



COMMON GROUND

NOVEMBER 2016 ISSUE

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins:

**COMMITTED
TO PROGRESS**



CHANGING LIVES. TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES
SCSD PROGRAMMING

A Message From the Chief of External Affairs:

Nov. 2016



Our mandate at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is the care and custody of those who are committed by law to our institutions – the Suffolk County Jail and the Suffolk County House of Correction. It is also our mission to ensure and enhance public safety for the citizens of Boston,

Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop. As the leader of our Department since 2013, and in his earlier role as the Chief of External Affairs, Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins has done this and more.

Whether reflected through his tireless advocacy for those afflicted with addiction and mental illness, his efforts around meaningful criminal justice reform, or the 90-plus programs that he oversees and strives relentlessly to improve upon and increase, Sheriff Tompkins has continued working to change lives and transform communities.

In this issue, you'll read about just a small handful of the programs, initiatives and efforts that the Department has undertaken under the direction of Sheriff Tompkins, to ensure that the men and women who are with us are able to return to our society in better standing, and more able to care for themselves and their families, than they were when they first entered our facilities. And, while this issue offers only a small sampling of the work that is being done by the Department, both "behind the walls" and in our neighborhoods, it is our hope that you'll appreciate and support Sheriff Tompkins and the Department in our mission to make our County and Commonwealth safer, healthier and more vibrant for everyone.

Thank you,

Sandy Zamor Calixte
Chief of External Affairs and Communications
Suffolk County Sheriff's Department

Sheriff's Profile

Learn more about Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins who was initially appointed to serve as the Sheriff.

Summer Enrichment Program



The Summer Enrichment Program, launched in the summer of 2014, targets eleventh and twelfth grade high school students who have an expressed interest in law enforcement.

Common Ground Institute

Read about our 10-week vocational program designed to enhance and fortify the employment skills of participants with a focus on employment opportunity.



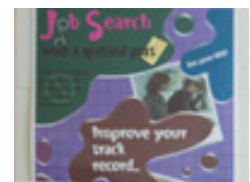
Culinary Arts and Our Urban Farm



Hear about our efforts to reduce recidivism by offering skills and training that will help our men and women find gainful and sustainable employment.

Women's Job Center

Welcome to Department's Women's Job Center where we deliver life skills instruction, job placement, and health care services to reduce recidivism.



Family Matters Program

Learn more about the Family Matters Program which works with those in the care and custody of the Department to stabilize their households as they return home to their families.



OUR SHERIFF: Steven W. Tompkins

Steven W. Tompkins, a member of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department since 2002, was appointed to serve as the Sheriff of Suffolk County on January 22, 2013 by the Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick. In November of 2014, he was elected to the office.

Sheriff Tompkins is also currently serving as the President of the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association.

As the Sheriff of Suffolk County, Tompkins manages all operations of 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 over 1,000.

Over the course of his fourteen years at the Department, both in his previous role as the Chief of External Affairs and now in his current position, Sheriff Tompkins has created a number of new programs, including the innovative Common Ground Institute, a vocational training and reentry program that teaches marketable vocational skills in a classroom setting, and allows inmates to hone those skills by renovating public lands and facilities throughout Suffolk County. One of CGI's most unique features is its job placement component for graduates, with employers who hire with full knowledge of the offenders' criminal histories. Sheriff Tompkins has subsequently introduced new program components of CGI, including: Culinary Arts, Basic Auto Repair, Retail Skills Training and Golden Scissors Tailoring.

In his three years at the Department's helm, Sheriff Tompkins has augmented and fortified both the vocational and educational training for the people in his care and custody, created new programs that directly impact returning citizens with respect to recidivism reduction, and he has concentrated more resources on effective addiction recovery and mental health treatment, for which he continues to powerfully advocate in the communities of Suffolk County, with his peers in elected government.

His Family Matters Program is an innovative pre- and post-release program that is committed to helping inmates and their families work toward positive relationships, connecting families with community resources, and helping families prepare for when their loved ones are released. The Department's Opioid Overdose Peer Prevention and Vivitrol programs, along with a number of other detoxification and addiction recovery programs, work to aid inmates and detainees burdened by the weight of addiction, while providing the psychological tools that can assist them in successfully navigating through their return to society.

Sheriff Tompkins' work also focuses externally on the communities of Suffolk County, with outreach programs designed for the diverse groups of residents and stakeholders in Boston, Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop, and beyond.

