



# COMMON GROUND

FEBRUARY 2020 ISSUE



## SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BRINGS "CHOICE" TO SUFFOLK COUNTY YOUTHS

# Sheriff's Statement



As many already know, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's primary function is to provide care and custody for the men and women who are remanded by the courts to our facilities - the Suffolk County Jail and Suffolk County House of Correction. We also make it our mission to ensure that the people who come to us receive the kinds of programming and services that can help them to return to society with new skills, in better physical and mental health, and with access to services that will help them to better care for themselves and their families.

Another component of what we do in our efforts to achieve better health and safety in our communities is the external programming that we make available to the many people who live, work and learn in Suffolk County. In this issue, we focus on one of the programs that we offer to the young people in our neighborhoods: the Choice Program. This program was developed as a guide for Suffolk County school children to help them meet the many challenges that they face on a daily basis. We work to accomplish this mission by sending officers into schools and community centers across Suffolk County to speak with students, and meet their teachers and administrators, helping them to address such issues as bullying, peer-pressure, violence, and more while demonstrating and encouraging positive choices.

Additional items in this edition of the Common Ground include our recent Partner's Luncheon, our newest class of recruits and my involvement with some of the events held around Suffolk County to honor the legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

## COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

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Learn about the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department program that works to support young people in their efforts to overcome today's pressures and challenges by making positive choices.

## SCSD CHOICE OFFICER HIGHLIGHTS COMMUNITY SERVICE, GIVING BACK

Suffolk County Jail Officer Thomas Maguire talks about his time as an officer in the Choice Program and his commitment to service.

## SHERIFF TOMPKINS DELIVERS KEYNOTE, SUPPORT FOR LOCAL MLK OBSERVANCES

Read about Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins' involvement in events that honored the legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## COTA CLASS 20-01 KICKS OFF FIRST DAY OF TRAINING

The recruits of Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) Class 20-01 begin their collective journey to become the first group to join the Department in the new decade.



# CHOICE PROGRAM ENCOURAGES SELF-RESPECT, ACHIEVEMENT WHILE BATTLING BULLYING, VIOLENCE

In today's day and age, there is a tremendous amount of pressure that adolescents face – pressure to fit in with their peers, the pressure of social media, and pressure to succeed. Research has suggested that most humans' brains do not fully develop until they are twenty-five years old. The frontal lobe, which takes the longest to develop, acts as the control panel of our personality and ability to communicate. It is the part of the brain that controls cognitive skills in humans, such as emotional expression, problem solving, and judgement. Behaviors such as bullying/cyber bullying, sexting, use of guns & violence, and drug/alcohol abuse are all more likely to occur when children are faced with situations that are difficult for them to handle without the proper guidance.



With this in mind, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department developed the Choice Program to assist adolescents from the Boston, Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop areas with navigating the aforementioned challenges. Officers from the House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail visit schools and community centers across the county to encourage students to make decisions that will set them on the proper path for success. The point of the program is not to scare participants, however, Choice Program officers are very transparent when discussing all of the behaviors listed, and how they can oftentimes be illegal and may even result in arrest, legal charges, jail time and a CORI. The officers also tailor their presentations to students based on their various age groups, and gear them towards any issues that teachers and/or principals want to highlight for a specific visit. Setting goals, learning self-respect, civics and about the effects of a CORI are among a plethora of topics for discussion.

Choice Officers are specially trained to deliver a one-hour presentation to the students, and their responsibilities include educating students, answering questions that they may have, and helping to prevent problems before they might arise at school, at home and elsewhere. Officers who serve in the program have all been recruited because of their passion for helping young people and their willingness to successfully complete 40 hours of required training. Students twelve years of age and older are also invited to follow-up with a tour of the Suffolk County Jail or Suffolk County House of Correction. Some of the schools that the Choice Officers have recently visited are the Tynan Elementary School, William McKinley School, Blackstone Elementary School, Perry School, St. Rose School, Garfield School, and Paul Revere School. The program however, is not limited to visiting schools. Choice Officers also present to adolescents who are a part of non-profit organizations within the community. Recently, they spoke with the participants of No Books, No ball, a mentorship/basketball program that emphasizes the importance of educational achievement in addition to athletic success.

