

COMMON GROUND

2023

Year in Review



SHERIFF'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 2024

Greetings,

I want to wish you a very Happy New Year filled with joy and prosperity, and the hope for good things to come in 2024.

Before we move into all that is new in the New Year, however, we invite you to take a look back at some of the important advancements made, events completed and accolades earned by the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department through the efforts of the many exceptional and dedicated individuals who help to make our organization one of the best law enforcement agencies in the country.

In this special "Year End" edition, we recall with great pride the official opening of the Richard P. Pacitti Re-entry and Transitional Center; our inaugural "Public Safety Through Public Health" forum in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; the return of our Family Matters Playshop, which reunites in-custody parents with their children for an opportunity to strengthen their familial bonds through play and storytime; the visit to our PEACE Program by Grammy Award-Winning artist and Massachusetts Institute of Technology Fellow Lupe Fiasco; and our weeklong tribute to our custody and non-custody staff for Correctional Officer and Employee Appreciation Week.

We also report on some of the trainings undertaken by members of the Department in the perpetual service of improving and upgrading the techniques and programming offered to the men and women remanded to our care by the courts; we showcase members of our staff in their athletic pursuits; celebrate the new officers who joined our ranks throughout 2023, and also some of our veteran officers for the special recognition that they received from community organizations for their hard work and commitment to others; and introduce you to the participants of our 2023 Summer Enrichment Program. Finally, we highlight my participation in the celebration of students graduating from institutions of higher learning, in addition to other items.

I hope that you'll enjoy remembering some of these special moments with us, and I look forward to bringing you more insight and information about the form and functions of the Department in the issues to come throughout the New Year.

-Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

ABIEZER AYUSO - SPECIAL SHERIFF
PETER VANDELFT - 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

CONNECT WITH US



#WEARESCSD

INDEX

RE-ENTRY CENTER OPENED

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Announced the official opening of the Richard P. Pacitti Re-Entry and Transitional Center Opening.

PUBLIC HEALTH FORUM HELD

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Department held an inaugural forum in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

EAP PROFILED

The Department offered a look into the workings of the Employee Assistance Program.

FAMILY MATTERS PLAYSHOP RETURNED

The SCSD welcomed the return of the Family Matters Playshop for in-custody parents and their children.

SHERIFF TOMPKINS WELCOMED NEW GRADUATES

Sheriff Tompkins welcomed three new classes of officers to the Department and also joined the graduates of the Class of 2023 for separate commencement exercises at Harvard University and Roxbury Community College.

OFFICERS CELEBRATED

Sheriff Tompkins and the Department feted members of the custody and non-custody staff for Correctional Officers and Employees Week.

GRAMMY WINNER AND MIT FELLOW LUPE FIASCO VISITED HOC

Recording artist and special Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Lupe Fiasco visited the House of Correction to talk to the participants of the PEACE Program.

TRAININGS HELD TO HELP BOLSTER, IMPROVE PROGRAMS, SERVICES

The Department held and attended several trainings in the ongoing effort to improve the delivery of services and programming for those in custody.

SHERIFF TOMPKINS TAKES OATH OF OFFICE WITH ASSIST FROM CHIEF JUSTICE KIMBERLY BUDD

At the start of the Year 2023, things got off to a celebratory and historic start with the swearing-in ceremony of Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins by Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Kimberly Budd.

The special inauguration, held at the House of Correction, was a first-of-its-kind event with Chief Justice Budd delivering the oath of office to Sheriff Tompkins, who entered his second six-year term after winning his third election into service of the Suffolk County communities of Boston, Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop.

Following his appointment to the position by then-Governor Deval Patrick in January of 2013, Tompkins was officially elected in 2014 to serve out the remaining two years of his predecessor. He was then reelected in 2016 and again in November of 2022.



Sheriff Tompkins spoke then about the enormous honor of both being sworn back into service by the Chief Justice of the state's highest ranking court and returning to serve the people of the Suffolk County communities within Boston, Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop.

As the Sheriff of Suffolk County, Tompkins manages all operations at the Suffolk County House of Correction, the Suffolk County Jail and the Civil Process Division. In addition to providing care, custody and rehabilitative support for inmates and pretrial detainees, Tompkins also oversees a management, security and administrative staff of nearly 1,000.

From the beginning of his service to the position, Sheriff Tompkins has worked to reduce recidivism through enhanced educational and vocational programming, addiction recovery and mental health services, and efforts to expand addiction recovery and mental health services in the and around the communities of Suffolk County.



With the first year of his six-year term concluding, Sheriff Tompkins has already launched several new initiatives, including the opening of the Richard P. Pacitti Reentry and Transitional Center, hosting a forum with the United States Department of Health and Human Services, an Officer of the Month recognition program – all of which you can read about in this edition of the Common Ground – and he has begun laying the groundwork for even more innovative programming, including several new initiatives that will be announced over the course of the incoming Year 2024.

