



COMMON GROUND

OCTOBER 2020 ISSUE

SPOTLIGHTING THE S.A.F.E.R. PROGRAM



SHERIFF'S STATEMENT



Greetings,

In this issue, we focus on some of the programming that has slowly begun to resume and expand within our facilities in recent weeks with special attention paid to COVID-19 safety protocols.

To this end, we feature stories about our Nurturing Fathers Program, which provides the tools and training to participants to help them to become better parents for their children; our newest writing program, Inside Expressions, which provides a creative and constructive outlet for men and women in our care and custody; and, in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we provide a brief look at one of our collaborative programs designed to assist survivors of domestic violence, the

S.A.F.E.R. (Survivors of Abuse Feeling Empowered for Re-entry) Program.

In addition to these stories, we also highlight a panel presentation that I, and Suffolk County Sheriff's Department House of Correction Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith participated in for the LeadBoston organization.

Finally, with extremely heavy hearts and the deepest sorrows, we pay our respects to Officer Robert Murphy and share condolences with his family, friends and colleagues.

I hope that you'll find this newsletter informative and enlightening, and I look forward to bringing you more insight about the form and functions of the Department in the issues to come.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

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INDEX

NEW PROGRAM ENCOURAGES PARTICIPANTS' "INSIDE EXPRESSIONS"

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recently celebrated the completion of the first class of a new program designed to provide healthy and productive outlets of expression for participants.

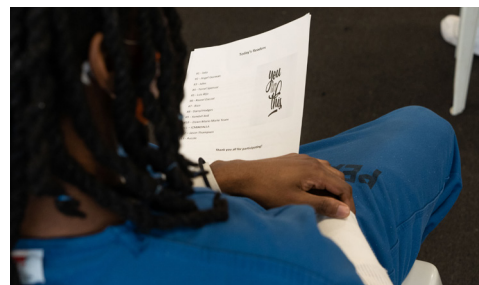


SHERIFF TOMPKINS, SUPERINTENDENT SMITH JOIN LEAD BOSTON PANEL

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and Suffolk County House of Correction Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith joined LeadBoston to take part in a panel discussion about incarceration and reentry.

SCSD COLLABORATION WORKS TO BUILD NURTURING FATHERS

The Department continues its collaboration with the Family Nurturing Center to encourage and support the role of fathers in the home, being engaged and empowered to nurture and develop their families.



SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT MOURNS THE LOSS OF OFFICER ROBERT MURPHY



Recently, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department announced, with a truly heavy heart, the passing of Officer Robert Murphy.

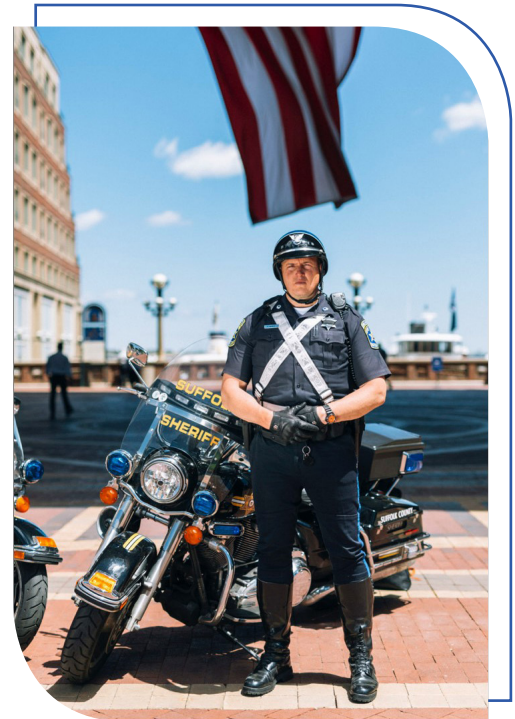
Officer Murphy, at the young age of 50, was a veteran of the Department with nearly 23 years of service at the House of Correction.

Like many other days, Officer Murphy rode his motorcycle to the House of Correction in the early morning in advance of his shift, ready to begin his work day. Upon arrival, he reported a feeling of numbness in his legs and was experiencing extreme clamminess. Upon examination by one of our medical practitioners, emergency medical services were activated and Officer Murphy was transported to Boston Medical Center, where they immediately began surgery to repair the aortic valve in his heart. Unfortunately, doctors' attempts to save him were unsuccessful and Officer Murphy was lost to us that night.

Officer Murphy was an active member within the Department, lending his time and talents to both the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Motorcycle Unit. Many have described him as a "gentle giant" who was always ready with a kind word or conversation for all, and a warmth of spirit even greater than his imposing presence.

