



PROBATION



Volume 2, Number 3

Winter 2016

The Massachusetts Probation Service

Sealings:

By the Numbers

March	5,743
April	5,302
May	4,732
June	5,138
July	3,329
August	4,188
September	4,880
October	4,444
November	3,796
December	4,398

Record Sealing Wait Time Reduced

According to a U.S. Department of Justice study, nearly one third of American adults have been arrested by the age of 23 resulting in a criminal record. Although there are businesses willing to hire someone with a record, it is still a major barrier to finding employment for many.

The Massachusetts Probation Service has made it more convenient to seal a criminal record by reducing the current wait time to one day for records sealed by a judge and processed by Probation (100 C sealings), and a three-day turn around for records sealed by Probation's Sealing Unit (100 A & 100 B petitions). This unit is one of two departments that are under the umbrella of the agency's Records Unit which also includes the CIMG (Central Identity Management Group). The CIMG analyzes, updates, and maintains data contained in all court-related databases governed by the Commissioner of Probation. The Sealing Unit is sealing from 3,000 to 5,000 cases per month.

This new wait time is a marked improvement from a year ago when the turn around time was more than three months, according to Thomas Capasso, Probation Records Unit Director. Capasso attributes the decreased wait time to the hard work of the Records Unit staff and some reorganization of job duties which allows Sealing Unit staff time to focus solely on sealing petitions. Last March, the Records Unit began tracking sealings by the number of cases sealed.

"The goal is to help individuals with past minor indiscretions have a better opportunity to gain employment," Capasso said. "Because we anticipate the demand for sealing records will continue to increase, a one-day turn around might not always be the norm. Therefore, it is our goal to keep the wait time to under a month which will still benefit those seeking work."

The number of petitions for sealing records increased nearly 60 percent in the past five years due to the passing of the CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) Reform which rolled back the time frames for sealing of convictions from 15 to 10 years for felonies and misdemeanors from 10 to five years. The increase in petitions was attributed to the focus of CORI reform on the reintegration of people with criminal records into the workforce.

Boston Municipal Court Provides Winter Gear To Homeless and Struggling Families

Boston Municipal Court (BMC) Probation employees conducted a Sock Drive which extended from the holiday season into the first of the year providing socks as well as hats, gloves, scarves, and coats to homeless men and women and coats and winter gear to school children.

This first time Sock Drive, "Helping Hands for Warm Feet," is the brainchild of Boston Municipal Court Regional Supervisor Renee Payne who rallied her staff to conduct the drive after recognizing a need for warm clothing among probationers and those in the vicinity of the eight BMC courts.

"I discovered that the simple and most under donated item is socks. We had planned to go out with State Police to look under bridges where the homeless live to check on them and I thought how about going out and giving them socks. I then mentioned to the BMC Chiefs that we should do something and they agreed," said Payne.

Teams of BMC Probation Officers went into the community and delivered the winter gear. Probation Officers Allison Connolly and Meaghan Mills of BMC-West Roxbury joined Boston Police in the Community Outreach van distributing items to homeless individuals living under bridges in the area. Probation Officers Edith Alexander and Christopher Gillis delivered items to the West End Homeless Shelter. Dorchester Probation Officers Deirdre Kerr and John Fontes provided clothing to Area B3 (Mattapan) to drop at local schools in the area. East Boston Probation distributed packages containing a hat, gloves, and socks to homeless probationers living at a local shelter. South Boston District Court Probation Officers Marynel Sanchez and Barbara Loftus handed out socks to individuals along Massachusetts Avenue and delivered shoes and boots, collected by their court colleagues, to residents of the Woods Mullen homeless shelter. BMC-Central Probation Officers William Regan and Donald Castle and Charlestown Assistant Chief Probation Officer William McNichol also delivered winter gear to area human service agencies for distribution.



Left to right: BMC-Dorchester Probation Officers John Fontes and Deirdre Kerr; and B-3 (Dorchester-Mattapan) Boston Police.

A Message From The Commissioner



Edward J. Dolan

Dear Colleagues:

Now that we have ushered in a new year, it is time to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, build on its successes, and prepare for the future of the Massachusetts Probation Service as opportunities to enhance our organizational structure abound.