SHERIFF TOMPKINS, DEPARTMENT LAUNCH REENTRY & TRANSITIONAL CENTER



At the beginning of October of 2023, Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department held a ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening for the new Richard P. Pacitti Re-entry and Transitional Center (RPRTC) at the Suffolk County House of Correction.

Named for the late former Deputy Director of External Affairs and Communications, the Pacitti Re-Entry Center was created with the purpose of providing critically needed re-entry, behavioral health, and employment services and diversionary programming to our returning citizens, both men and women, through a collaboration of community partners, private sector businesses and companies, and local area stakeholders. It offers complete wraparound re-entry and program services to the returning citizen population of the Boston area, delivering intake services, assessment and Re-Entry referrals to pre-release and

post-release returning citizens in order to transition them into a position of self-sufficiency and independence in our community.

The RPRTC offers support and instruction through informational seminars, classes, community panels, workshops, and access to computers to facilitate job searches, as well as state-of-the-art virtual communication equipment and technology to better facilitate connecting participants to community resources. The Center primarily focuses on employment and healthcare for returning citizens and their families, and, in addition to providing a comprehensive employment readiness program during their incarceration, participants also receive pre- and post-release case management to assist with their career goals, health care services, and personal goals post-release.

Before a crowd that included several members of the Pacitti Family, State Representatives Christopher Worrell and John Moran, representatives for other elected officials, President of the New England Patriots Foundation Josh Kraft, several of the Department's community partners, and Department staff, Sheriff Tompkins spoke about the man for whom the center was named.

"As almost everyone here today knows, Richard P. Pacitti served as the Deputy Director of External Affairs and Communications until his untimely passing in January of 2006," Sheriff Tompkins began. "If you knew Richie, you loved Richie, and he was known and loved by so many, many people."

"But, As well-known as Richie was for his exemplary work here at the Department, he cut an even larger figure outside of it in his efforts to help make not only his own neighborhood better, but to improve the neighborhoods across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as both a community activist and a powerhouse behind-the-scenes of local politics. I am so very, completely and overwhelmingly overjoyed that Richie's family could be here for this event so that we could all, once again, remember the man that Richie was and so that we could express our gratitude as an organization to the family for sharing him with us even for the short time that we had him."

SCSD TEAMS-UP WITH HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR PUBLIC FORUM



Towards the close of the year, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department held a forum in conjunction with the United States Department of Health and Human Services, with participation by a diverse array of community partners, service providers and public safety agencies.

Held on the campus of Roxbury Community College, the panel discussion focused on enhancing collaborations between public safety and public health organizations, and community partners in the delivery of care and services for those impacted by mental health and substance use disorders.

Panelists for the event included Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, Region 1 Director of New England for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Everett Handford; Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh; Chief of the Jails Division at the National Institute of Corrections within the U.S. Department of Justice Stephen Amos; and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association Carrie Hill.

Topics included current best practice strategies, local & national initiatives, and emerging trends with the goal of creating an ongoing partnership dialogue focused on linking criminal justice-involved individuals with critically needed services and a continuum of care.

Speaking about the assembly of more than one hundred participants, Sheriff Tompkins reiterated his appreciation for the people present, representing a wide variety of agencies and organizations.

"As many in this room are intimately aware from your own involvement in similar efforts here in Massachusetts and across the nation, this critically important work of rehabilitation and recovery is often as challenging as it is rewarding," said Sheriff Tompkins.

"No single agency can do it alone, and we are thankful for the many important relationships that we have cultivated through the years with you – our community partners, private sector businesses and companies, and local area stakeholders – who have helped us to deliver greatly-needed re-entry, behavioral health, and employment services and diversionary programming to our returning citizens. We thank you for taking the time out to be here today, and we very enthusiastically look forward to continuing our work together."

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



In April, which is recognized as both National Stress Awareness Month and Alcohol Awareness Month, the Common Ground newsletter showcased 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 that all individuals have the necessary tools to handle life stressors. All services rendered by EAP are confidential and free to employees.

The Department's EAP and Peer Support officers are 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, and Sergeant Romara Pearsull. Peer Support Officers include Deputy Kenny Sheehan, Lieutenant Kylie Wilhoite, Lieutenant Sharon Corbin, Deputy Shawn O'Brien, and Deputy Tom Maguire.

"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."

FAMILY MATTERS “PLAYSHOP” RETURNED



For 2023, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department reintroduced a special event aimed at strengthening the bond between incarcerated fathers and their children. The Family Matters “Playshop” was initially launched in early 2020 in collaboration with the Nurturing Fathers’ Program at the Suffolk County House of Correction.

