



COMMON GROUND

JANUARY 2021 ISSUE

YEAR IN
REVIEW





SHERIFF'S STATEMENT

JANUARY, 2021

Greetings,

And welcome to the 2020 Year In Review issue of the Common Ground newsletter.

Over the past year, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department has continued in its mission to provide for the care and custody of the people who have been remanded to our facilities by the courts, offering programming and services designed to help heal and rehabilitate our population as they prepare to reenter society. We have also introduced new elements to our programming, while continuing to deliver outreach to the people in the communities of Suffolk County, and we've spearheaded a number of groundbreaking events designed to civically engage our population, staff and constituents in an effort to improve the safety, health and vibrancy of the people across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond. You can read about some of them in the following pages.

Like the rest of the world, however, we experienced a myriad of challenges in fulfilling our prescribed mission due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, with its presence overshadowing nearly every aspect of our operations. But, from the beginning of the pandemic, we took very seriously our collective obligation to protect the people in Department custody, rising to this new challenge by developing and implementing rigorous health and safety protection protocols established in coordination with Centers For Disease Control and Department of Public Health guidance, which proved to be effective in containing the spread of COVID-19 within our facilities.

As we head into the new year with great hope for an end to the pandemic with new vaccines being implemented gradually around the globe, in our county and within our facilities, we are looking forward to the opportunity to create even more opportunity for those in our care and custody to begin taking the steps that will lead them out of our custody better able to care for themselves and their families, and we look forward to continuing our work with all of our community partners, organizations and residents to raise the standard of living in Suffolk County and beyond.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

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SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT CONTINUES STRINGENT HEALTH, SAFETY PROTOCOLS AGAINST COVID-19 INFECTION

In December of 2019, global awareness about a new coronavirus, identified in China as SARS-CoV-2, was only just beginning. By late February, early March of 2020, it was clear that it had reached both pandemic levels and the shores of the United States as COVID-19 infection was accelerating at a rapid pace across the globe.

Like many public institutions across the country, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department immediately began implementing steps to try and prevent the contraction and spread of the virus behind the walls. As a microcosm of the neighborhoods and communities outside, however, the arrival of the virus inside of Department facilities was inevitable, but also, fortunately, anticipated.

Engaging with medical experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), and enlisting the expertise of Infectious Disease Specialist Dr. Alysse Wurcel of Tufts Medical Center to bolster the practical and strategic planning of its COVID-19 response, the Department enacted a set of protocols and procedures to ensure that medical practices would be maximally effective and responsive to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The use of masks for all personnel was mandated, symptom screening and the administration of temperature testing was enforced for anyone entering

Department facilities, custody and medical staff were assigned personal protective equipment (PPE), and all staff, detainees and inmates were given masks, to be replaced as needed. Enhanced sanitization and decontamination protocols were implemented for the Department, and, in units in which an individual or individuals tested positive, deep cleaning and decontamination procedures were utilized.

While in-person visits for families and friends were suspended on a temporary basis as part of infection prevention protocols, the Department enhanced alternative means of communication, which has included a range of options like: additional phone calls, mail services and increased access to text messaging or video conferencing.

In addition to the protection and mitigation protocols, the Department also worked collaboratively with the courts to reduce the population within its facilities in compliance with the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) Order 12926.

While continuing with all of our safety and protection protocols heading into the New Year, we at the Department are now in the initiation phase of the implementation of our vaccine dissemination program. As vaccine distribution expands across our state, country and around the globe, it is with great optimism and enthusiasm that we anticipate returning to a sense of normalcy at some point as the year progresses.

SCSD PROGRAMMING, SERVICES AND OUTREACH PERSEVERED UNDER SHADOW OF PANDEMIC

Though the COVID-19 pandemic required that the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department make extensive alterations to the form and function of daily operations, enacting comprehensive protective protocols and sanitization measures to prevent the contraction and spread of the virus among our staff and those in our care and custody, the Department still managed to deliver important programming and services inside, while maintaining outreach to the residents of Suffolk County, albeit in a masked and socially-distant capacity.

Whether hosting turkey giveaways to family members of participants in the Department's the Family Matters Program; offering parenting, HiSET, creative writing, Urban Farming, Women's Programming and more for our in-custody population; bringing outdoor, socially-distant presentations of the Choice Program to teens in our community; co-hosting a virtual CORI-friendly job fair; delivering toys collected from Department employees for the Toys For Tots program and participating in a revamped "Shop With A Cop: Heroes and Helpers event; or broadcasting several live entries of the Department's "Directions for Corrections" community forum series, the Department remained active and engaged despite the challenge of navigating through the pandemic.