Officer Murphy is survived by his wife Kirsten and three children, Liam (18 years), Brendan (16 years) and Declan (12 years). On behalf of everyone in the Department, we send them our prayers and share our condolences.

Rest In Peace, Officer Murphy. You will be deeply, profoundly missed.



SHERIFF TOMPKINS, SUPERINTENDENT SMITH DISCUSS CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM WITH LEADBOSTON

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and House of Correction Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith recently took part in a virtual informational session about incarceration and re-entry for participants of LeadBoston.

Created by YW Boston, the LeadBoston program helps individuals and organizations to change policies, practices, attitudes, and behaviors with the goal of creating more inclusive environments where women, people of color, and especially women of color can succeed. The program equips participants with the skills, knowledge, and network to be inclusive change agents in their organizations.

Former LeadBoston members Sheriff Tompkins (Class of '04) and Superintendent Smith (Class of '10) were joined by Liam Lowney, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance; Kevin Sibley, Director of the City of Boston's Office of Returning Citizens; Gabriella Priest,

Director of Innovation, Implementation and Development for Community Resources for Justice; and True-See Allah, Director of Reentry for the Massachusetts Office of Public Safety and Security and a LeadBoston Class of '09 alumni, for a discussion about incarceration, rehabilitation, re-entry, criminal justice reform and other related topics.

"As both an alumni of the program, and a speaker for several incoming classes, I know firsthand the important work that LeadBoston is doing around inclusion, social justice and equality," said Sheriff Tompkins. "Reforming the criminal justice system is absolutely critical if we are to move our country forward in any positive fashion, and I am grateful to LeadBoston for inviting us to continue to have this conversation."

To learn more about LeadBoston, visit:

www.ywboston.org/our-work/leadboston.



LeadBoston



Steve Tompkins (LeadBoston '04)
Sheriff of Suffolk County



Yolanda Smith (LeadBoston '10)
Superintendent, Suffolk County
House of Correction



Gabriella Priest
Director of Innovation, Implementation, &
Development, Community Resources for Justice



Liam Lowney
Executive Director, Mass. Office for
Victim Assistance



True-See Allah (LeadBoston '09)
Director of Reentry, Mass. Executive
Office of Public Safety and Security



Kevin Sibley
Director, City of Boston, Office of
Returning Citizens

OUR 2020 SPEAKERS AT LEADBOSTON'S PROGRAM DAY: INCARCERATION & RE-ENTRY

NEW PROGRAM GIVES INCARCERATED POPULATION POSITIVE OUTLET WITH “INSIDE EXPRESSIONS”



The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recently celebrated the successful inaugural run of its program designed to provide a creative outlet for incarcerated men and women.

The Inside Expressions Initiative was created by Suffolk County House of Correction Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith, under the auspices of Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, with the purpose of providing a space where individuals can respond to personal pressures and current events and in a positive way.

Through the Inside Expressions Initiative, the Writers Without Margins (writing) Workshop, debuted at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, facilitated by Founder and Executive Director Cheryl Buchanan and Communications Manager and former program participant Stephen Crivellaro.

Over the course of four weeks, fourteen men and women attended the workshop, meeting twice weekly to work on their craft. During the last week, Writers Without Margins held the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's first virtual guest speaker presentation via Zoom, wherein nationally-renowned speakers Randall Horton (Emerson College English professor and author) and Reginald Dwayne Betts (legal scholar and poet/author) presented to the class. Randall Horton previously

donated his book, #289-128 to workshop participants.

During the program's final presentation, Writers Without Margins held a Poetry & Spoken Word Reading (titled: Inside Expressions: Writers Without Margins [Poetry & Spoken Word]) during which participants presented their writings and poems. More than twenty Department members were in attendance, including Superintendent Smith, with Writers Without Margins board member Stephen Kennedy Smith also sitting in.

Following the presentation, Writers Without Margins celebrated the workshop presenters with a lunch of pizza and cupcakes.

"We created this program as a means of introducing skills that can provide participants with a more positive way to channel personal expression," said Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith. "I am so proud of everyone who participated in this program. The works that they delivered were incredibly powerful and evocative of the kind of deep introspection that can lead to greater personal healing and future success when they reenter society."