The “Playshop” facilitates in-person playtime between fathers who are under Department custody and their children, as well as visiting time with other family members. Attendees are provided with toys, age-appropriate books, and coloring materials from the Family Matters Program, and they share a pizza dinner as they reconnect and rebuild critical family bonds.

Research has shown that maintaining a connection between incarcerated fathers and their children is crucial, as physical play and interaction can challenge and stimulate children’s minds, positively affecting their learning and skill development. Additionally, this interaction can help children manage frustration, explore new activities, and solve problems creatively, among other benefits.

Case Manager for the Family Matters Program Frantz Dorcena stated, “A Nurturing Fathers role in a child’s well-being is very important. Fathers teach many important lessons to a child, like how to be affectionate and supportive, and how to take care of everyone else by giving the best example, and all of this while being great examples themselves. Fathers are great caretakers; they make their little ones feel safe and secure. They teach their little ones to jump higher, and to always aim for the best,” he continued, “This is why it’s so important that the Department host events, like the ‘Playshop’, so father’s may remain involved in their child’s life and recognize the labor of all of those involved fathers that are day-by-day supporting their families.”

The Family Matters Program, which is voluntary, is offered by the Department’s Division of Re-Integration Services. It aims to assist incarcerated individuals and their families in developing positive relationships.

SHERIFF TOMPKINS ONCE AGAIN TOOK THE STAGE FOR HARVARD, RCC COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES IN 2023



Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins was a proud participant of the pomp and circumstance surrounding the 2023 commencement exercises held by Harvard University and Roxbury Community College, respectively.

As in years prior, Sheriff Tompkins joined Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian onstage for Harvard University's Order of Exercises for the Three Hundred Seventy-Second Commencement. Sheriff Koutoujian performed the customary opening of ceremonies, which featured the Commencement Address delivered by actor and activist Tom Hanks; the conferring of Honorary Degrees including a Doctor of Science for Jennifer A. Doudna, who has dedicated her career to understanding the molecular structure of RNA and thereby improving the human condition; a Doctor of Arts for Tom Hanks, the renowned actor, producer, writer, director, and humanitarian; a Doctor of Science for Katalin Karikó, a biochemist who successfully explored the therapeutic potential of messenger RNA and is a professor at the University of Szeged and adjunct professor of neurosurgery at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine; a Doctor of Laws for David Levering Lewis, an historian, biographer and the Julius Silver University Professor Emeritus at New York University; a Doctor of Humane Letters for Hugo Noé Morales Rosas, a trailblazing figure in public broadcasting and a lifelong advocate for elevating marginalized voices; and a Doctor of Laws for Michael Glenn Mullen, of the U.S. Navy (retired) who is a decorated military leader with a career of service spanning 43 years, which culminated in his work as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Sheriff Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard also rejoined the Roxbury Community College (RCC) family to initiate and celebrate their 47th Annual Commencement during the college's 50th Anniversary. As the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for RCC, Sheriff Tompkins stood with Interim President Jackie Jenkins-Scott to welcome Commencement Speaker David Banks, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education; Michael Curry, Esq., CEO of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers and 2023 Community Service Award recipient; Jose Masso, Inductee of the Massachusetts Broadcasters Hall of Fame and 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award winner; Tashanea Whitlow, winner of the Alumni Achievement Award and Co-Ancor of Good Day Wake Up New York; and other presenters including Latifa Muhammad Turner of RCC's Class of '16 who gave the Alumni Network Welcome and Commencement Singer Athene Wilson, among others.

GRAMMY AWARD-WINNER AND MIT PROFESSOR LUPE FIASCO PAID VISIT TO SCSD'S P.E.A.C.E. UNIT

Grammy award-winning rapper and record producer Lupe Fiasco made a memorable visit to the P.E.A.C.E. (Positive Energy Always Creates Elevation) Unit at the Suffolk County House of Correction earlier this past year. Lupe, whose real name is Wasalu Muhammad Jaco, rose to fame in 2006 with his debut album, *Lupe Fiasco's Food & Liquor*. Known for his thought-provoking lyrics and powerful messaging, Lupe has used his platform to inspire change and encourage personal growth.

Lupe Fiasco has recently become a distinguished member of the Educational Justice Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he aims to foster collaboration between the worlds of rap, computing, and activism. As part of his year-long fellowship at MIT, he is offering an exclusive rap course for MIT students. Through an ongoing partnership between the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and MIT, Lupe, and his students, visited individuals in the P.E.A.C.E. unit at the House of Correction to create opportunities for growth and empowerment.



