Big-P

The Sources of Our Stress

By Corporal Jaycie Burke

The National Institute of Justice cites that there are numerous sources of the stress we face in our chosen career field. These sources are identified as being organizational, work-related, and stress from outside the system.

Organizational stress is that which stems from understaffing, overtime, rotating shift work, supervisor demands, as well as role conflict and role ambiguity. More often than not, we find that jails are understaffed as a result of high turnover rates and unattractive salaries. This can lead to several different kinds of stress which include a lack of time to complete required job tasks and having to work at faster speeds in order to complete said requirements. There may also be some apprehension, if not blatant fear when it comes to dealing with the possibility of inmate violence when there are too few officers available. Organizational stress can also be created when there is an inability to get time off work for special occasions and family events or crises. Overtime and rotating shift work are frequently noted as creating stress with family life and reducing an officer's ability to perform their work consistently due to fatigue and irritability.

Role conflict is defined as the struggle officers engage in to reconcile custodial responsibilities such as maintaining security but also promoting treatment functions such as rehabilitation. Role ambiguity is defined as the uncertainty created by supervisors who expect officers to "go by the book" and follow all rules to the letter when supervisors and line officer alike know that officers must be flexible and use judgment in their interactions with inmates.

It has been noted that work-related sources of stress stem from four main conditions. The threat of inmate violence is identified as being the most frequent source of stress. Actual violence can be a major source of stress for many officers not only during the episode, but after. Inmate demands and manipulation are another key source of work related stress. Problems with coworkers is also cited. One survey found that 22 percent of staff viewed "other staff" as creating more stress than any other single factor except for dealing with hostile and demanding inmates. "Other staff" can create work-related stress by repeatedly venting their frustrations with colleagues; competing for limited or choice assignments; apprehension that coworkers will refuse to back them up in a confrontation with inmates, that they are too inexperienced or do not have the physical or emotional strength to be effective; inappropriate officer behavior toward inmates; sexist attitudes by colleagues and/or supervisors and sexual harassment creates stress for many women officers. It is noted that many male officers question whether female officers have the physical strength and determination to help in a confrontation with inmates. These thought processes and behavior may have declined however, due to more women becoming officers and demonstrating that they can be just as effective as men in dealing with inmate violence.

Lastly, there is always stress from outside the system which is identified as stemming from two main sources. The first being a poor public image. Unfortunately, the general public seems to view our line of work and officers as being stupid, animalistic and that we are the senseless abusers of socially wronged individuals. This image is most often negatively portrayed and reinforced by the media. This results in officers often times feeling isolated and even estranged from friends and family. The second source has been identified as poor pay, which speaks for itself considering everything we are required to deal with in our careers.

Officers experiencing this stress can suffer from physical illnesses, job burnout, and this stress can also be detrimental to personal relationships. So what can be done to address this issue? The National Institute of Justice states that implementing a stress program can be highly effective in combating officer stress. A successful stress program could benefit your agency financially by reducing the amount of sick time that tends to be used excessively when officers are stressed. Such programs, if implemented correctly, could improve officer work performance, lead to increased institutional safety. By providing such services, it also gives administrators the opportunity to demonstrate a genuine concern and care for their staff by recognizing that they are more than "just employees."

Training Report

Fellow TJA Members,

Happy Easter to all! I hope that spring has found everyone well. I along with the entire Board of Directors, hope to see ya'll at the 31st Annual Conference in Austin, May 15-19, 2017. We have a tremendous lineup of training. Some of the training is new, the ideas are new, and if it isn't new, it's material that has been requested to be repeated. Either way, I guarantee great programs and great folks to share it with.

Besides the work of the Training Committee, I would like to recognize the efforts of other individuals that were instrumental in this year's training arrangements. **Kevin Stuart**, Brazos County stepped up and substituted in my absence and was with this program until its end. Sharese Hurst has also been hustling and checking e-mails during her weekends, vacation and time off. A well-deserved thank you to the Training Committee and these individuals for a great lineup of training.