The Department's Choice Program sends trained officers into the schools of Boston, Chelsea, Winthrop and Revere to deliver on the program's mission of helping young people to make positive choices for future success while reinforcing the theme of respect for themselves and for others around them.

Sheriff Tompkins also created the Summer Enrichment Program, paid internships that take young juniors and seniors from schools across Suffolk County who are interested in careers in law enforcement and criminal justice into the Department, for job shadowing, weekly presentations by members of law enforcement and the criminal justice community, roundtable discussions, law enforcement-related field trips, and educational tours.

Some of Sheriff Tompkins' other external outreach initiatives include the Directions for Corrections community forum series; Senior ID, Ident-A-Youth, and Senior Safety Tips programs; the *Common Ground* television show; JailBrake; facility tours; community meetings; and more.

THE 2016 SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM



“One of the best measures of community is how we nurture and raise our children, because as they grow, they continue to keep our communities strong and vibrant,” said Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins. Standing before a group hailing from the various neighborhoods of Suffolk County, Sheriff Tompkins delivered a clear message about the significance of the younger members of our society. “We need your help to make sure that our youths – our future – do not fall into the criminal justice system. Can you help me with that?”

As attested to in various studies conducted about criminality and crime, the correlation between low education and high incarceration is as clear as the ties that bind success and achievement to a strong educational foundation. With approximately 23% of the incarcerated population in Suffolk County being young adults aged 18-23, and recognizing the role that a good quality education plays in diverting young people away from the criminal justice system, Sheriff Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department have continued to develop programming designed to bolster vocational, academic and social skills for not only those who find themselves in the care and custody of the Department, but for students attending schools within the neighborhoods of Suffolk County.

The Department’s Choice and Summer Enrichment programs are among the initiatives that have been implemented to provide outreach to the young people of Suffolk County, in an effort to prevent them from entering the criminal justice system, and instead, steer them towards education and civic responsibility.

The Choice Program sends trained officers from the Department to visit with students in schools across Chelsea, Winthrop, Revere and Boston to teach a curriculum that embraces self-respect and respect for others,



coping with issues like peer pressure and bullying, the importance of staying in school and working hard, and making positive choices along the path into adulthood.

“The fact remains that once a young person enters the revolving door of the criminal justice system, it is very difficult to leave,” said Sheriff Tompkins. “The Choice Program is just one way the Department is working to stem the tide of incarceration.”

The Summer Enrichment Program, launched in the summer of 2014, targets eleventh and twelfth grade high school students who have an expressed interest in the world of law enforcement by bringing them into the Department each summer to work as paid interns. During their time in the program, students are assigned to job shadowing posts, participate in field trips to law enforcement and educational organizations each week, and take part in lectures with practitioners in the legal and law-enforcement communities. Thus far, the program has employed over 60 students.

“This program was conceived with several purposes in mind,” Sheriff Tompkins said. “One of the main features of the program revolves around the opportunity that it presents to connect young people with positive role models to help them along in their desire to become law enforcement professionals. I also wanted to offer summer employment to students in Suffolk County. Too often, we hear about the need for more job opportunities for our young people, particularly during the summer months when schools are closed and youth violence is typically on the rise. This is an example of what we can do to be part of the solution.”

The program runs for seven weeks, three days per week, and takes place between July and mid-August. Participants earn CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) certification, and receive a certificate of completion, along with transferable job skills that they can utilize in their future careers.

“I think that the Summer Enrichment Program is powerful on a number of fronts,” said Sheriff Tompkins. “Our kids are engaged in the summer months when there is more idle time and the opportunity to get into trouble. But most importantly, providing early professional development and positive encouragement can have a transformational impact that will stay with them for a lifetime.”

COMMON GROUND INSTITUTE

VOCATIONAL & FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING



Every year, nearly 3,000 inmates are released from the Suffolk County House of Correction – approximately 95% of whom will be returning to neighborhoods within a five-mile radius of the facility. With most of these returning citizens serving sentences of two-and-a-half years or less, Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department have continued to create and implement programming that is designed to help the men and women remanded to Department care and custody to return to society, as more skilled and able citizens than they were when they first began serving their incarceration.