INSIDE

- SCSD CELEBRATES CORRECTION OFFICER AND EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION WEEK 2023
- SHERIFF TOMPKINS TAKES THE STAGE FOR HARVARD, RCC COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES
- SCSD RECOGNIZES PRIDE MONTH

The P.E.A.C.E. Unit, initiated in 2018 by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, is a specialized treatment housing program that focuses on helping young men between the ages of 18 and 25 develop the skills and tools necessary to effect positive change in their lives. Studies have shown that individuals in this age group often exhibit lower levels of maturity in judgment and emotional regulation compared to older adults. The aim of the P.E.A.C.E. Unit is to provide a therapeutic space where these young men can learn how to make better decisions and break the cycle of incarceration.

With an innovative and holistic approach, the P.E.A.C.E. Unit offers a variety of programmatic components that encourage positive growth and instill coping skills. These include education, job training, skill development, individual and group counseling, attitudinal changes, and conflict resolution. The goal is to empower the individuals in the unit to take accountability for their actions and decisions while introducing practical life skills that will prepare them for successful reintegration into society.

During his visit, Lupe Fiasco delivered an inspiring message to the young men in the P.E.A.C.E. Unit encouraging them to embrace their own individuality and challenging them to step out of their comfort zones lyrically. Lupe emphasized the importance of personal growth and self-expression, urging individuals to explore new horizons and try different things.

The Suffolk County House of Correction and the P.E.A.C.E. Unit are grateful to both Lupe Fiasco and MIT for this visit as it showcased the power of music and personal connection in promoting positive change. It also revealed that embracing individuality and stepping outside of -comfort zones can lead to remarkable personal growth in both creativity and behavior.



EIGHTY-ONE NEW OFFICERS WELCOMED INTO DEPARTMENT SERVICE

In 2023, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department welcomed a total of eighty-one (81) new officers from its Correction Officer Training Academy classes.

Of the total number of newly-sworn officers, nineteen came by way of Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) Class 22-04, which was started near the end of the previous year and graduated at the start of 2023. The other sixty-two officers were

part of COTA Class 23-01, COTA Class 23-02 and COTA Class 23-03, which were all started and completed in 2023.

COTA classes gathered for their graduation ceremonies at Casa Lucia in Revere, MA, which were presided over by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, Superintendents William Sweeney, Michael Colwell and John McLaughlin, and were attended by members of the Command Staff, the training academy, and the Department's Honor Guard. Graduates were joined by family members and friends, and those who could not attend the graduations were able to observe the proceedings on the Department's Facebook Live broadcast.

Speaking to graduates, Sheriff Tompkins said, "Our mandate is care and custody. We do not stand as judge or jury. Our job is to make sure individuals within our care use their time productively so they can get back to their friends, families, and communities. Our job is to offer educational opportunities, lighten the load on the families, and to take care of our brothers and sisters, both in the Department and in the community."

Members of each COTA Class partook in a rigorous academy consisting of an intense core of practical and academic training that included; ethics and professionalism, suicide prevention, the use of force continuum, firearm safety and handling, inmate education and programming, contraband control, courtroom testimony, CORI and inmate rights and responsibilities, fire safety, CPR, harassment and discrimination prevention, cross-gender supervision, report writing, and more.

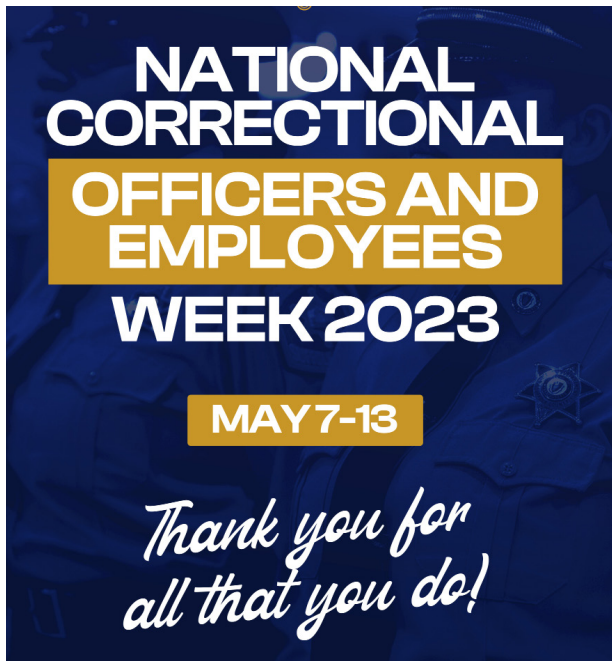
COTA Class 22-04, which was assigned to the Suffolk County Jail, includes: Augustinho Mendes, Maya Young, Daniel Dunbar, Emerson Thomas, Dorval Adelson, Cassandra Dyer, Tykent Rogers, Hitzal Saint Cyr, Zasharie Liriano, Pierre Ulysse, Joidson Wagnac, Chanthan Neang, Janycia DeJesus, Benjy Antoine, Jackson Barboza Oville, Daniela Gomes, Scott Caspe, Rubenz Regis, and Juan Seoane-Seri.