One key focus is the hiring of a professional, talented, and motivated workforce. I am happy to report that this process is proceeding exceedingly well. Probation has added 183 employees to its more than 1,700 staff members across the state—including 101 new Probation Officers in the last year.

A total of 43 provisional Assistant Chief Probation Officers have been promoted to permanent, full-time positions. The recent posting of 54 Assistant Chief Probation Officer positions is a huge opportunity for individuals wishing to advance their careers. More than 50 candidates were interviewed for Chief Probation Officer positions last month in nine courts: Boston Municipal Court-Brighton; the Brookline, Cambridge, Clinton, Fall River, Hingham, Lynn, and Taunton District Courts; as well as Worcester Superior Court.

Probation Officer jobs in each of the 105 courts statewide have been posted on the Trial Court employment webpage. Individuals who have taken and passed the Probation Officer exam may apply.

In addition to the hiring process, Probation is setting important goals with the assistance of the Ripples Group of Boston which will be working with the agency to establish a strategic plan. Your input in this endeavor is important as we hope to harness your creativity and talent as we move forward in building a highly efficient and effective Probation Service.

In the coming weeks, I will visit local courts and attend regional Chief Probation Officer meetings to hear about and view first hand your important work in the courts and the communities.

I look forward to meeting and working together with you to continue our agency's success. Thank you and remember great things are in store in 2016 for the Massachusetts Probation Service.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Dolan, Commissioner
The Massachusetts Probation Service

Probation Updates: News Briefs on Probation-Related Activities

Probation On The Hill

Commissioner Edward J. Dolan attended a forum Wednesday, February 10th, on Justice-Involved Women sponsored by State Representative Kay Khan. Dolan informed the group that 22 percent of Probation's 82,000 supervised caseload are women. The Statehouse event was sponsored by the Caucus of Women Legislators' Task Force on Justice-Involved Women.

On January 12th, Juvenile Probation Statewide Supervisor John Millett, Hampden Juvenile Assistant Chief Probation Officer Karen Sullivan, Essex Juvenile Probation Officer Jose Avila, and Hampden Juvenile Probation Officer Kristen Hurst testified before the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities Massachusetts State Legislature at the Statehouse. They spoke about Probation's focus on placing children on a "diversion track to treatment and not prosecution."

Criminal Justice Collaborations

Probation Superior Court Statewide Supervisor Andrew Peck hosted a meeting on January 25th at the Massachusetts Probation Service Training Academy for First Assistant District Attorneys (ADA's) from across the state to discuss highlights of the new Superior Court Guidelines for Violations of Probation and their impact on our practice. The Guidelines went into effect February 1st. Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 279, Section 3 allows ADA's to assist Probation in presenting evidence at a Probation violation hearing. While Probation conducts most of its hearings, the agency may request assistance from ADA's on more complex hearings such as crimes with victims and white collar crimes. The Guidelines are recommended best practices for Probation violation proceedings in Superior Court. In attendance were ADA's from Hampden, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties, the Attorney General's Office, as well as Probation's General Counsel Crispin Birnbaum.

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Hiring Report

Now Hiring Probation Officers And A Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services

Probation Officer positions for jobs in many of the 105 courts across the state and a Deputy Commissioner job have been posted on the Massachusetts Trial Court's employment page: www.mass.gov/courts/employment. The Deputy Commissioner of Administrative Services, a newly-created position, will assist the Commissioner of Probation and oversee and coordinate administrative functions for the Service including fiscal affairs, personnel, labor relations, and information technology services.

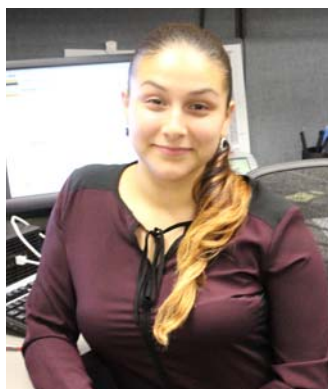
Chief Probation Officer Selections Are Underway

Six new Chief Probation Officers have been appointed: Donelle Gomes-Talley, Fall River District Court; Jean Curtin, Worcester Superior; G. Joseph Pennucci, Lynn District; Jeffrey Jarasitis, Brookline District; Kelly Hamilton-Welzel, Taunton District; and Michael Dube, Boston Municipal Court-Brighton. Selections are ongoing for Chief's positions at Hingham District and Clinton District courts.