Featured on the front cover in this issue are Sergeant Holly Nelson and Officer Thomas Maguire from the Suffolk County Jail and Lieutenant Christina Chaney and Officer Geovanni Chevere from the Suffolk County House of Correction. All of these officers agreed unanimously that being a part of the Choice Program is one of the most rewarding parts of their job.



If you are interested in bringing the Choice Officer Program to your school or would like more information, please contact Assistant Deputy Superintendent Abiezer Ayuso at (617) 704-6652 or email [aayuso@scsdma.org](mailto:aayuso@scsdma.org).

# Officer Thomas Maguire

## Speaks About His Time In The Choice Program

This month's Employee Profile features Officer Thomas Maguire from the Suffolk County Jail. He has been a part of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department since 2017 and recently became a Choice Officer in October 2019. Officer Maguire came to work on his day off to complete this interview, a gesture that says a lot about him, and his commitment to the Department.

**Question:** What made you want to be a part of the Choice Program?

**Response:** I love kids – I have a son who is twenty-two years old and two stepchildren who are nine and fifteen. Prior to coming to the Sheriff's Department, I was a football coach and being able to witness the players succeed brought me pure joy. I wanted to join Choice to help make a difference in the other kids' lives. I want them to know that they do have choices. Children are so teachable and hungry to learn; sometimes they just need help building their confidence to do the right thing.

Also, I am comfortable with public speaking because I have had a lot of experience with it as a football coach. I have spoken at many banquets, and have had frequent communication with the players' parents.

I also believe that all adults have a duty to give back and help their community. This is my contribution.

**Question:** What was the most recent school you visited, and how did it go?

**Response:** I went to the Josiah Quincy School last week and it went well. We spent four hours there and talked to the kids about bullying, peer pressure and making good choices. During the presentations, we encourage the kids to make comments or ask questions. We use that as an opportunity for them to practice their public speaking skills, engagement and eye contact. Sergeant Al Cervera just gave me an updated list of schools to visit, so I am looking forward to being able to talk to more kids.

**Question:** Why is it important for other officers to be a part of Choice Program, and what would your advice be about why he or she should join?

**Response:** It is important because our jobs as correction officers are not easy. It has to be taken very seriously at all times, so it is necessary to have some kind of healthy outlet that provides a balance to the demands of our job. This could be an outlet – it is for me. I can guarantee that seeing a room full of children laughing and smiling will turn your entire day around. And again, giving back to our communities should be all of our responsibilities. It will have a tremendous impact on those who are in need of our help.

Lastly, being a part of the Choice program is truly rewarding and fulfilling. I am honored.





# SHERIFF TOMPKINS, DEPARTMENT HOST 2ND PARTNER APPRECIATION LUNCHEON



Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department teamed-up with the Mayor's Office of Recovery Services (ORS) to host an appreciation luncheon for all of the Department's partners who come behind the walls to contribute their services to the men and women in our care and custody.

During the luncheon, Sheriff Tompkins, House of Correction Superintendent/Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith, Suffolk County Jail Superintendent Michael Colwell, Department Director of Integration Karla Acevedo, and Brendan Little, Policy Director for ORS all spoke words of gratitude to the partners in the room.

The event also featured two videos that shared the success stories of returning citizens. In the videos, Carlos Montes and Caitlin Gillespie both talked about how the Department and its partners played huge roles in their recovery.

Carlos, whose video was shown first, was in attendance of the luncheon. A returning citizen, Carlos is also a master barber and an aspiring entrepreneur with a plan. He worked with Director Acevedo and Boston College Professor Lawrence Gennari to complete the 10-week program at Project Entrepreneur, and he is now on his way to starting his own mobile barbershop business.