COTA Class 23-01, which was assigned to the Suffolk County House of Correction, includes: John Batakis, James Cazeau, Alonzo Cumberlander, Ibraheem Almarawi, Pierre Perrier, Jack Moitoza, Djoser Dor, Danella Meus, Tejan Lewis-Rosario, Enyel Santana, Freddy Soto, Kenroy Stewart, Marie Vante, and Wallace Youyoute.

The members of COTA Class 23-02 are, in alphabetical order: Layton Artigo, Walter Aulean, Jessica Bruno, Dimitry Cayo, Fabrice Charlecius, Angel Deleon, Anderson Derisma, Retz Domingue, Christopher Forance, Bernard Goulding, Roshawna Grant, Phil Jean-Philippe, Kelvin Kerthi, Joseph Lewandowski, Patrick Lindor, Kerne Lorse, Dadeson Multy, Normilus Olivier, Natalia Ortiz, Denis Sanchez, Zaim Sanchez, Flennard Shaw, and Ricardo Souffront.

COTA Class 23-03 includes: Rennex Barham, Stephanie Bien-Aime, Anissa Carter, Melissa Carter, Dana Cromwell, Tracy Denton, Vladimir Desrivieres, Jeff Desulme, Kenny, Dugue, Joy Ezike, Tia Freeman, Christopher Gilbert, Kymari Green, Bertho Henri, Averill Kennedy, Derell Larode, Royaumine Laureore, Alix Leger, Fritz Louis-Jean, Amos Pierre, Norberto Rubert, Wilberto Serrano, Octavia Simmons, Khiry Todd, and Cem Uprak.

SCSD CELEBRATED CORRECTION OFFICER AND EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION WEEK 2023



In May, Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department celebrated Correction Officer and Employee Appreciation Week with a number of special events dedicated to its hardworking and committed men and women who make the Department among the best in the profession.

Kicking off the week of recognition, Sheriff Tompkins, members of the command staff and union representatives held wreath-laying ceremonies at both the Suffolk County House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail to honor the memories and service of our fallen officers. Both gatherings were marked by tributes to members of the Department who have passed, as well as expressions of gratitude to current custody and non-custody staff for their dedication and service to the organization.

The Department also hosted catered lunches where employees savored Italian dishes, threw a Barbecue with service by grill-masters from the command staff, and held raffles with great prizes, all in the spirit of appreciation for the tireless commitment and sacrifice made by SCSD employees.



SCSD “OFFICERS OF THE MONTH” RECOGNIZED FOR 2023



SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS &
THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

CONGRATULATIONS!

TO THE
OFFICERS 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 honor is granted to staff members who consistently demonstrate excellence, professionalism, and integrity while carrying out their duties.

The Officer of the Month Award was initiated in February of 2023 to recognize and appreciate the diligence and commitment of our staff. The Command Staff and peers play a crucial role in the selection process, which involves nominations and evaluations. We encourage all of our employees to actively participate in the program by nominating their deserving colleagues.

The following is a listing of the recipients of the Officer of the Month Award for the Year 2023.

Winners from the Suffolk County Jail included: Marqui Murphy; Eric Strong; Ryan Jones; Danny Pizarro; Christine Leone; Michael Keenan; Eliana Dos Santos; Esteban Acosta; Baldwin Ihenacho; and Shawn McCusker.

Winners from the Suffolk County House of Correction included: Mirlande Philogene; James Fitzgerald; William Hickey and Daniel Kelly; Michael Eed; Kemi Rodriguez; Antonio Jones; Tony Lee, Michael Coakley, Alison Crowley, Paul Ferringo, Eric Hester, and Jon Corey; Keith Storlazzi; and Jonathan Ruiz.

ADS JOSE MOJICA GAINED CERTIFICATION AS INSTRUCTOR FOR ACTIVE ATTACK INTEGRATED RESPONSE



In 2023, Governor Kim Driscoll convened a multi-agency First Responder Training at Merrimack College to train state and local police, fire, EMS (emergency medical services), and 911 emergency assistance on the implementation of the National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 3000 standard.

The NFPA 3000 is the standard for an Active Shooter/ Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program. It establishes a model for cross-discipline collaboration to protect citizens and help communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from a crisis event. Massachusetts is the first state in the nation to adopt this standard.

The weeklong "train-the-trainer" program at Merrimack College certified a cohort of qualified instructors to teach the model standard to other first responders and community partners across the state. During the training, Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrance Reidy addressed program participants and thanked the first responders for their commitment to public safety.