You can read about some of these in the briefs below and in story form throughout this annual special "Year End" issue of the Common Ground.

Sheriff's Department Collaborates With Local Agencies For Book Bag, Supplies Giveaway

With the help of community organizations such as the New Market Business Association, MissionSAFE, Starlight Ministries-Emmanuel Gospel Center, and Education First, the Department provided returning citizens with a book bag filled with toiletries, non-perishable snacks, and information about COVID-19 with a listing of currently-available resources. Thank you to our amazing community partners!

SCSD Brings Choice Program Outdoors For Boston Fire Youth Academy

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department held an outdoor, socially-distanced presentation of the Choice Program for members of the Boston Fire Youth Academy. Held at White Stadium in Franklin Park, Assistant Deputy Superintendent Abe Ayuso and Sergeant Holly Nelson delivered a presentation about the meaning behind the "3 C's" (Care, Custody

and Control), and spoke with the academy about a variety of topics, including how to become an officer of the Department, the dangers of sexting, the consequences of bullying, peer pressure, guns and violence, and the ramifications of CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information).

Family Matters "Play Shop" Brings Nurturing Fathers Together With Their Children

Earlier this year, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Family Matters program collaborated with the Nurturing Fathers' Program of the Family Nurturing Center in an effort to help the men in our custody realize the true value of nurturing and supporting their children while still maintaining authority and structure. Family Matters is a voluntary program under the Division of Re-Integration Services at the Suffolk County House of Correction that is designed to assist inmates and their families with working toward



positive relationships. The Nurturing Fathers' class is a thirteen-week class that teaches the incarcerated men about their children's needs and how to meet them, all while examining their past personal experiences with their own fathers. With the guidance of their Family Nurturing Center facilitator, John O'Neil, they also learn the importance of serving as their children's first teacher while they are still impressionable, the power of positive affirmations, and providing a nurturing environment that makes their children feel safe.

New Collaborative Program Brings Students, Incarcerated Population "Inside-Out"

"Outside Students" from Boston College came together in one location at the Suffolk County House of Correction with "inside students" to exchange ideas and perceptions about crime, corrections and justice in a seminar-style college course. "Inside-Out" is a worldwide program that takes an innovative approach to education, with thousands of students having participated, and hundreds of instructors, universities and correctional facilities playing a part in making it all possible. Participants of Inside-Out receive the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the United States criminal justice system through theoretical knowledge and practical experience. Some topics of discussion consist of causes and definitions of crime, criminal justice institutions, the myths and realities of prison life, the experiences of crime victims, theories of punishment and rehabilitation, and the relationship between crime and community. The course is run by Matthew DelSesto, Coordinator of the Incarceration to Education Initiative and Teaching Fellow in Sociology at Boston College.

SCSD 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.

Sheriff Tompkins, Department Celebrate HiSET Graduates

The Department celebrated a group of in-custody participants of the HiSET (High School Equivalency Test) program. The men participated in a graduation ceremony presided over by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, who spoke to the graduates, and also featured Special Sheriff and House of Correction Superintendent Yolanda Smith, Director of Education Jim Dizio and guest speaker and former House of Correction Superintendent, former Norfolk County Sheriff's Department Superintendent and current University of Massachusetts adjunct professor Gerard Horgan.



SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WELCOMED 23 NEW OFFICERS WITH COTA 20-01 GRADUATES

In January, the Chelsea Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) began the process of transforming twenty-three officer trainees into correction officers for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. Three months later, Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department proudly welcomed them all into the Corrections profession.

For twelve weeks, the officer candidates went through a rigorous program in which they dedicated themselves to learning the duties and responsibilities of becoming correction officers for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. The men and women in training spent long hours in the classroom and logged many more in the field as they received academic and physical instruction from the Department's academy instructors. The candidates chosen to become officers of the Department successfully completed an academy that required intensive instruction in several practical and classroom subjects that included: ethics and professionalism, suicide prevention, the use of force continuum, firearm safety and handling, inmate education and programming, contraband control, courtroom testimony, CORI and inmate rights and responsibilities, fire safety, CPR, harassment and discrimination prevention, cross-gender supervision, and report writing, in addition to several other topics.