Retired Chiefs Return to Lend Their Expertise

Four retired Chiefs are returning to Probation temporarily to assist with the implementation of the new Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSIR) Pilot Program which will help Probation Officers and Judges determine the risk factors of domestic violence offenders who come before the court. The former chiefs include Gerald Buono (East Brookfield), Susan Galvin (Chicopee District), Patricia Kane (Newburyport District), and Sophia O'Brien (Middlesex Probate & Family) who will participate in data collection efforts involving 400 closed cases in an effort to determine the risk factor of offenders. The tool will be piloted in eight courts (to be announced at a later date) following a February 18th training.

New Employees/Promotions



Vanessa Castano-



Daniel J. Pires



Nina Pomponio



Vincent L. Lorenti

Vanessa Castano was named the Assistant CARI (Court Activity Record Information) Coordinator in the Records Unit.

As Assistant CARI Coordinator, Castano is responsible for providing a variety of clerical and administrative support. Prior to her appointment, she was employed as a Transitional Coordinator for the Eliot Community Human Services in Saugus. She was introduced to the criminal justice field as an intern at Chelsea District Court in 2013.

Castano is a 2013 graduate of Suffolk University where she double majored in Paralegal Studies and Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice.

Daniel Pires became the new Statewide Manager of the Electronic Monitoring (ELMO) Program.

Pires' duties include the development and implementation of ELMO Center operation policies and practices, management of ELMO Center operations and oversight of staff, ensuring compliance with subpoenas for records and testimony by ELMO staff, and monitoring the issuance of warrants.

Pires held the position of Program Manager at the Electronic Monitoring Center prior to his new appointment. He has also served as ELMO coordinator and Assistant ELMO coordinator.

He earned both a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary/ Special Education in 1999 from Providence College and a master's degree in Public Administration from Anna Maria College in 2014.

Nina Pomponio was hired as a new Administrative Attorney in the Legal Unit in December.

Pomponio's duties include providing administrative and legal assistance within the Commissioner of Probation's Legal Unit. Among Pomponio's primary tasks are researching legal issues and making recommendations to the General Counsel, Executive, and Senior staff.

She comes to Probation from the Massachusetts Division of Professional Licensure, where she served as a Prosecuting Counsel for four years. Pomponio also served as an Assistant District Attorney in Middlesex County.

Pomponio earned both her Bachelor's Philosophy (2004) and Juris Doctorate from Boston University (School of Law in 2007).

Vincent L. Lorenti has been named Director of the Office of Community Corrections, effective January 19th.

As the new director, Lorenti is responsible for managing the overall operation of the statewide OCC program where intermediate sanctions for probationers are enforced. Individuals sentenced to the centers must check in several times weekly, and participate in substance abuse treatment, HiSet (Massachusetts High School Equivalency Testing) Program preparation and job training.

Lorenti began his career with Probation as a Court Services Coordinator at the Suffolk County Community Corrections Center in 1998 after working as an intern while a student at Boston College. He later served as a Program Specialist at OCC.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Boston College in 1998 and a Juris Doctorate from Suffolk University Law School in 2011.

Probation Officer Profile:

Marynel Sanchez, South Boston District Court



Marynel Sanchez

Marynel Sanchez, a South Boston District Court Probation Officer, has a calming, no-nonsense demeanor that has guided many probationers through their addiction, family turmoil, and lives in disarray to a place of sobriety. Sanchez also does not hesitate to recommend jail time for those who do not comply with their probation conditions.

As a Probation Officer at one of the longest running Drug Courts in the state, Sanchez has been a major influence at the court. She first arrived at the court 22 years ago, a time when local public housing was becoming integrated and the neighborhood began to change. This change was met with resistance and clashes between new and long-time residents resulted in assault and battery cases before the court, Sanchez recalled.