Governor Maura Healey also issued the following statement to the group: "Our investment in training will bolster our first responders' collective ability to prepare for, prevent, and respond to emergencies while strengthening public safety in communities across the Commonwealth."

Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Assistant Deputy Superintendent (ADS) Jose Mojica attended the weeklong training program and spoke highly of the course, stating, "Course instructors came from various backgrounds, including law enforcement and military special operation teams. These individuals brought their experiences and life lessons to us, which is huge."

ADS Mojica is one of approximately 100 instructors tasked with training over 23,000 law enforcement officers in the state with this new response technique. He emphasized the importance of the new training, saying, "Unfortunately, there has been an increase in gun violence throughout the country. The course was taught from the perspective of 'it is not a matter of if this could occur but when.' With that mindset, we can always be prepared to respond to this type of situation."

"The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has approximately 35 individuals who are post-trained," ADS Mojica continued. "The goal is to have each of these individuals certified through this program. My goal internally is to train officers to that level of experience."

The statewide standard of NFPA 3000 is a significant step towards improving emergency preparedness and community resiliency in Massachusetts. It provides a model for cross-discipline collaboration and prepares first responders to respond effectively and efficiently to hostile events.

SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT HOSTS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTOR COURSE



The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Correction Officer Training Academy hosted a Mental Health First Aid instructor course as part of a federally funded initiative through Anna Maria College. This initiative aims to provide Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to public safety professionals throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The initiative successfully certified 15 MHFA instructors from different public safety departments, including the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, Barnstable County Sheriff's Department, Middlesex County Sheriff's Department, Norfolk County Sheriff's Department, and several Boston-area police departments.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a nationally recognized skills-based training program from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. It teaches participants about mental health and substance use, increasing mental health literacy and decreasing the stigma associated with these challenges.

According to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, mental health is important to public safety as 1 in 4 law enforcement encounters involve an individual experiencing mental health issues and 1.2 million individuals with mental illness are in jail or prison each year.

The course required students to complete an online prerequisite before attending the three-day in-person class. The MHFA course covers a range of topics including an overview of common mental health and substance use disorders; recognizing risk factors and warning signs; crisis diffusion techniques; affirming and reassurance tactics; how to encourage appropriate help; and self-help and support strategies.

Suffolk County Sheriff's Department training officers including Assistant Deputy Superintendent Jose Mojica, along with Sergeant Nick Lopriore, Sergeant Nicole Gaines, and Deputy Michael Disabatino successfully completed the course. As certified MHFA instructors, they are now fully-equipped to impart valuable lessons to Department employees and other public safety professionals.

The MHFA curriculum aims to build new mental health capacities within the public safety sector and helps to foster healthier and stronger communities. The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department remains committed to ensuring that its staff has the knowledge and skills required to address mental health challenges with the goal of training all Department employees on MHFA by 2024.

SCSD'S TRANSGENDER AWARENESS TRAINING STRESSES RESPECT, PROFESSIONALISM



As the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department (SCSD) delivers on its mission for the safe care and custody of the men and women remanded by the courts into its facilities, the Department remains committed to providing comprehensive and effective training for custody and non-custody staff members that reflects the best and most current practices in corrections.

In addition to instruction on a variety of technical and tactical trainings, the Department has also stressed the importance of sociocultural awareness and understanding in its training as a means of fostering an environment of mutual respect and cooperation, not only between members of staff and the men and women in Department custody, but across the Department as a whole.

As one of several such curricula, the Department introduced its Transgender Awareness Training back in 2019, which was later expanded upon by Sergeant Nicole Gaines when she joined the Department's Correction Officer Training Academy in Chelsea as one of its instructors in 2021.

"A lot of people don't understand some of the terminology used when addressing the LGBTQI+ community, or what transgender is and why people transition," said Sgt. Gaines. "I think a lot of people aren't trying to be mean, they're just ignorant and they really don't know. I wanted to add in a little bit more about transgender awareness to our curriculum so that people could become better informed."

As defined by the training, a transgender person is someone whose gender identity, gender expression or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth. Most transgender people are seeking to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity, a process known as "transition." As part of the transition process, many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies, with some undergoing surgeries as well. But, as the training cautions, not all people can or will take these steps, and it is important to understand that being transgender, or "trans," is not dependent upon surgical procedures.

"We deal with people who are trans in our custody," said Sgt. Gaines. That person might be a biological male transitioning to female and they may still look like man on outside, or vice versa, but that doesn't negate who they are on the inside. If they tell you that they are transgender, they are. Believe them and accept that they are transgender."

Sgt. Gaines also pointed out that, while a transgender person may want to transition, they may not have the insurance or money to do a full transition, reinforcing the importance of respecting everyone and their right to be addressed as they identify rather than by appearance. When training her Department colleagues about this and other topics, Sgt. Gaines fortifies her message with an example about her own experience.