I'm happy to report regionals have continued around the state and we have been able to offer an abundace of training to members. If you attended any of this training, I hope it you enjoyed it and I hope it was beneficial. If you did not attend, I urge you to attend one in the future, you owe it to yourself, your supervisors, subordinates (if you have any) and your agency.

Thank you to the TJA Membership for allowing me to serve as your 2nd Vice President and Training Committee Chairman. If there is anything that I or the TJA Training Committee can assist you with, do not hesitate to ask.

Your 2016-2017 TJA Training Committee consists of:

Martin Gonzales, Chairman- Atascosa County

Rey Del Bosque- Zapata County

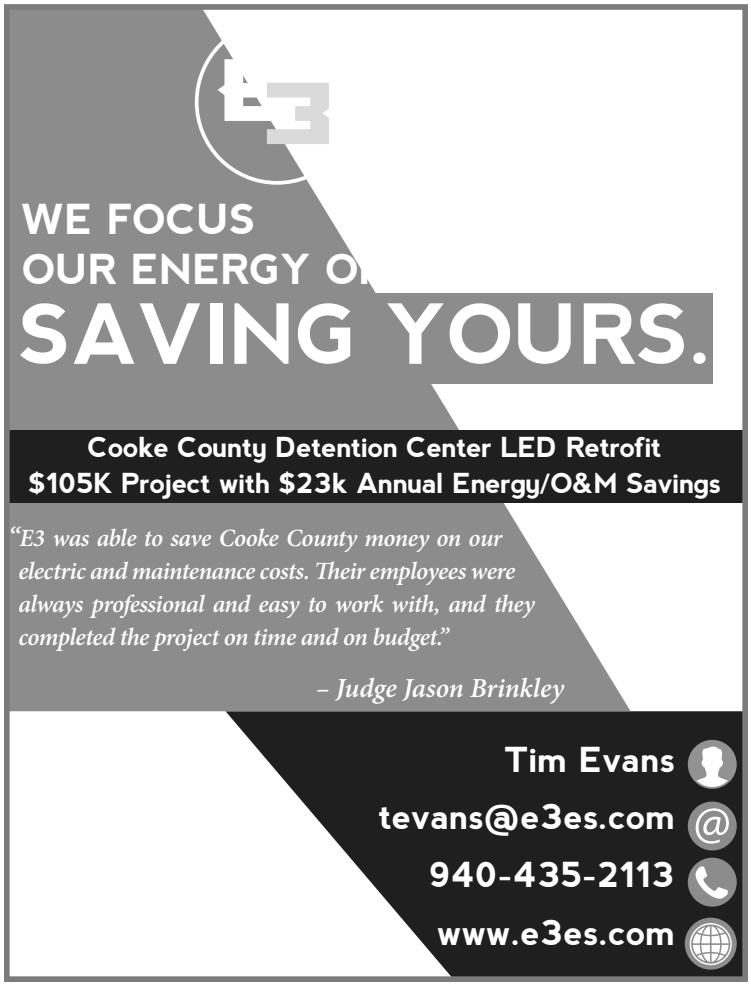
Wayne Johnson, Terry County

Kit Wright, Brazos County

Dolores " Chach" Rodriguez, Bee County

Eric Hensley, Montgomery County

David Burrous, Hardin County



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"You Don't Know What You Don't Know"

Taking on new roles

By Shane Poole

I was blessed earlier this year to be selected by our new Sheriff, **Sally Hernandez**, to serve our Department and the citizens of Travis County at the next level as the new Administration and Support Bureau Major. While it has been a whirlwind getting up to speed, it has led me to reflect back on all the previous roles and challenges I've been presented with. The common theme for me has typically been that I just thought I knew what I was getting into, or to put it another way, *"you don't know what you don't know".*

It didn't matter whether the new role was from a promotion or a project assignment, there were always things that I didn't know that would come up—AKA "the learning curve." So how do you overcome these obstacles? How do you prepare for what you don't know? Can you prepare for it? Does your success depend on the performance of others? How do you get the knowledge to make the decisions that need to be made that day without screwing things up?