Years later, opiates became the enemy in South Boston, one of the first communities to fall under its strong grip. Sanchez is now dealing with entire families—mother, father, sons and daughters—struggling with addiction. She works tirelessly to find rehabilitation beds for her clients.

"Finding beds is not always easy. There just aren't enough but that does not stop me from trying really hard to find one," Sanchez said.

She strives to find a way to raise the conscience of a probationer and to show them that drugs are not the answer. Sitting at a desk surrounded by books, she often gives them one to read to help them find hope in the characters as well as broaden their perspective. Sanchez helps run the court's Changing Lives Through Literature Program, CLTL, and oversees the Women's and Men's Relapse Group that meets on Monday nights.

"She is very tough but she really cares," said a probationer who did not want his name published.

South Boston District Chief Probation Officer Steven Siciliano described Sanchez as the "ultimate team player."

"Marynel is very passionate about the people and families she serves here in South Boston. As our Drug Court PO, she goes above and beyond her duties as a Probation Officer in securing beds and treatment services to assist individuals with maintaining their sobriety," Siciliano said. "The ultimate compliment is that she is well respected by her fellow colleagues and treats everyone with the utmost respect. It is a joy to work with her as well as all the probation officers and support staff at South Boston as they make my job as CPO easier."

Specialty Courts Update

Opening of Bristol County Juvenile Mental Health Court

The Bristol County Juvenile Mental Health Court Pilot will launch March 1st. This pilot, the first in the state, will identify youth with mental or behavioral health issues at arraignment and place them on a diversion track. The court will hold three separate sessions in Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton.

Drug Court 101: A Two-Day Conference

A two-day training for Drug Court teams, "Drug Court 101," will take place on March 24th and 25th at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester. Probation Commissioner Edward J. Dolan will offer opening remarks. The training will include an overview of addiction and treatment modalities, best practices for operating a Drug Court, sanctions and incentives, mock staffing, and a mock Drug Court Session. Drug Court graduates will also serve as speakers.

New Program Teaches Court-Involved How To Better Parent Troubled Children



Triple P Parents, Mike and Shannon, discuss parenting tips.

Raising children is challenging for any parent. This challenge is magnified when the parent is court-involved and the child has been removed from the home, experiences that may result in behavioral issues.

Last fall, a group of parents learned how to become better caregivers and to address the needs of children, up to age 12, through participation in the eight-week Triple P Program, a parenting intervention program certified by the World Health Organization. The eight-week program is run by Norfolk Juvenile Probation Officers Teresa Plante and Tracey Clougher.

The major emphasis is on positive parenting. Plante and Clougher, parents themselves, lead the group through a range of exercises to help them determine the root of a child's behavior, set specific goals,

use strategies to promote child development, and manage misbehavior.

The program also involves four-two hour group sessions, three 15-30 minute telephone consultations to assist parents with independent problem solving at home. The program will be offered again in fall 2016.

"We as practitioners often see families torn apart by substance abuse. Parents who achieve reunification often feel guilty about their past failures and tend to give into their child's every want and are the cause of their children's behavior. Our goal is to keep families together. We want to avoid these children growing up becoming unmanageable teens and adults and becoming another statistic in the criminal justice system," Plante said.

Actor/Comedian Helps Court-Involved Youth at Norfolk Juvenile Court

The Norfolk Juvenile Probation Department, Quincy office, introduced the TARGET (Teens Achieving Respect Goals Education Together) Program which included weekly sessions facilitated by Boston actor and comedian Steve Sweeney, who appeared with actor Denzel Washington in the movie "The Equalizer," and with actress Cameron Diaz in "All About Mary."

The six-week program focuses on mindful meditation, realistic goal setting, defining goals, learning to focus, identifying proper support systems, assistance with job resources, and dealing with peer pressure. Twelve children participated in the program and another session has started.

Sweeney has worked in the field of recovery for more than 25 years, including a homeless shelter for veterans and Mount Auburn Hospital. He has also worked at the Gavin House in Dorchester.