On April 8, 2020, the officer candidates were officially sworn-in by Assistant Deputy Superintendent and Director of Training Jose Mojica, Superintendent William Sweeney, and Suffolk County Jail Superintendent Michael Colwell. In observance of safety protocols related to the

COVID-19 pandemic, the officers were not able to have a formal graduation ceremony, however, Department officials expressed to COTA Class 20-01 how proud they are of their accomplishments.

"This class was a good group of officers and worked well together," stated ADS Mojica. "We were directly affected by the COVID-19 virus, but, fortunately, all of the students were able to complete the necessary requirements and were able to receive their Oath of Office on April 8th. It was a learning experience for each of us, from the academy class members to our most senior cadre of instructors. This was an unprecedented situation and I am proud of how the academy staff and Class 20-01 worked together in order to achieve our goals."

The members of COTA Class 20-01 included: Josemer Augustin, Michael Casey, Brianna O'Leary, Lorraine Velez, Ronie Robinson, Lino Azul, Khang Lam, Joshua Mojica, John Exantus, Wilfredo Rubert, Djeckby Joseph, Jake Shrewtawski, William Chu, Jordan Blair, John Posada, Christopher Barros, Alvin Colbourne, Zachary Primo, Clevens Jean, Eric Goodwin, Wisdom Degboe, Baldwin Ihenacho, and Jorge Arredondo. The COTA Class 20-01 class leaders were: Baldwin Ihenacho as the class President, John Posada as the Vice-President, Brianna O'Leary as the secretary and Eric Goodwin as the treasurer. Award recipients included: Brianna O'Leary, Drill Instructor Award; Lisa Enos and Jake Shetrawski, Academic Award; Joshua Mojica, Defensive Tactics Award; Jake Shetrawski, Physical Fitness Award; Eric Goodwin, Top Gun Award; and Lorraine Velez, Unit Citation Award.



SCSD'S URBAN FARM CONTINUES GROWTH AMIDST COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Along with businesses, educational institutions and organizations across the country, the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic forced the necessary implementation of health and safety protocols around the Department and the postponement of some of the many programs that are provided to our incarcerated population. One program that continued to thrive, albeit with new safety guidelines, was the Urban Farming Program. Introduced in 2012, the program has quite literally continued growing and flourishing, despite the restrictions necessitated by the new protocols.

Speaking this past July with Captain David Granese, Director of Vocational Education, through which the Urban Farming Program is facilitated, he highlighted the many successes of the program, despite the restrictions created by the pandemic.

"It's growing like crazy," said Captain Granese. "We have two men from the program who assist with watering, weeding and planting. Typically, there are about ten people out there at a time, but in observance of COVID-19 protocols, we've cut it back to two participants in effort to

keep social distancing." According to Captain Granese, approximately ninety percent of the plants in the garden were started by seeds under the "grow light" system in the Common Ground Institute, the Department's vocational education hub. An impressive array of fruits and vegetables soaked in the sun and ripened for harvest, including: Romaine Lettuce, Radishes, Cucumbers, Summer Squash, Zucchini, Eggplant, Green Beans, Basil, Parsley, Tomatoes (Cherry, Yellow Pear, Early Girl, San Marzano) and Peppers (Green, Red, Hot, Jalapeno), in addition to others. Captain Granese once again stressed the new health and safety standards, stating that, during the harvesting process, masks and gloves were worn at all times and the harvested items were placed in bags, weighed and brought to the SCSD's Kitchen where one of the Serv-Safe-certified chefs surveyed all of the produce to ensure safe consumption.

Captain Granese anticipated that a large amount of the produce grown from the garden would be donated, as the Department continued preparing for the reopening of the Culinary Arts Kitchen for programming, where the rest of the harvest would be utilized.

SHERIFF TOMPKINS, DEPARTMENT HOSTED HISTORIC US SENATE FORUM AT HOC

In July, Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins invited United States Senate candidates Senator Edward Markey and Congressman Joe Kennedy, III into the Suffolk County House of Correction to participate in a forum held for a group of incarcerated men and women.

Comprised of ten women and ten men, the group stood before each candidate to ask a series of questions that they prepared in advance of the event. Addressing everything from police brutality, parole and probation, CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information), slavery and reparations, facial recognition software, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), unemployment due to COVID-19, term limits, equality, and a vast array of additional topics, participants brought a combination of thoughtfulness, intensity and nuance to the forum that elicited expansive and often spontaneous responses from the candidates.