Much like taking over any new leadership role, there are some steps you can take to flatten that learning curve. So unless you have the good fortune to be trained at length by the person you're replacing, you will need to Assess, Identify, and Trust not only the situation but the people involved.

Assessing the situation and the people has several components. Do you have a lot of time to get up to speed? (That never happens!) How complicated or critical is the task, and thus your role? What resources do you have? Do you have clear guidance on expectations? Your boss may or may not have all of these answers. Are there key metrics or outside assessments of your team's performance that you can look at to determine where your team is in terms of performance and meeting organizational and stakeholder expectations?

Next, identify the key folks around you that will teach, coach and counsel you as you grow into your role. Are you working with or supervising subject matter experts? Do you have knowledge in these critical areas? More importantly, can you recognize where you are lacking? What can you do to fill these gaps quickly? How diverse are the people and the operational tasks you are working with? Are performance comparisons easy, difficult or non-existent? How do you assess their knowledge, skills and abilities? What are they telling you their challenges and needs are?

Building these new relationships quickly is paramount. You may have the assessment, advice and opinion of others to start with, or your own opinions based on your previous "outsider" view, but it is critical that you take the time to talk directly with the folks you will have to rely on to be successful. Trust your instincts, but verify what they're telling you to the extent possible. Meet with stakeholders, internal and external, that your key folks serve or work with on a regular basis. You won't find this information on Yelp! They'll be able to tell you how well their needs are being met. And remember, since we rarely have the opportunity to build a team from the ground up, everyone brings something of value to the table. Your job is to find what that is and capitalize on it for the good of the organization.

You may also have to reach back to past mentors or look outside the organization to others who work in the same role or have met similar challenges. Rely on that professional network you have established through organizations like the Texas Jail Association and learning opportunities like the CMIT Leadership courses and the National Jail Leadership Command Academy.

Trust…this will likely be the most difficult part of the task. Once you've identified those key people around you and begun to build those solid working relationships, it is now time to trust them to do their jobs just as you expect them to trust you to do yours. Based on the demands of your role, this time may come sooner than you are comfortable with, but come it will regardless of whether you are ready.

Trust is difficult to earn and give, but easy to lose, so this is critical. Trust that team members in key roles have the organization's best interests at heart and they are there to fulfill their role in the agency's mission. Verify, however, that they are clear on just what their role is and what your expectations are for them. Trust they are in alignment with the vision and values of the organization and the executive leadership. You can verify this through conversation, observation, and having them assess their own performance as to whether it supports the organizational vision and values. You will often be surprised how ready they are to meet not only current demands, but those new challenges that you bring.

Now that you have the ship headed in the right direction with all hands on deck, just remember that this is an on-going process. Your assessment of yourself, your team, and the team's performance is never ending, just as that learning curve is never ending. However, trust in yourself and your team and you may just learn a little bit more of what you don't know just in time to take on that next challenge!

Good luck out there and thank you for doing what you do everyday!

The Chaplain's Corner

Oh, what WILL you do?

I always heard my mom say, "Where there is a will there is a way." She is also very often heard saying, "His will, not mine." A friend was pondering the will of God recently. If you pray for something you really want or maybe even believe you need, and you do not get it, what does that mean? We are taught that if we go to God in prayer He will meet us at the point of our needs. Understanding and accepting God's will means that you allow Him to answer those prayers in His time or in some cases by not answering them at all. To know what it means to be in God's will you only have to read His word. What is required of us to be in God's will is for us to; act justly, love mercy and humbly walk with Him. When you don't seem to be getting answers to what you are faithfully asking for, or maybe even expecting to receive, you need to examine how you are doing in those three areas. In the bible we are called to persevere so that when we have done the will of God we will receive what God has promised. 1 Thessalonians tells us to give thanks in all that we do and to be sanctified. In Hebrews we learn that He will equip us with everything good for doing His will. When you don't seem to be getting the answers you want, believe that you will get what you are to have in His time. Proverbs reminds us that the Lord works out everything to its proper end. I encourage you to examine your daily walk and make every effort to act justly with love and humility. With a heart of gratitude, I thank Him for putting me on the path that led me to have the opportunity to share with each TJA member in this manner. I have grown spiritually with each *Key Issues* submission and I thank President **Brent Phillips** for giving me this voice. The Texas Jail Association is a tremendous part of my life and I am beyond thankful for every opportunity I have been afforded in the last 10 years. God bless each and every one of you and I pray for each of you, that God's will be done in your life.