Four of Eight New Innovation Award Recipients Are Probation Employees

Newburyport District, Worcester Superior, Eastern Hampshire, and Bristol Juvenile Probation Departments were each awarded one of the Trial Court's Innovation Grants, representing half of the recipients at a January 22nd ceremony held at the John Adams Courthouse. Twenty-seven proposals for the grants, totaling \$28,000, were submitted.

Newburyport District Court Assistant Chief Probation Officer Jenelle Russo, received \$1,925 to purchase two helmets and bicycles for a bicycle patrol that will maintain a presence at area parks and school playgrounds as well as popular hang-outs to discourage "a rash of needles and drug paraphernalia" left behind after drug use in Newburyport, Salisbury, and Amesbury where opiate use is on the rise.

Worcester Superior Court Probation Officers were awarded \$2,080 to purchase books for three, nine-week sessions of its new Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL) Program. The Program began in January and will accommodate up to 30 probationers.

The Eastern Hampshire District Court Womanhood Program was given \$2,000. This 10-week program, run by Probation Officer Regina Sanderson, features information on nutrition, breast and cervical cancer, and self-defense. Sanderson said the \$2,000 grant will be used to purchase class supplies, refreshments, and a gift of Alix and Ani bracelets, featuring a Path of Life charm, to each participant who completes the program. The bracelet is presented at the graduation ceremony. The program runs two semesters a year—spring and fall. The program graduated seven out of 10 women this past spring. This fall, all 11 participants graduated as well. The next semester will begin March 1, 2016. Graduation is scheduled for May 17th at the courthouse.

"I am honored to have been among the few selected by the committee given the large number of applicants, Sanderson said. "Having the support of the Trial Court has certainly enhanced the pride I feel about the program. Their support is an indication to the groups and myself that not only do they support us financially, but that they believe in us and our program mission."

Bristol Juvenile Court Probation is the recipient of a \$2,000 grant for the court's Girls Group. The stipend will be used for food, transportation and travel to the New Bedford Whaling Museum and Boston, as well as for graduation ceremonies.



Jenelle Russo

Chief Probation Officer Association Recognizes ELMO Employees



The Massachusetts Chief Probation Officers Association recently recognized employees of the Electronic Monitoring Center for their work and dedication.

In a glowing letter to Daniel Pires, Statewide Manager of the Electronic Monitoring Program, Association President and Southern Berkshire District Court Chief Probation Officer Alfred Barbalunga thanked Pires and his "hardworking" staff. The Association gifted each ELMO employee with "a small token of appreciation," a Dunkin Donuts gift card.



Left to right: Kenley Wasmer, Daniel Collins, Allison Beard, and Shawna Allder.

"The Chiefs are very impressed by the professionalism of the ELMO coordinators when receiving calls from them. The level of activity and potential stress, appears to be that of an air traffic controller, and every decision these employees make has the potential to have a resounding impact on the safety of all of us living in the Commonwealth," wrote Barbalunga.

The Executive Committee of the Association voted unanimously to honor the 44 employees who are responsible for closely monitoring the activities and whereabouts of 3,400 probationers and parolees. Of the 3,400, there are approximately 3,000 individuals monitored by the GPS bracelet and about 400 on a Remote Alcohol Device called SCRAM which is equipped with facial recognition detection.

ELMO employees manage up to 1,800 alerts a day. Of that number, staff on any given shift investigate the nature of the alert. An alert may include a signal interruption, uncharged battery, curfew violation, or serious infraction that may require an immediate action or response. The employees follow through on these alerts by calling offenders, police departments, and probation personnel. This level of investigation results in an average of only 17 after hour warrants per day.

"The Chiefs Association acknowledgement of the ELMO employees was a great gesture and is a true testament to the partnership between the Electronic Monitoring Center and the field," Pires said.

The ELMO staff works closely with the 105 courts in the five Trial Court Departments—Boston Municipal Court (BMC), District, Superior, Juvenile, and Probate & Family. They collaborate daily with more than 360 local and state police agencies and District Attorney's offices throughout the state. This group of employees also contributes to crime correlation efforts which enables staff to place an offender at the scene of a crime or rule them out as suspects.