Part of an ongoing initiative designed by Sheriff Tompkins, the forum was created to both promote civic participation among the Department's in-custody population, and bring candidates for elected office behind the walls to listen to the often-unheard voices and concerns of system-involved men and women. This civic-engagement program began back in 2018 when Sheriff Tompkins and the Department hosted a debate-styled forum featuring six candidates who

were then competing to win the seat of Suffolk County District Attorney. The Department also made history when it welcomed members of the Boston City Council into the House of Correction on two separate occasions for two city council hearings, a first for both the City of Boston and, at the time, for the nation.

"As anyone who has ever met me knows, I am an extremely vocal proponent of civic engagement," said Sheriff Tompkins. "It is crucially important, now more than at any point in our lifetimes, that we all have a seat at the table and a voice in the process that decides who we collectively aspire to be as a country, and what direction we're going to take to get there."

"We need to hear from everybody," Sheriff Tompkins continued, "particularly from people who have not typically had a consistent voice. Conversely, we also need the people who are seeking to represent us in government to hear from all of the people, wherever they might be, and to become well-versed in all of the issues and responsive to their entire electorate."

To watch a recording of the event, visit the Department's Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/SCSDMA and click the video titled "SCSD Town Hall."





OFFICERS JOINED BY SHERIFF TOMPKINS IN STATEMENT AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

This past May, Officers and members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department were joined by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and executive staff as they took a knee in solidarity with people protesting the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis Police Department officer.

Sheriff Tompkins, Superintendent of the House of Correction and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith and Superintendent of the Suffolk County Jail Michael Colwell spoke about the need to end systemic racism and oppression and voiced their support for accountability by members of the law enforcement community.

"I am extremely proud of the members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department who came out to show their support for achieving justice for George Floyd and ending systemic racism," said Sheriff Tompkins. "Often, people will say that the system is broken. It's not broken...it's working exactly as it was intended to work, and we need to change that. We're also proud to stand with our fellow countrymen in demanding an end to racism, systemic oppression and inequality."

SHERIFF TOMPKINS CONTINUES EFFORTS TO INFORM, ENGAGE COMMUNITIES OF SUFFOLK COUNTY

The COVID-19 pandemic also did little to slow the efforts of Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins as he continued to steer the Department forward through the pandemic to deliver on its mandate for the care and custody of the people remanded to our facilities by the courts.

In addition, Sheriff Tompkins also spearheaded several new programs; hosted a number of virtual community forums designed to bring the residents, businesses and organizations of Suffolk County useful information and encourage civic participation; served on virtual panels for both local and national events; launched a new “Zoomcast” program “Real Talk In The Commonwealth, With Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins”; hosted an historic forum at the Suffolk County House of Correction with United States senatorial candidates Senator Ed Markey and Congressman Joseph Kennedy, III (which you can read about in this issue), and more.

We’ve compiled briefs of just a few of these events below.

Sheriff Tompkins Moderates Panel Of Mayors In Discussion About Municipal Government

Sheriff Tompkins most recently hosted “A Discussion About Municipal Government,” as part of his ongoing forum series “Directions for Corrections.” Sheriff Tompkins moderated a conversation, held virtually, with Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera, Framingham Mayor Yvonne Spicer, Somerville Mayor Joe Curtatone and Easthampton Mayor Nicole LaChapelle about city governance and all of the responsibilities, roles and requirements that carrying the mantle of “mayor” entails, along with a host of current topics and issues affecting residents, businesses and organizations across Massachusetts.

Sheriff Tompkins Co-Hosts “Get Konnected” Lunar New Year Forum

Sheriff Tompkins kicked off the Year 2020 joined co-host Melody Mendez of NBC’s Channel 10 Boston, for the Get Konnected! Lunar New Year forum. Created by Colette Phillips, President of Colette Phillips Communications, Inc., this special event featured an impressive array of elected officials representing the “new, diverse faces of political power” in Massachusetts. Sheriff Tompkins and Ms. Mendez moderated a discussion that ranged from the importance of representation, to civic engagement, to public health, and much more.

Sheriff Tompkins, Superintendent Smith Discuss Criminal Justice Reform With LeadBoston

Sheriff Tompkins and House of Correction Superintendent and Special Sheriff Yolanda Smith 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.

