participate in Officer of the Month Program by nominating their peers.

AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY:

Department Representatives Attend Excel Academy Charter School's Summer Opportunity Fair

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recently attended the Excel Academy Charter School's Summer Opportunities Fair to talk about the Sheriff's Department's Summer Enrichment Program.

Department representatives were accompanied by former program graduates who assisted in promoting the program among their peers.

The Summer Enrichment Program (SEP), which was created and launched in 2014 by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, is a 7-week paid internship that gives young people the opportunity to learn about the multitude of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in and around Suffolk County to strengthen both their focus on future employment within the field and their relationships with its professionals. For more information about the SEP, visit: www.scsdma.org/SEP2023



The Department Holds Graduation Ceremony for Community Work Services Program (CWS)

The Department recently held a graduation ceremony for its collaborative program with Community Work Services (CWS), which teaches Building Maintenance and Commercial Cleaning to participants.

Led by Reintegration Supervisor Nick Lahage, CWS Program Coordinator Tim Muise, and joined by Executive Director of CWS and Senior Vice President for the Northeast Region of FedCap, Craig Stenning, the ceremony celebrated the 16 men who completed the training.

In recent years, CWS has been an active community partner with the Department, helping people with barriers to employment – like those with a history of incarceration or in possession of a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) history – to not only overcome these obstacles but to excel in sustainable jobs with livable wages. Community Work Services (CWS) was founded more than 140 years ago by Annie Adams Fields to improve the lives of people living in poverty.

Department Representatives Attend Spring Career Fair

For the second year in a row, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department participated in the 2023 Spring Career Fair held at the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology. Human Resources Assistant Director Melissa Elow and Deputy Nick Virgulto spoke with students about the variety of employment opportunities available within the Department.

The Spring Career Fair drew a record turnout of 210 students and 66 top employers from various job industries. The career fair provides students and soon-to-be graduates with opportunities for internships, as well as part-time and full-time jobs in their chosen fields.





**THE SUFFOLK COUNTY
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM 2023

JULY 5, 2023 - AUGUST 18, 2023

8AM - 4PM

APPLY NOW

This program will invite twenty participants to the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department to learn about careers in law enforcement. Participants will work 21 hours a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 8AM-4PM beginning July 5, 2023 and will be compensated at a rate of \$15 an hour.

SUMMER ENRICHMENT

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Summer Enrichment Program targets incoming 11th and 12th graders with the opportunity to intern at Suffolk County Jail, the House of Correction, Chelsea Training Facility and Civil Process.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE
Friday, May 12, 2023**

Contact

NADIA LOVINSKY

617-704-6656 | NLovinsky@scsdma.org

200 Nashua Street • Boston, MA

www.scsdma.org/SEP2023



REQUIREMENTS

- Must be entering either the 11th or 12th grade
- Must be resident of Boston, Chelsea, Winthrop or Revere
- Interest in Law Enforcement or Criminal Justice strongly encouraged.
- Must have proper form of Identification (Student ID, Passport, Mass ID or Driver's License)
- Active Checking or Saving Account
- Updated Physical Form

**SCAN FOR
APPLICATION**