Graciously,
Aimee Crockett
TJA Chaplain

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A NEW BATTLEFIELD

SERIES 4

By: Colonel (RET) Dave Lewis

In this article I want to address the issues associated with veterans who are homeless when they enter the detention facilities. Unsurprisingly, the issues of mental health, substance abuse, justice involvement and homelessness frequently go hand-in-hand in our jails. We've addressed several of these topics in past articles, so now I want to focus on reentry planning for veterans who are homeless.

First, do you screen for veteran status, and do you screen for self-declared homelessness when the veteran arrives in your facility? Probably the best way to ask the question is "Have you ever served in the military?" because sometimes a qualifying veteran may not view themselves as a veteran.

Second, and importantly, definitions matter. What is the formal definition of "homeless" as it relates to our veteran population? For our purposes we utilize the definition that is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 24 CFR 576.2.

As per HUD 24 CFR 576.2, "literally homeless" is defined as:

(1) An individual/family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
(i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
(ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals);
(iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Please note that part (iii) above is very important; if the veteran resides in an institutional setting (your detention center) for more than 90 days, they are not considered to be "literally homeless" – and this has implications for possible reentry solutions. If someone is not "literally homeless" i.e. couch surfing or doubled up, they may still be eligible for community housing solutions.

Speaking of solutions – what are the possibilities for veterans when they exit the jail? Well, you may have noticed the large effort that the VA has put forward over the past couple of years to address the homeless veteran challenge that exists in so many locations around the country. This program is known as Supportive Services for Veterans and Families or SSVF. The VA provides nearly $400 million annually to 383 grantee agencies to execute this important effort. Note that I did not say the VA executes this program – the money goes to community agencies that are most familiar with the nature of the challenges in their own communities. In concert with other veteran homeless programs, the VA estimates that the number of homeless veterans has been reduced by 47% since the program's inception in 2010. That is SIGNIFICANT!

As I write this, Texas has 18 SSVF providers in 141 counties who provide targeted housing assistance to communities in the national effort to address this challenge. Chances are good that a provider exists in your community, or a nearby county. The list of providers is available on the VA's website at https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/ . As many spears as the VA takes for their bureaucratic shortcomings, this is a program that works really well – and is community based. Get to know your local SSVF provider; they are well resourced to help you address the challenge.

SSVF runs under the "Housing First" model. For many years the discussions around how to deal with homelessness, mental health and substance abuse were centered on the "best" sequence to address the challenges in a holistic manner – treat first, or house first. The debate is largely settled with the Housing First model. It's important to note that Housing First does not mean Housing "Only" i.e. the wrap-around services a veteran needs must be addressed once they are housed. Just placing someone into housing is not the primary goal; housing stability is the objective for this program. Once someone is placed in permanent housing we want them to remain there long term, so stability and wrap-around services are key.

Eligibility for SSVF housing programs are based on several things: Veteran status (requires Active Duty time), the nature of the veteran's discharge, and income level. There are many nuances associated with the eligibility criteria that I won't address here, but your local SSVF provider is well versed in all of the criteria.

What if your veteran has spent more than 90 days in your facility? In this instance, discharge planning should include a temporary housing plan, typically a local shelter, which will ensure their eligibility for SSVF services. That may seem unnecessarily bureaucratic, but the rules must be followed.

In summary, get to know your local SSVF provider as soon as you can. Many community SSVF providers have their hands full with outreach to a "street" based homeless population, and may not have much time to do "in reach" with your facility. A little bit of proper reentry planning, along with knowledge of the resources available to you will likely result in a successful community reentry, and reduce the chances of recidivism.