Caitlin's story was shared next, and she is also a returning citizen who truly exemplifies the meaning of never giving up. In the video, Caitlin talked about how she had reached a point in her life where she felt like she had no real purpose. However, today, she is the mother to a beautiful daughter, a recovery coach at North Suffolk Mental Health Recovery Support Services, and she is attending UMASS Boston with the goal of becoming a licensed alcohol and drug counselor. During Caitlin's incarceration and journey to sobriety, she said that her support system consisted of the case workers at the House of Correction. They provided her with the necessary tools she needed to help prepare for life on the outside.

One of our most important missions here at the Sheriff's Department is to rehabilitate the men and women in our custody, so that they can return to the community in a much more productive manner. To all of the partners, we would like to extend our thanks for their collective holistic approach to reentry. The Sheriff's Department would be hard pressed to complete its mission without this critical assistance. We also are proud of our team at the Department for organizing such an empowering event. Finally, we would also like to congratulate Carlos and Caitlin on their continued success. It gives us a great sense of pride to know they are striving and we wish them all the best moving forward.



SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

# DIRECTIONS FOR CORRECTIONS

A DISCUSSION ABOUT MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT



**MODERATOR**

**STEVEN W. TOMPKINS**  
SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF

**PANELISTS**

**THURSDAY**  
**MARCH 19, 2020**

**6 PM - 8 PM**

**(DOORS OPEN 5:30PM)**



**MAYOR MARTIN J. WALSH**  
BOSTON



**MAYOR JOSEPH CURTATONE**  
SOMERVILLE



**MAYOR KIM DRISCOLL**  
SALEM



**MAYOR DAN RIVERA**  
LAWRENCE



**MAYOR YVONNE SPICER**  
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**RSVP BY:**  
**MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>**  
[www.SCSDMA.org](http://www.SCSDMA.org)



# AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY

## **SHERIFF TOMPKINS KEYNOTES MLK CONVOCATION:**

Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins delivered the keynote address for this year's Annual MLK Convocation at Twelfth Baptist Church. He was joined by Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, newly-sworn Boston City Council President Kim Janey, Massachusetts State Auditor Suzanne M. Bump, Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards, Boston City Councilor Annessa Essaibi-George and Boston City Councilor Ed Flynn, who took the stage with Reverend Arthur Gerald, Jr., Pastor of Twelfth Baptist Church and Reverend Willie Bodrick, II, among others, to remember the life and legacy of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



## **SHERIFF TOMPKINS SUPPORTS MLK BREAKFAST AT ROXBURY YMCA:**

Sheriff Tompkins also joined the Roxbury YMCA for their 12th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Business and Community Breakfast. Reverend Liz Walker, pastor of the Roxbury Presbyterian Church, was the keynote speaker for the event. Prior to her journey to ministry, she made history as the first African American Anchor in Boston. Mayor Marty Walsh and Representative Ayanna Pressley were also in attendance, serving as guest speakers.



During the breakfast, two community leaders were honored. Mr. William A. Moran, the president & CEO of Bill Moran Associates, LLC, was presented with the Keeper of The Dream Community Service Award. General Air, a Roxbury based company, was given the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Corporate Leadership Award. General Air has provided 30+ years of HVAC services to the community, and was founded by Leroy and Pamela Anderson.



## **OFFICER CANDIDATES BEGIN QUEST TO JOIN DEPARTMENT:**

With Correction Officer Training Academy Class 20-01 on the horizon, the officer candidates locked in on completing their first day of physical training – just the first of many steps that they will take in their collective journey to become Suffolk County Sheriff's Department correction officers.







# SAVE —THE— DATE

## NOBLE REGION 1 CONFERENCE

*"LEADERSHIP, MENTORSHIP, AND INCLUSION"*

# APRIL 26-28, 2020

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