SCSD SPOTLIGHT: THE S.A.F.E.R. PROGRAM



"SAFER helped me understand, identify, and prevent all types of domestic violence. I've learned how to take notice of my triggers, and I can honestly say that it's helped me to avoid escalating a lot of situations that I can say would've been different without the help of S.A.F.E.R." – SO

"Being in S.A.F.E.R. has really opened my eyes. Whether physical or mental, no violence is ok. I now know that I have a voice." – AM

"I was broken, damaged, and filled with self-hate. With the help of intensive DV counseling and the ongoing PTSC (post-trauma self-care) group, I began pulling back the layers of trauma and started identifying feelings, actions, behaviors that were all connected to my history with domestic violence." – Anonymous

"I am no longer a victim that says 'ok' to being yelled at, hit, forced into a sexual act, or told I am worthless. Instead, I am a survivor and a fighter. I am a dignified, strong woman who deserves to be respected and loved. I still have a long road ahead of healing and hard work, but today, I can say I LOVE MYSELF, something I couldn't say for many years." –Terez Durbano

"They take time to listen and not judge. The group sessions are what I call 'soothing to the soul.' It (Domestic Violence) stripped me of my sanity of living in this world. This program makes me feel safe. Sharing stories of our lives with other women that have the same types of stories, we become as one. This is the first time I've been part of a group like this." – Anonymous



S.A.F.E.R.
SURVIVORS OF ABUSE FEELING
EMPOWERED FOR RE-ENTRY

MASSACHUSETTS
Suffolk County
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

20 Bradston Street
Boston, MA 02118

#WeAreSCSD

www.SCSDMA.org

In recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we want to provide readers with a brief introduction to the S.A.F.E.R. Program, one of the many gender-specific, individualized reintegration programs offered to sentenced women, which works to support survivors of domestic abuse while behind the walls and, later, when they return to the community.

S.A.F.E.R. (Survivors of Abuse Feeling Empowered for Re-entry) is a unique collaboration between the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and RESPOND, Inc., a pioneer in the movement to end domestic violence as New England's first domestic violence prevention agency and the second in the nation.

The program provides support in both individual and group settings for all victims of domestic abuse before and after release from custody. Domestic Violence Counselors provide

emotional support, classes, court accompaniment, case management, and safety and discharge planning. The counselors also work closely with probation, courts, and other agencies connected to the participants. Training and workshops are also available for interested law enforcement and other community agencies.

Designed to provide maximum support to survivors, The S.A.F.E.R. Program gives participants access to the following services: An eight-week class; support groups; emotional support for victims; goal and boundary setting; safety planning; discharge planning; continued support post-release; referrals to community services; court accompaniment; assistance with protection orders and other law enforcement needs; and other related services. To learn more visit: www.respondinc.org.

NURTURING FATHERS PROGRAM BRINGS POSITIVE PARENTING SKILLS TO INCARCERATED MEN

Just as children need loving relationships with their mothers to thrive, developing similarly healthy relationships with their fathers is equally important.

The Nurturing Father's Program, in conjunction with the Department's Family Matters Program, brings together men from all family circumstances (custodial, non-custodial, step-fathers, new fathers), who need help with understanding what it takes and how to be nurturing and supportive, while also maintaining their authority and providing consistent guidance and structure to their children.

Fathers are important, and the Nurturing Father's Program here at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department encourages and supports the role of fathers in the home, being engaged and empowered to nurture and develop their families.

Our most recent group of participants in the Nurturing Father's Program persevered through the COVID-19 Pandemic, and has emerged to pursue fathering from a new perspective as nurturers. These fathers, some of whom have been abused, neglected or raised by a single mother, have spent ten weeks together sharing their experiences, bonding through fatherhood and being challenged to be better fathers, spouses and sons.

This experience in fatherhood culminated with a graduation experience like no other. Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins gave a very powerful and insightful keynote speech to the group, encouraging participants to be better men for the future. The Department also shared in this event with the Executive Director of the Family Nurturing Center, Dr. Matt LiPuma and Mr. Michael Ramos of Children's Trust who sponsor and support the work of the Department's Family Matters Program. The Family Matters Program continues to teach the ten-week curriculum at both the Suffolk County House of Correction and the Suffolk County Jail.

Among the many powerful moments that defined the graduation, the most inspiring was the "Father I want to be" dissertations of the graduates. The crowd, graduates and dignitaries were all deeply moved by the passion and heart-felt commitment of all the speakers. This event will not be soon forgotten.

To learn more about the Family Nurturing Center and the Nurturing Fathers Program, visit: www.familynurturing.org. You can learn more about the Family Matters Program by visiting: www.scsdma.org.





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

OCTOBER

NATIONAL DOMESTIC
Violence
AWARENESS MONTH

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