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Nomination and By-Law Committee Report

By Todd Allen, 1st Vice President

Greetings TJA members! The call for nominations has expired and the candidates have been set. Positions up for election were 3rd Vice President, Treasurer, and two Director Positions. We are excited to have a wonderful slate of qualified candidates step up to run for these positions. Running for the 3rd Vice President position is **Dan Corbin** from Lubbock County. Dan is running unopposed. For the Treasurer's position, **Carla Stone** from Kaufman County running unopposed. The Directors position has a field of five candidates. They are **Becky Caffey** from Brown County; **Edwardo Jackson** from Travis County; **William Phariss** from Grimes County; **Debby Alaniz** from Hale County; and, Cody Greinke from Guadalupe County. Please take the time to get to know these candidates and cast your vote for the person you feel will be best suited to serve your Association.

Remember that as a result of a change in the by-laws, members not able to attend the conference will now be able to vote in this year's election. Anyone joining TJA prior to **April 15, 2017** will be eligible to vote for the 2016-2017 TJA Board of Directors. Voting will begin on **April 17, 2017** and will remain open until 3:00pm on Wednesday, **May 17, 2017**. Further information will be sent via email soon. We are excited to be able to include all of our members in this year's election.

If you were not able to run for a position this year, keep in mind that we have several committee positions available. Contact a board member for information about joining a committee. It will be a great opportunity to learn about the operations of the Texas Jail Association and you can help keep the association great!

Up On the Hill

The 85th regular session of the Texas Legislature convened in Austin on January 10th. Since then, committee appointments have been announced, numerous hearings on the budget have been held, and of course new bills have been filed.

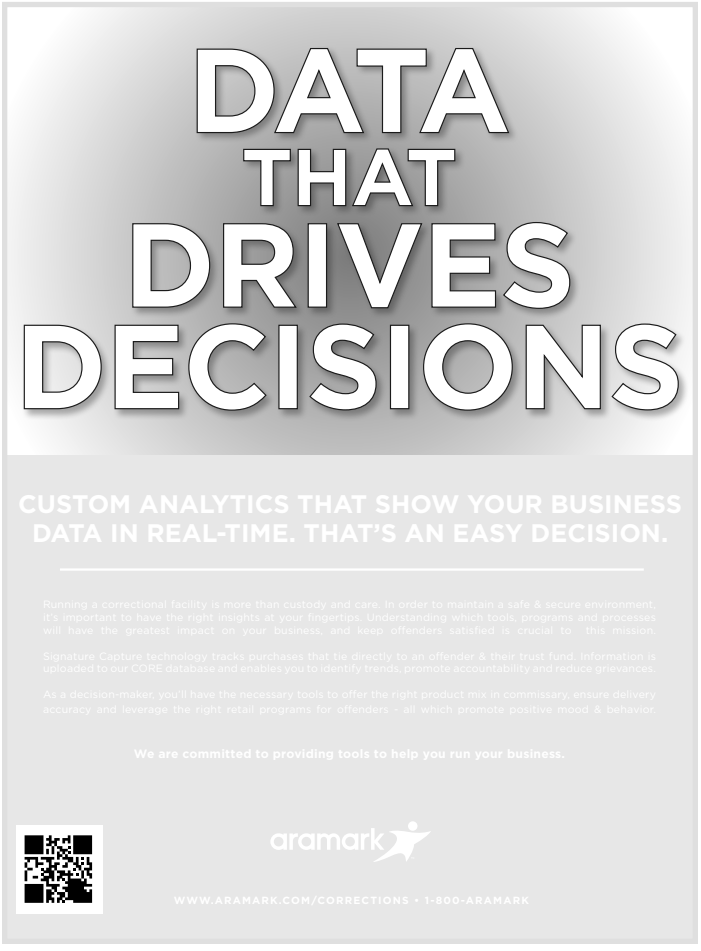
As of February 16th, there have been 3,046 senate and house bills, along with 813 resolutions filed. The deadline to file is March 10th.

We are tracking 13 bills that affect peace officer, first responder benefits and employment, 21 bills that directly affect jails, and numerous bills regarding mental health.