**The Electronic Monitoring (ELMO) Center Staff
The Massachusetts Probation Service**

Mahly Alejandro
Shawna Allder
Emmanuel Avril
Roxanne Barboza
Allison Beard
Jeanne Bennett
Stephanie Cardaci
Andrea Carruthers
Matthew Cipriani
Daniel Collins
Colleen Connors
Adam D'Ambrosio
Courtney Davis

Joey DePasquale
Katherine Diaz
Robert Donnelly
Patrick Donovan
Ryana Dorcey
George Festa
David Fournier
William Fitzpatrick
Daniel Fox
Jacalyn Gearin
Carmine Giuggio
Anissa Hannon

James Hotaling
Christina Huff
Kenny Irula
Stephen Joseph
David Kang
Michael Lamoureux
Phil Lang
John Langone
Susan Lapointe
Calvin Lopez
Brandon McLaughlin

Maura O'Toole
Jeanna Rhieu
Meghan Ryan
Louis Strazzullo
Diana Truong
Stephen Ware
Kenley Wasmer
Ross Winnett
Justin Yawn

Probation Ovation Awards Enter New Season

The Commissioner’s Office began the new year by recognizing the last of the 2015 Massachusetts Probation Ovation Award recipients with a star-shaped glass statute presented to Probation employees for their “exemplary work.”

Brian Mirasolo, Field Services Administrator; John Corrao, a Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service employee; and Charlene Williams, Middlesex Superior Probation Office Manager; received their Ovation Awards during separate award ceremonies, attended by their colleagues and friends, in the last two weeks. The following is the list of 2015 recipients.

2015 Massachusetts Probation Service Ovation Award Winners

- January** **Carol Silvia**, Fall River District Chief Probation Officer
- February** **Sara Cohen**, Dedham District Probation Officer
- March** **Pamela King**, Salem District Probation Office Manager
- April** **Yazdel Correa**, Hampden Juvenile Probation Officer
- May** **Donna Moore**, Newton District Associate Probation Officer
- June** **Maureen Chamberlain**, Worcester District Chief Probation Officer
- July** **Kristy Paciorek**, Eastern Hampshire District Probation Officer
- August** **John Gilpatrick**, Plymouth Probate & Family Probation Officer
- September** **Joan Hogan**, BMC-West Roxbury Probation Office Manager
- October** **Charlene Williams**, Middlesex Probation Office Manager
- November** **John Corrao**, Associate Court Services Coordinator, Trial Court Community Service Program.
- December** **Brian Mirasolo**, Field Services Administrator, OCP, and **Carmine Giuggio**, ELMO Coordinator, Electronic Monitoring Center.



Michael Coelho, Deputy Commissioner-Programs, and John Corrao, Associate Court Services Coordinator, Trial Court Community Service.



Middlesex Superior Probation Office Manager Charlene Williams and Chief Maureen MacEachern.

Nominations for the January Ovation Award recipient in Region One—District Court are currently being accepted. Forward your submissions to Thomas Walsh, OCP, thomas.walsh@jud.state.ma.us.

Probate & Family Court Probation Employees Are Recognized By Bar Associations



Pamela Eldridge

Hampshire Probate & Family Chief Probation Officer Pamela Eldridge and Plymouth Probate & Family Assistant Chief Probation Officer Richard Giaquinto were honored by Bar Associations for their work in the criminal justice field and their dedication to the community.

The Hampshire Bar Association presented Eldridge, a 35-year Probation employee, with the Contribution to Justice Award last Thursday at the Grand Ballroom at the Hotel Northampton.

John Drake, Hampshire Bar Board member, said of Eldridge’s award, "Probate & Family cases are often difficult and fraught with emotion. Nevertheless, Pam is always able to cut through to the issue at hand and get to the truth which is mostly what is in the children’s best interest. She is able to provide the judges with the insight needed to reach a just and equitable decision.

Giaquinto, a 23-year Probation employee, received the Plymouth County Bar Association’s “Excellence in Judicial Administration” Award at a dinner held November 10th at Thorny Lea Country Club. Giaquinto said he was honored to be recognized.

Plymouth Probate & Family Chief Probation Officer Kevin Coughlin was called on to present the award. During his remarks about Gianquinto, Coughlin said, “He (Giaquinto) is very adept and in fact quite masterful in helping most discordant parties referred to us by the court in an effort to find some measure of harmony and appropriate common ground.”