Summer Enrichment Alumni Join Sheriff Tompkins, Department For Youth Summit

Sheriff Tompkins and members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department hosted a virtual event for former members of the Department's summer internship program. Envisioned as a forum through which to discuss the many concerns currently confronting young people, alumni of the Department's Summer Enrichment Program joined Sheriff Tompkins and members of the Department for a "Youth Summit" that delved into such timely topics as education during the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and gender inequality, civic engagement and responsibility, police brutality and the Black Lives Matter movement, among several other issues.

Sheriff Tompkins Hosts 2-Day Virtual Community Forum About Voting And Men Of Color

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins recently held a two-day Zoom event – featuring two groups of panelists from a diverse array of occupations, organizations and experiences – to discuss the state of voting and civic participation among men of color. On both nights, the wide-ranging discussions proved to be both lively and informative, with powerful, thought-provoking contributions from each panelist. This two-part discussion, titled, "A Conversation About the Need to Increase Voter Participation Among Men of Color," featured an accomplished assembly that included: Russell Holmes, State Representative, 6th Suffolk District; Ricky Grant, Chief of Community Engagement for the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office; Thaddeus Miles, Director of Community Services at MassHousing; Conan Harris, Founder and CEO of CJ Strategies; Segun Idowu, President of the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts; and James Hills, Host of #JavaWithJimmy for the first night. For the second night, panelists were Lee Pelton, President of Emerson College; Michael Curry, CEO and General Counsel for Government Affairs and Public Policy for the Government Affairs and Public Policy Division at the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers; Rahsaan Hall, Director of the Racial Justice Program of the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts; Alberto Vasallo, Jr., Founder and Publisher of El Mundo Newspaper; Arthur Bernard, Attorney at Travaglini Scorzoni Kiley; and Paul Francisco, Chief Diversity Officer at State Street .

Sheriff Tompkins Speaks Out About Racial Justice And Equality

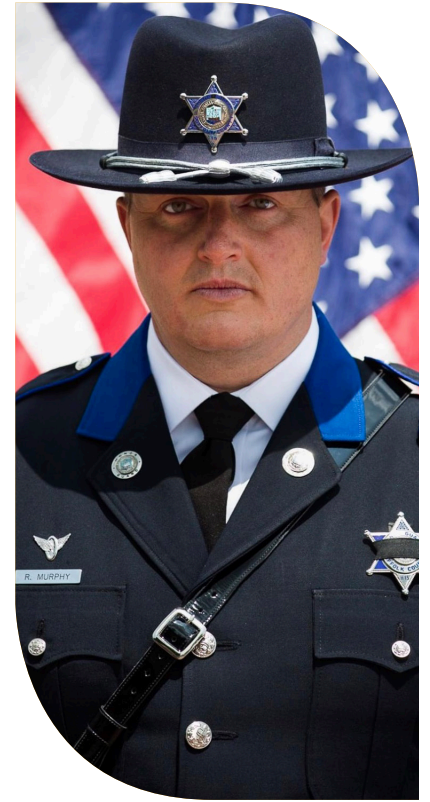
Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins participated as a panelist in two separate forums held to address racial justice and equality. Spurred by the outcry for justice following the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and other Black and brown people at the hands of law enforcement, these forums were part of the larger discussion about race that was occurring and continues around the nation. Taking place at Roxbury Community College on the eve of Father's Day, a group of Black men from a diverse array of perspectives, professions and experiences assembled to discuss racism, trauma and the road ahead for racial justice and equality. Sheriff Tompkins addressed the gathering among a group that included State Representative Russell Holmes, Boston Police Commissioner William Gross, MBTA Police Chief Kenneth Green, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center President and CEO Manny Lopes and several others. Taking part in another, similar forum - this time occurring virtually among participants - Sheriff Tompkins joined a panel discussion that focused on structural racism, hosted by the City of Somerville and moderated by WHDH Channel 7 News Boston's Byron Barnett.

The other panelists featured were: Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley; Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins; Framingham Mayor Yvonne Spicer; Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone; Somerville City Councilor At-Large Will Mbah; Ward 4 Somerville School Committee member Andre Green; and Somerville High School Black Student Union President Floreisha Bastien.