As it is early in the session, there is not much else to report other than we will be working with the Sheriff's Association of Texas and other affected associations to present pertinent facts and testimony as needed.

The session ends May 29th and most new legislation would not take effect until September 1st so we will keep you up to date.

Billy Bryan
Legislative Chair



5th Annual

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All Donors are entered in a drawing for $100 Gift Card.

TEXAS JAIL ASSOCIATION

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE STATE

BROWN COUNTY

Brown County Sheriff **Vance Hill** is pictured with staff that received promotions within the Department.

(L to R): Charles Lawson Lt., Melanie Dees Lt., Sheriff Hill, Becky Caffey Chief Deputy of Corrections, and Les Karnes Capt.

HOUSTON COUNTY

In November 2016, **Michael W. Molnes** was promoted to Jail Sergeant. He has worked for the Houston County Sheriff's Office since March 2015. His father, Michael P. Molnes, is an investigator with the Sheriff's Office and has worked here since 2009.

LUBBOCK COUNTY

Lubbock County Sheriff's Office promotes two at the Detention Center. Corporal **Emily Flores** promotes to Sergeant and Officer **Christopher Rodriguez** promotes to training Corporal.

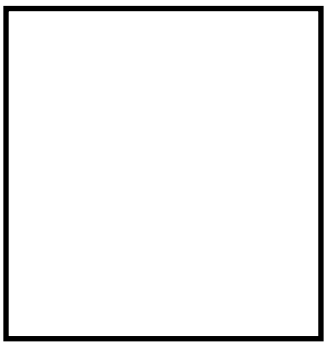
Kelly Rowe recognizes **Tammy Smith** as the Employee of the Month for December. Tammy serves as the Programs Coordinator in the Detention Center, where she oversees the educational needs of the inmates and other programs within the jail.

On December 16, 2016, Officer **Rachel Nelson** retired from Lubbock County after 11 years of service. Officer Nelson was presented with a plaque by Sheriff **Kelly Rowe**, Chief **Cody Scott** and Assistant Chief Deputy **Kim Howell**.

In December, Lubbock County Detention Corporals from The Office of Professional and Ethical Standards **Jennifer Espinosa**, **Nayda Santos** and **Robert Taylor** present VetStar with a check for $1,500. Detention staff and Volunteers raised the money to help our local veterans during the Christmas season.

On January 6, 2017, Deputy **Christopher Rodriguez** was recognized for employee of the month for January in the Detention Center. Deputy Rodriguez stays positive while he is at work and volunteers for the specialty pods, special assignments, and extra duty on a regular basis.

Sheriff **Kelly Rowe** swears in deputies at the Detention Center as he takes office for another 4-year term.



Savanna Garcia was recognized as Employee of the Month for February 2017. Officer Garcia helped save the life of an unresponsive inmate on December 20, 2016.

Sheriff **Kelly Rowe** welcomes new hires to the Lubbock County Sheriff's Office. Pictured are Jailers, **Martina Rios**, **Jonathan Parrish**, **Sandra Pierce**, **Megan Hernandez**, **Amanda Moritz** and **Jason Garcia**. New hires are **JoAnn Moore**, **Katie James**, **Laura Maldonado** and **Rhonda Percifield**.

On January 25, 2017, Officer **Cynthia Phillips** was joined by co-workers and friends during a retirement reception of 20 years of service. Chief **Cody Scott** expressed how he could always count on Cynthia for being honest, truthful and a great mentor to others. Officer Phillips will be missed.

McLENNAN COUNTY

McLennan County Jail Pilots Reintegration Program

The McLennan County Jail Reintegration Program was created after years of planning. In January 2012, a Steering Committee held its first meeting. Throughout that year the steering committee met regularly and very quickly the effort evolved to include community stakeholders. The McLennan County Reintegration Roundtable was soon created and collectively decided on five priorities: increasing employment, linking ex-offenders to resources and services, increasing public knowledge, pre-release counseling, and reducing recidivism. Local community members gathered to discuss the needs for improvement and potential solutions for issues surrounding the topic of reintegration of ex-offenders. As the concept gained popularity, funding was secured through partnerships with McLennan County Commissioners Court, the City of Waco and The Heart of Texas Region MHMR. In 2016 the Roundtable officially fell under the purview of the Heart of Texas region MHMR center with the creation of a new Program Manager position. **Jamie Schmitt** was hired into this position in June and subsequently designed the program. The first group of inmates began participation in the program on November 14th, 2016.