"When I teach for in-service training, before I go into any of the LGBTQI+ material, I tell people that I am a lesbian," Sgt. Gaines said. "I am not embarrassed or ashamed to talk about it. I tell everyone I work with that me being lesbian has nothing to do with what we do here, nothing to do with me working as their partner, and nothing to do with how I'm going to back them up or help them when they need it. What's important is that I can do the job and that I treat people with respect. I've never gotten any negative feedback about it. People know that I'm a good person and that I do the job and I support them."

In turn, Sgt. Gaines ensures that the members of her Department training classes use that same barometer in working with members of the population.

"If someone tells you how they want to be identified, respect that and use the proper pronouns," said Sgt. Gaines. "You may have different beliefs or thoughts on the subject, but here on the job, it's about care, custody and having respect for people, minus what you may think personally. The ultimate message is that we need to treat everyone with respect and try to get a better understanding of the fact that we are all human beings,"

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WRAPPED 8TH SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM



The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department marked the end of the summer and beginning of the school year with the completion of this year's Summer Enrichment Program.

Launched in 2014 by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, the seven-week paid summer internship brings together young people from across Suffolk County with an expressed interest in law enforcement and criminal justice to learn about the great variety of career opportunities that exist within the Department and beyond.

To this end, the Department once again utilized its partnerships and collaborative relationships with the many different agencies and organizations that make up the criminal legal system and law enforcement community in Massachusetts with the goal of helping to increase participants' knowledge and expand their ideas of what a career in these organizations can look like.

The program was also envisioned as a vehicle that would help to bring together uniformed officers and young people with the goal of fostering positive, proactive relationships between them.

This year, the Department introduced a special study component which expanded the program from three days per-week to five days, with emphasis on advanced study techniques, financial literacy, and educational resources.

As part of the program, participants get to learn about the mechanics of law enforcement through job shadowing, weekly presentations and roundtable discussions, law enforcement-related field trips, and educational tours.

In addition to taking in presentations by members of the Department, Summer Enrichment Program participants were able to visit and tour the Massachusetts State House before meeting with Governor Maura Healey; Boston City Hall where they sat with Mayor Michelle Wu; Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority Police headquarters to meet MBTA Police Chief Kenneth Green; the Office of the United States Attorney General; the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office for a session with Attorney General Andrea Campbell; the Massachusetts State Police Barracks; the United States Marshal's Office with Marshal Brian Kyes, the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigations), the Massachusetts Trial Courts, the Winthrop Harbormaster, and others.

Here at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, the SEP also toured both the Suffolk County House of Correction and the Suffolk County Jail; were instructed in CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and lifesaving techniques by our Correction Officer Training Academy; sat in for a demonstration by the SCSD K-9 Division; took an interactive meeting with the Gang Intelligence Unit; attended seminars with representatives from our Field Supervision Unit, our P.E.A.C.E. Unit, which provides programming specifically developed for men between the ages of 18 and 25; were visited by an array of program services representatives; met with the Superintendents of both facilities; and sat with Sheriff Tompkins himself.

"We take great pride in our ability to provide this internship for young people interested in this field of study," said Sheriff Tompkins. "There are a multitude of different opportunities available in just about every agency, and we want to help our SEP participants to explore as many of them as we can."

"Now, more than ever, as law enforcement and the criminal legal system continue to evolve across this country, we need to have the input and engagement of our young people, particularly those who are committed to the work of effecting positive change for all members of our society."

For more information about the Summer Enrichment Program and other Department programming, visit: www.scsdma.org.



SPORTS ISSUE RECAP



In the special Sports Edition of the Common Ground newsletter, which ran in August of 2023, we featured several members of the Department in their athletic endeavors and, in addition, we showcased the charitable nature of their involvement in several of these pursuits.

Once again, members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department took part in the BFit Heroes Cup, which is one of the largest first-responder hockey tournaments in the world.

The tournament was created by the Boston Bruins Foundation back in 2017 and includes among its participants members of police and fire departments, EMS (emergency medical services), military personnel and others. This year's tournament, with the help of more than 100 competing teams, raised over \$500,000 for various charities.

With participation organized each year by two of the Department's unions, JOEASC and Local 419, SCSD employees raise and donate their own money and time to play in the tournament to help bring in money for a charity that they select.

"It's for a great charity event that is well put together and incredibly well-organized, given all the teams from across the country that participate," said Captain Jay McCarthy of the Suffolk County Jail. "Any opportunity to gather and socialize outside the workplace, particularly for an event like this, is appreciated by all who attend. A lot of laughs and good, healthy competition make for a great tournament. I'm already looking forward to the next one."