Sheriff Tompkins, Dorchester Bay EDC “Rise To The Challenge” In Celebration of Vibrant Communities

Sheriff Tompkins joined special guest Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, President Emerita of Spelman College, and the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation to help celebrate the organization’s 41st year of helping to build strong neighborhoods in and around Dorchester. Dorchester Bay EDC was founded in 1979 by local civic associations to address the problems of economic disinvestment, unemployment, crime, community tensions and the shortage of quality affordable housing undermining Boston’s Dorchester neighborhoods. The theme of the virtual event was “Dorchester Strong: Rising to the Challenge,” and the organization gave special recognition to Sheriff Tompkins, along with the founder of Stajez Cultural Arts Center, Sophia Haynes-Cardwell.





IN MEMORIAM:

OFFICERS GREGORY RECTOR & ROBERT MURPHY

With truly heavy hearts and great sorrow, the Department has continued to mourn the loss of two officers who served at the Suffolk County House of Correction.

In April, the Department lost Officer Gregory Rector, an 18-year veteran of the Department who served at the Suffolk County House of Correction. Officer Rector became ill in early March and was ultimately hospitalized for a brain disease. Gregory was remembered as a gentle soul and one who smiled every day. He continues to be greatly missed by all who knew him.

This past fall, we also lost Officer Robert Murphy who, at the young age of 50, was a Department veteran of nearly 23 years at the House of Correction. Officer Murphy arrived to work experiencing symptoms from an aortic valve complication that surgeons, ultimately, couldn't repair. Officer Murphy was an active member within the Department, lending his time and talents to both our Honor Guard and our 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.

Everyone at the Department continues to keep the families of Officer Rector and Officer Murphy in our hearts and wish them peace, comfort and healing in the year to come.



A DEPARTMENT CONSTANT FOR OVER A HALF-CENTURY, “MRS. B.” TAKES WELL-EARNED RETIREMENT

Back in May, the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department celebrated the retirement of its longest serving member, Albia Bondar. Beginning a career that has spanned an amazing fifty-one years, “Mrs. B.” joined the Department in the spring of 1969.

When she started her job as a Senior Clerk Typist for the Department, Mrs. B. was earning \$2.55 per-hour as one of only two women working at the Deer Island House of Correction at the time. As one could easily imagine, the Department was a decidedly different place back then, with standards, practices and technology having advanced quite a bit over the decades.

Becoming a full-time employee in 1973, Mrs. B. worked in what was called the “front office,” sharing a variety of different responsibilities with co-workers which included billing and procurement, staffing the switchboard, managing inmate canteen services and telephone calls, recording and calculating inmate sentencing, and a host of other duties, albeit in a decidedly more painstaking fashion than today’s requirements.

Though Mrs. B. was unable to have an official “retirement day” at work due to the safety protocols and “stay-at-home” work orders mandated by the COVID19 pandemic, members of the Department were able to show their appreciation by driving by her house for “Mrs. B. Day” to help her celebrate this latest milestone before she sets her sights on the next ones.

If the past 51 years are any indication, it’s doubtful that Mrs. B. will be slowing down into her well-earned retirement any time soon.

CHARITY, GENEROSITY HELPED TO LIFT SPIRITS WHILE PROTECTING STAFF AND IN-CUSTODY POPULATION

Through all of the uncertainty and apprehension that surrounded the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were many inspiring stories about people coming together to rise to the occasion and give their assistance in whatever way that they could to help their neighbors, local organizations and even strangers to mitigate the fallout caused by the pandemic. As the Department navigated through the crisis, the necessity for personal protective equipment (PPE) was at the forefront of our mission to keep everyone safe and secure. To this end over the past year, the Department received several generous donations from many organizations and people out of the kindness in their hearts and concern for the men and women working behind the walls, and for the people in our care and custody.

Early on, it was Richard Leiter, a friend of Captain Dave Granese, the Department's Director of Vocational Education, who was kind enough to donate (120) N-95 masks to the correction officers here at the Department.

Later, the Department received donations of masks from Anthony Seymour of Youth In Crisis, Richard Harding, President of the Green Soul Foundation and Taba Moses, of the Green Soul Community Development Foundation.

Once again, receiving charity from within its own ranks, the Department also received from Caseworker Kenny Pires a donation of 1,000 masks and 300 protective gowns.

In what was the largest single donation of protective masks, the Department received 5,500 professional-grade and hand-made masks from members of the community – including Leonard Lee of Communities Coming Together, Operation LIPSTICK, cut#50, the Reform Alliance, Sewing COVID-19 (the group that created the hand-made masks), Grace Church of All Nations and Reverend Jeffrey Brown – who united in the cause of providing protective equipment for the people who work in and are remanded to our facilities.