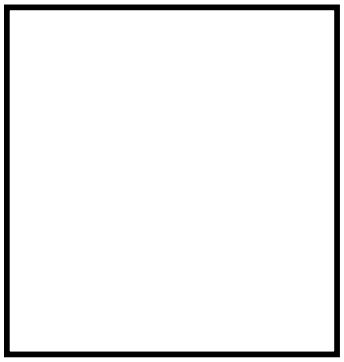
The program is designed to offer services during incarceration rather than waiting until release. The pre-release phase provides individuals with the skills needed for successful reintegration. Inmates who participate receive social skills training, support with mental health and substance use disorders, as well as pre-planning for employment, housing, and education. They are provided Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Winners Circle and Celebrate Recovery groups. These groups offer the inmates an opportunity to meet and build relationships with those who will mentor them upon release. Phase Two of the program is a community effort which helps to guide the individuals to successful reentry, they also continue to attend counseling services, support groups and meet regularly with their mentors.

As of this date 21 inmates have participated in the program. Out of those, 18 have been released and 16 are still participating in the program on their own in the free world.

The Jail Program is continuing to expand. By thinking ahead; we were able to ask the McLennan County Commissioners Court for funds to start construction prior to the program starting in the jail. We asked to place walls in certain areas of the jail to make more classrooms so that the program may expand into the other areas of the jail as our volunteer numbers increase. The walls have been built and we are waiting on the final touches to ask the Jail Commissions permission to start using the classrooms. The classrooms will not only be used for the Reintegration Program, but also to expand GED services as well as workforce training classes.

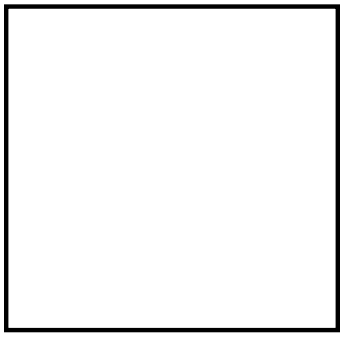
The McLennan County Sherriff's Department is proud to offer an opportunity for these individuals to change their lives. We have put up walls inside the jail, so that others can take down the walls or barriers upon their release.

McLennan County First Reintegration Summit



(L to R) Sheriff Parnell McNamara, Retired Police Chief Brent Strohman

The McLennan County Reintegration Program is an inclusive collaboration that promotes public safety through effective reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals utilizing Recovery Oriented Systems of Care. Being incarcerated and successfully reentering society alone is a tremendous challenge; however for those dealing with a mental health or substance use disorder the systems are even more difficult to navigate.



(L to R) Captain Ricky Armstrong, Sheriff Parnell McNamara

The Summit featured national, state and local experts sharing solutions and answering questions on how McLennan County can continue to expand on Recovery Oriented Systems of Care approach to Reintegration and Recovery

(L to R) Lieutenant Mike Garrett, Jamie Schmidt, Lieutenant Karen Anderson

Panel members Jerrod Cameron Clark, Kent McKeever, Captain Armstrong, Chip Seigman and Jose Vallejo shared their vision of creating a Recovery Oriented Systems of Care in McLennan County for individuals who have a Justice Involved past.

TOM GREEN COUNTY

Sheriff **David Jones** congratulates **Derek Williams** and **Taylor Robertson** on their promotions to the rank of Corporal.

TRAVIS COUNTY

Our very own TJA Board Member **Frances Dembowski** was promoted to Lieutenant by Sheriff **Sally Hernandez** on 3/1/17. Frances is now the evening shift lieutenant in the largest TCSO housing unit holding 1336 inmates. Congratulations Frances!

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