Giaquinto was also acknowledged by the House of Representatives for his service to the state.



Left to right: ACPO Richard Giaquinto and Chief Kevin Coughlin.

Dudley District Probation Officer Honored At Red Mass

Dudley District Court Assistant Chief Probation Officer (ACPO) Philip Carofaniello was presented with the Catholic Layperson Award by the St. Thomas Moore Society of Worcester County during a Red Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Worcester. The Layperson Award is given to a practicing Catholic working in the Legal system who has made notable contributions to the administration of justice and the church. The Red Mass was held last fall.



Philip Carofaniello

GRATITUDE GRAPEVINE

The Gratitude Grapevine is a forum that celebrates the work of Probation employees and those who are thankful for Probation's positive impact on their lives. If you have a letter or message to share, forward it to Communications Assistant Joyce Higgins: joyce.higgins@jud.state.ma.us or call 617-557-0253. Two letters will be selected for publication each quarter.

A Mother's Thank You To Norfolk Juvenile Probation Officer Denise M. Aguero



Probation Officer
Denise Aguero

Dear Ms. Aguero:
I have been so relieved to see my child happy again. Thanks to you, the teacher, the judge, and the entire GOALS (Gain Opportunities Acquire Learning Skills) staff, I have my happy, kind, smart, beautiful loving respectful daughter back. She smiles again and it's been so

long since I've seen her beautiful smile.

I just wanted to take the time to thank you for giving my child and me a chance to show you and ourselves that we are strong women that have been put through so much emotionally and me physically, so all we needed was a little time and a little extra help in order to be the women that we always were before all the abuse.

And, because of your fairness, understanding, kindness, and commitment, this has been life-changing and a 100 percent positive steps towards our success! Forever thankful, forever grateful, with total respect, Thank you Again.

Note: The GOALS Program is an alternative high school in Quincy.

An Acknowledgement Of Three Worcester Juvenile Probation Officers

Candy Harris, thank you for being my first Probation Officer. To be honest, I don't remember much of the relationship we had since it was brief and I was young. However, I do remember you always being nice to me and always treating me with respect, which is the best gift anyone can ask for. I also thank you for being straight up with me when I would mess up or get myself into trouble.

Joe Silva, I still remember the very first time I met you and I doubt that I will ever forget it. I got called to the office to meet with you. I had no idea who you were and I wasn't sure what we were meeting for but from the moment you introduced yourself, I knew you were the real deal...You turned out to not only be my Probation Officer but also a friend. I know I didn't make your job as my Probation Officer any easier, but despite all the times I would mess up, you would always be there to help me out.

Steve Germain, although you were never my Probation Officer, you were always a good friend. You still owe me one of your delicious breakfast sandwiches that you would make when I attended JRC (Worcester Juvenile Resource Center).

Thank you guys for all you have done for me. Although I am no longer court-involved (I hope it stays like this) I hope we can stay the best of friends.



Left to right: Worcester Juvenile Probation Officers Steve Germain, Candy Harris, and Joe Silva.

Graduations

The graduation ceremony of the **Veterans Court** at the **Boston Municipal Court-Central Division** will host its graduation February 26th, at the Edward Brooke Courthouse.

The **Lowell District Drug Court**, established in 2014, will host its very first graduation ceremony on Tuesday, February 23rd, 1 p.m. Seven individuals are slated to complete the 11-week program. The four men and three women are ages 23 to 60.

Orange District Court and New Bedford Drug Court held graduations on February 2nd and 4th respectively.

Berkshire Juvenile Court's LIFT (Learning Intervention for Teens) Program graduated 15 juveniles during a January 27th ceremony at Williams College.

Barnstable Juvenile Court's Girl's Group, run by Assistant Chief Probation Officer Ann MacDonald and Probation Officers Kelly Flaven and Julie Hall, hosted its first graduation with eight young women completing the program in December. The program began another session last month.

The **Northampton District Court's** Womanhood Program hosted a graduation in December. Another program will begin on March 1st.