"If you can teach someone how to cook, how to farm, lay a floor, hang a window - they are employable,"

said Sheriff Tompkins. "And if you can couple those vocational skills with some of the essential life skills that are needed to survive in society – things like managing a bank account, setting budgets and financial goals, understanding interest rates on credit cards – then you have a greater chance at not only staying out of our facilities, but being successful in general."

As part of the plan to address some of the skill shortages and educational challenges that many people enter with, Sheriff Tompkins created the Common Ground Institute (CGI). CGI is a 10-week vocational program designed to enhance and fortify the employment skills of participants, with a focus on carpentry, custodial maintenance, painting, landscaping,

urban farming, culinary arts, retail training, tailoring and more. Participants also receive additional programming that provides job readiness training, employment opportunity searches, job placement, and access to the Department's Clothing Closet, which offers participants appropriate attire for potential interviews.

Academic education is also a large component of the programming that is made available to those individuals in Department custody, with HiSET (High School Equivalent) testing; Literacy; English as a Second Language (ESL); writing, reading and poetry workshops; an External Diploma Program; and Special Education; among the many available classes.

"For many of those in our care and custody at the Suffolk County House of Correction and the Suffolk County Jail, we have become their de facto educational, medical and mental health practitioners," said Sheriff Tompkins. "We take this responsibility very seriously and have made it our focus to seize upon this opportunity to help positively impact our population by providing the skills and resources that can help them to better care for themselves and their families when they leave us."

One of those resources includes

a Financial Literacy class that is taught by Massachusetts State Representative Russell Holmes. In the class, participants gain a better understanding about how the economy works, how to achieve repayment of debts, credit cards, establishing and maintaining a solid credit score, personal budgeting, and how to finance large purchases, such as cars and housing.

“You have to know how to engage with the system,” Representative Holmes explained during one of his classes. “We want for you to be in programs like this one, the Common Ground Institute, and others to prepare you for when you come back to the community.”



Sheriff Tompkins meets with CGI participants





CULINARY ARTS AND THE URBAN FARM PROGRAM

Originally envisioned by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins in 2013, the Culinary Arts Program was implemented in January of 2014, the same year in which it celebrated its first class of graduates.

Created with the purpose of training inmates in food service industry basics, the ultimate goal of the Culinary Arts Program is to impart skills that will enable participants to become employable as line cooks, preparation cooks, assistant bakers and more, upon return to society. While the idea is not to immediately produce head chefs upon graduation, participants of the program are able to cook various dishes and bake an array of desserts upon completion of the course. Through the end of their coursework, the “Culinarians” learn about kitchen safety, proper use of utensils, culinary terminology, teamwork in a kitchen

environment, and demonstrate knowledge in the basic math and reading required to prepare and cook foods properly. Participants also complete trainings in proper food sanitation and receive their five-year SERVSAFE certification while immersed in “live work” settings, complete with deadlines, production schedules and customer demands.

“This program isn’t merely a path to being a dishwasher; it covers a range of chef skills, like preparing meals,” said Chef and program director Dominic Bartholomew. “It’s a very thorough program. We teach participants the same things as any basic culinary program – how to make sauces and chowders, and prepare meat. This is a 120-hour class that requires you to pass a 120-question test before you actually graduate from this program.”

Among the items that the men and women graduating the program must show proficiency in making are several varieties of wings, Crab Rangoon, Caprese appetizers, Pizzelles, Quinoa cupcakes, cold cut rollups, corn fritters, enchiladas, fruit salad, cream puffs, and much more.



“Our Culinary Arts Program is part of an overall effort to provide the kinds of vocational and educational training for inmates in our care and custody that can help to make the difference with respect to employability when they reenter society,” said Sheriff Tompkins. “Along with programming like our Common Ground Institute, Retail Skills training, Urban Farming initiative and others, it is our intention to give ex-offenders every chance at a successful life with sustainable employment when they leave us.”

The Urban Farming Program, which teaches skills in sowing and reaping healthy fruits and vegetables, works in conjunction with Culinary Arts by delivering to that program useable produce that includes tomatoes, lettuce, celery, strawberries, raspberries, peppers, eggplants, collard greens, scallions, watermelons, basil, kale, squash and more, which also helps to provide fresher, greener meals to inmates, detainees and Department staff.

With the addition of a new state-of-the-art kitchen, designated for the culinary classes and scheduled to open before the end of the year, Culinary Arts participants will be able to utilize brand-new cooking equipment and flat-screen televisions that display lessons and recipes.