In June, Suffolk County Sheriff's Department General Counsel Allen Forbes returned to the road for his sixteenth year of support for Best Buddies as a participant in the organization's "Challenge: Hyannis Port" charity bicycle ride.

Funds raised through the Best Buddies Challenge: Hyannis Port benefit Best Buddies International, the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The organization's programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society. Riding once again for "Team Harris," named in memory of his late son, Forbes was as ebullient as ever in his support of the organization, despite the less-than-ideal conditions.

"It's essentially the same ride," said Forbes, speaking about the effect of the inclement weather. "I wasn't going as fast as I'm used to, but it's still fun. It was cold and windy, but the energy of the people riding was on another level and that helped to pull everyone through."

Highlighting just two of the events attended by the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Basketball Team we reported as they took to the court to score points for a couple of community organizations aimed at promoting peace and enhancing community relations.



Joining a slate of other first responder and law enforcement organizations, the SCSD men's basketball team suited up for some friendly competition to assist Youth In Crisis Ministries' 22nd Annual Scoops and Hoops event at Ryan Playground in Mattapan, and the 8th Annual Boston Strong Invitational Tournament.

The SCSD team laced up their sneakers once again for a different event, this one focused on improving the relationships between community members and law enforcement, and to honor the memories of the people who lost their lives as a result of the tragic events around the Boston Marathon of 2013. Competing in the 8th Annual Boston Strong Invitational Tournament, members of the SCSD men's team hit the hardwood in support of the event's mission while embracing the camaraderie and competition.

In July, the Boston Renegades women's football team won yet another national championship, adding to an already impressive legacy that began back in 2015.

"This win is special to me because it's our 5th straight Championship," said Captain Cabrera. Also, since the Renegades began back in 2015, we have won more championships than any other professional women's football team in a single league."

According to recorded history, while the Toledo Troopers also won seven national women's football championships, their wins were split between two leagues – the Women's Professional Football League and the National Women's Football League.

Members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's custody staff and participants in the Department's Community Works Program once again joined forces to help out with the production of the Massachusetts Special Olympics Summer Games, Torch Run and Cruiser Convoy.

Led by Department officers, two teams from the Community Works Program (CWP) helped to assemble portable basketball hoops, arrange tables, post signage and a host of other tasks in support of the event and its athletes. The CWP Unit is supervised by custody staff members and is comprised of volunteers from the Department's in-custody population who meet strict classification standards to be selected for the program.

As part of the SCSD's ongoing annual support of the Summer Games, Deputy Mark Loud took part in the Cruiser Convoy and participated in the last leg of the Torch Run to help open the ceremonies. As described by the Special Olympics organization, the torchbearers are known as "Guardians of the Flame," and members of law enforcement and Special Olympics athletes "carry the 'Flame of Hope' into Opening Ceremonies of local competitions. They also carry it into Special Olympics State, Provincial, National, Regional and World Games. There are over 97,000 law enforcement members that carry the 'Flame of Hope' annually. The flame symbolizes courage and celebration of diversity uniting communities around the globe."

The Special Olympics Massachusetts Summer Games is the largest event run by the organization every year. Over 1,500 athletes and Unified Partners, and more than 1,000 volunteers gather at the Harvard University Athletic Complex for three days of inclusion, sports and fun as athletes compete for gold in Track & Field, Power Lifting, Swimming, Tennis, and Volleyball.

Finally, we featured the athletic exploits of our own Lieutenant Richard Bloom, who had previously wrestled, weightlifted and rowed his way to a ridiculous count of fifteen Gold Medals, one Silver Medal, two Bronze Medals and eight world records in international competition. We predicted then that he would "need to clear more arm space" to accommodate the next wave of medals from his imminent return to competition. Granted, this was no bold Nostradamusesque forecast, given his past penchant for production. But, after some forced downtime due to surgery, and time off to tend to his new role as a father, Lt. Bloom has managed to weightlift, wrestle and Jiu Jitsu his way to eight more Golds, four more Silvers, another Bronze and one more world record, cementing his legacy and legend as a Michael Phelpsian performer.



SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS &
THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

WISH EVERYONE A SAFE AND

Happy
New Year
2024

#WEARESCSD | WWW.SCSDMA.ORG



SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS
SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NOW HIRING: LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREERS

BENEFITS:

- › SALARY RANGE FROM \$60K - \$80K*
**WITH APPLICABLE DIFFERENTIALS AND BONUSES*
- › PAID LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY TRAINING
- › GENEROUS MEDICAL, DENTAL AND RETIREMENT PLANS

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- › ALL CAREER BACKGROUNDS CONSIDERED
- › 20 YEARS OF AGE
- › U.S. CITIZENSHIP
- › HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
- › VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE

WWW.SCSDMA.ORG/CAREERS

617.704.6363

JOBS@SCSDMA.ORG