Boston Municipal Court (BMC)-Dorchester, BMC-Charlestown, and South Boston Drug courts held ceremonies. Charlestown graduated three on December 15th. One probationer graduated from the South Boston Drug Court in December.



Barnstable Juvenile Girl's Group first graduation in December.

SEEKING STORY SUBMISSIONS

TELL US YOUR STORY



The **Communications Department** in the Central Office of the Massachusetts Probation Service is looking for information to help tell the important stories of the Massachusetts Probation Service.

Please call or email us about:

- **Examples of exemplary Probation work—"Above & Beyond"**
- **Crime or social trends**
- **Community Supervision Efforts**
- **Programs or Initiatives (new or long-running)**
- **Probationer success stories**
- **Partnerships with law enforcement or social service agencies**
- **Successful evidence-based practices and approaches**

Massachusetts Probation Service Story Submission Form

Name _____

Court _____

Contact Information _____

Briefly Describe Your Story Here: _____

*****Send (scan/email) information to Communications Assistant Joyce Higgins, joyce.higgins@jud.state.ma.us or call 617-557-0253. Faxes may be sent to 617-727-0316.**

Probation Employees Spread Holiday Cheer

Probation employees across the state brightened the holiday season for those in need by providing toys for children, gift cards for senior citizens and warm winter clothing.

Northern Berkshire District Court’s Project Warm Winter donated new and gently used blankets, warm clothing, and hygiene products to the Louison House, a non-profit organization established in 1991 to address homelessness. Probation Case Specialist IV Bonnie Fachini spearheaded the donation effort and was assisted by Probation staff.

Fall River District Court Probation Officer Michael Borden provided toys and clothing to the children of probationers and struggling families for the 19th year. Through Borden’s efforts and the help of court and local law enforcement colleagues, 2,500 toys, including bicycles, computer tablets, and X-box game consoles were donated. (See 12/18/15 story in This Week In Probation).

Lawrence District Court distributed toys and clothing, donated by Debbie’s Treasures, to probationers and clients at the Lowell Community Corrections Center. Thirty-four children from 21 families were the recipients of toys and winter jackets from Debbie’s Treasures, a Lawrence-based charity.

Lowell District Court Probation Officers Megan Guthrie and Jennifer Kirchner raised money and purchased pharmacy and store gift cards for residents at the Senior Center.

Middlesex Superior Court Probation employees gifted toys and clothing to children in the care of the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Plymouth Probate & Family Court Probation provided clothing and toys for a Brockton mother, involved with DCF, and her three children ages 13, 8, and 6.

Woburn District Court provided 50 toys for children and non-perishable food for the court’s 11th Snowflake Food and Toy Drive, donating the items to Woburn Council for Social Concern.

Worcester District Court Probation employees continued their 11-year tradition of providing toys and outfitting children at the Worcester Comprehensive Day Center. Matthew Deveau donned his Santa suit and colleagues delivered clothing and toys to the children, infants to age eight.



Life Care Center in Billerica. Left to right: Center Program Director Erica Kelly, Chief Steven Mastandrea, Probation Officers Megan Guthrie and Jennifer Kirchner. Front: left to right, nursing home residents: Ginny, Elena, and Ann.

Suffolk P&F Probation Celebrate Season With Creative Door Office Designs



Suffolk Probate & Family Court Probation celebrated the holidays in a unique and creative way by decorating their doors and office spaces.

Of the eight contestants, Tyasha Abdul-Aziz won with her Kwanzaa-themed door. Kwanzaa is a seven-day, non-religious holiday, that celebrates African-American culture and community. The holiday office decorating contest was coordinated by Assistant Chief Probation Officer Patrice O’Brien.

New Addition to Communications

Joyce Higgins has been named the new Communications Assistant. Higgins, a 10-year Probation employee, will be working with Communications Director Coria Holland in Probation’s Central Office.

Among Higgins’ duties are conducting research, assisting in the news gathering process, helping with the planning and execution of media-related events, as well as performing administrative duties.



Joyce Higgins

The Probation Update Newsletter

Probation Update is a quarterly internal publication featuring the current news of The Massachusetts Probation Service.

Please forward newsletter story suggestions or comments to:

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