All of this, says Sheriff Tompkins, is part of the plan to help reduce recidivism by offering skills and training that will help participants of the programming to find gainful and sustainable employment.

“If you know how to cook and can handle yourself in a kitchen, no one will care where you learned those skills from,” said Sheriff Tompkins. “They just want to know whether you can do the job effectively and efficiently. It is our intention to see to it that they leave us prepared to do just that.”





Women's Job Center

With nearly 1,000 women moving in and out of custody each year, the Women's Programming Division at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is a critical factor in release preparation. While there are many programmatic components that help newly-released women to live healthy and fulfilling lives upon their return to society, one major factor is securing employment. As part of Women's Programming, the Department staff engages participants on all facets of job searching, from resume writing to providing information about their incarceration to employers. Founded under the leadership of Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, the Women's Job Center is in addition to programming, and features a space within the Suffolk County House of Correction in which women are able to access employment resources.

The Community Reentry for Women program (CREW) helps women who are nearing release to establish a plan for when they return to their communities through the delivery of life skills instruction, job placement, and health care services. Participants complete an eight-week life skills class during their incarceration while receiving pre and post-release case management to assist them with personal and housing goals, career goals and health care services.

A major aspect of the program is learning how to draft a resume and cover letter that each woman can use when applying for jobs. In addition, women at the House of Correction can look up different job postings for a number of employers in the area. The Department has many community partnerships such as Project Place that help women to secure employment once they're released.

Many who are involved in educational and vocational programs leave with new skills that help them earn jobs in a number of areas, including food service,

manufacturing and construction.

Twice a year, Women's Programming holds mock interviews with actual Boston employers through the "Paths to Employment" event. Representatives from businesses like Home Depot visit the House of Correction, and conduct job interviews with participants and give critiques about their performances. The simulated job interviews with female inmates help to enhance both their confidence and skills during interviews, which they can utilize once they've completed their sentences.

Designed for women who have successfully completed required stages of their individual service plans (ISP) and Women's Programming, "Paths to Employment" consists of a five-week job readiness training that is administered with a gender-specific and individualized reintegration focus.

"Our hope is to break down the barriers between these women and successful reentry," said Christina Ruccio, Director of Women's Programming at the Department. "We want them to be able to find a job so that they can return to their neighborhoods and support themselves and their families."



FAMILY MATTERS PROGRAM

“In my role as Sheriff, I see the devastating impact that the lack of resources has on the men and women in our custody, and how that limited access extends to their families in the community,” said Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, speaking about his inspiration for the Family Matters Program.

In an effort to assist those in the care and custody of the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department to re-enter society more successfully, the Family Matters Program works with participants to help stabilize their households as they return home to their families.

Family plays a powerful role in the direction of the lives of its members. At its healthiest, family can provide the kind of support, guidance and inspiration that can help its members to overcome obstacles and achieve great things. Family Matters is just one example of the Department’s powerful commitment to helping inmates and their families toward this goal of achievement and success.

With many newly-released inmates facing numerous challenges, the goal of Family Matters is to create a strong support system for the people who matter most to them. Repairing relationships with family members is a major step in the reentry

process, and having those positive relationships lessens the likelihood that individuals will return to crime after they complete their periods of incarceration.

Individuals who are interested in the Family Matters Program must fill out an application and meet with a staff member to discuss why they want to be involved. The program is designed for sentenced men who want to strengthen their support system and build effective reentry plans. The main focus of the program is to direct participants, as well as their family members, to community resources that can help throughout incarceration and after release.

“Incarceration is a major challenge for an inmate’s family, too,” said Family Matters Director Karla Walker. “When we offer services to them, it takes a lot of pressure off.”

By referring inmates and their families to local resources, the program allows participants to better overcome the challenges that are the by-products of incarceration, including isolation, stigma, and financial obstacles.

“The men who participate in Family Matters are ones who truly want to change their life,” Walker said. “You get out of the program exactly what you put into it.”

More than 100 men have participated in the program since its launch in 2015. Although the program is currently only offered to sentenced men, organizers hope to expand their reach to pretrial detainees. Those who aren’t enrolled in the program can still seek help from Family Matters; staff members are happy to offer resources and contact information to anyone who requests it.





COMMON GROUND

NEWSLETTER

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