SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

COMMON GROUND

JUNE 2026

SCSD'S K-9 DIVISION CONTINUES REPRESENTING THE INSTITUTION WITH DISTINCTION



"MY STORY" INITIATIVE CONTINUES AT THE SUFFOLK COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTION



BU'S RACE, PRISON, JUSTICE ARTS COMMENCES AT THE SUFFOLK COUNTY JAIL





SCSD'S HONOR GUARD AND STAFF JOINS THE OPENING OF THE SUMMER GAMES FOR THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS



SCSD'S JOINS THE 30TH ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY WALK 4 PEACE



OFFICERS AND CWP PARTICIPANTS PAY HOMAGE TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS FOR MEMORIAL DAY



SCSD'S MESSAGE

JUNE 2026

Greetings...

...and welcome to the June edition of the Common Ground Newsletter. In this issue, we celebrate the accomplishments of our K-9 Division as handlers and their canine partners competed in the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) National Detector Dog Trials and Region 4 Police Dog Trials. Competing against some of the nation's top K-9 teams, our officers earned certifications, qualifications for future competitions, and proudly represented the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department with distinction.

We also highlight a new partnership with Boston University's Race, Prison, Justice Arts (BURJA) program, which brings art and music workshops to detainees at the Suffolk County Jail. In addition, our My Story series continues with the inspiring journeys of two women at the House of Correction who share messages of hope, resilience, and the belief that everyone has the opportunity to build a better future after incarceration.

Lastly, we bring you our Around Suffolk County section showcasing the Department's ongoing community outreach efforts, featuring events and initiatives that strengthen connections, provide resources, and support residents throughout Suffolk County.

We hope that you'll enjoy reading these and other stories in this issue, and we look forward to bringing you more insight and information about the form and functions of the Department in the editions to come.

~The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department

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SCSD'S K-9 DIVISION CONTINUES REPRESENTING THE INSTITUTION WITH DISTINCTION

As our readers already know, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department K-9 Division plays a critical role in public safety, maintaining security within our facilities and throughout the community. They conduct searches for narcotics, and contraband at the Suffolk County Jail and House of Correction, assist law enforcement agencies and counties, and participate in community demonstrations.

K-9s are trained to detect what may go unnoticed by the human eye, allowing our officers to respond quickly and accurately to potential threats, and their role often extends beyond the walls of our institutions, providing support during narcotics investigations, searches for fleeing suspects, and efforts to locate missing children. To maintain this level of readiness, handlers and their four-legged partners undergo rigorous ongoing training and certification programs that ensure operational excellence and court credibility.

From May 3rd to May 6th, Jail Sergeant Zachary Miller and his K-9 partner Jak, along with House of Correction Sergeant Daniel Fitzgibbon and his K-9 partner Kano, traveled to Atlantic City, New Jersey, to compete in the 2026 United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) National Detector Dog Trials. The national competition brought together more than eighty police K-9 teams from across the country and tested participants through challenging hotel room and vehicle searches conducted amid real-world distractions, including public traffic and the presence of other police dogs.

Both SCSD teams successfully earned their National Narcotics Detection Certification, demonstrating the skill, precision, and teamwork required of elite K-9 units. Sgt. Fitzgibbon and Kano achieved an impressive score of 189 out of 200 points. Kano, a dual-purpose police dog trained in patrol and narcotics detection, showcased exceptional focus throughout the competition. "It was truly an honor to compete alongside some of the best K-9 teams in the nation," noted Sgt. Fitzgibbon. "Kano loves to work and gives 100% every time we're called upon to conduct a search." He credited additional training with other agencies and exposure to various narcotic odors in buildings, vehicles, and packages for helping prepare the team for the event.

Sgt. Fitzgibbon also emphasized the value of certification competitions in law enforcement, noting that they challenge both handlers and dogs to perform under a variety of conditions while strengthening their ability to assist other agencies and conduct searches in schools and communities. "You build a true bond with your dog and you learn to trust your dog," he shared. "It was an amazing experience, and we were honored to represent the Sheriff's Department."

Sgt. Miller and Jak also delivered an outstanding performance, placing 12th out of 78 teams. Jak is a single-purpose police dog trained in narcotics detection.

During the three-day event, the pair completed multiple certification exercises, including vehicle and hotel room searches, while continuing their regular monthly training regimen.

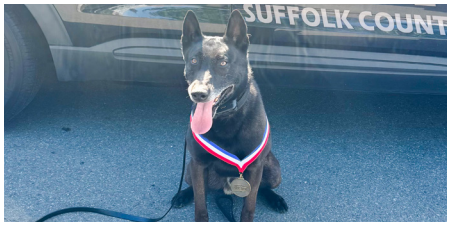
"These events bring handlers together to share knowledge, training techniques, and experiences that help strengthen our profession," said Sgt. Miller. Reflecting on his partner's performance, he added, "There's not enough I can say about Jak. He was close to getting a perfect score, and I have complete confidence and trust in him every time we work together."

At the end of the competition, both Sgt. Miller and Sgt. Fitzgibbon earned National Narcotics Detection Certifications, while Jak and Kano received Medals of Excellence for their exceptional performances.

The Division's success continued just one month later. From June 5th to June 7th, Sgt. Fitzgibbon and Kano once again competed in the USPCA Region 4 Police Dog Trials in Hampden, Massachusetts, alongside Sgt. Michael Carbonneau paired with Reggie, and Officer Richard Tran paired with Hanzo, where they all competed against some of the most experienced K-9 teams in the Northeast. They were evaluated in obedience, evidence searches, suspect searches, criminal apprehension, and apprehension-under-gunfire scenarios.

All three teams successfully earned their Patrol Dog Certification, securing qualification for the USPCA National Field Trials in Texas this fall. Special Sheriff Mark Lawhorne commended the accomplishment, stating, "Their dedication, professionalism, and countless hours of training reflect the high standard of excellence upheld by the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department."

Special thanks to Lieutenant Cornell Lewis, who oversees the K-9 Unit, and congratulations to Sgt. Miller, Sgt. Fitzgibbon, Sgt. Carbonneau, Officer Tran, and their K-9 partners Jak, Kano, Reggie, and Hanzo for representing the institution with distinction. We wish them continued success in the competitions ahead.





MY STORY: MEET THE WOMEN PAVING THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

On May 15, Director of Women's Program Services Jennifer Wolter and the Women's Program Services team hosted its third "My Story" speaker presentation as part of an ongoing mission to remind the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's female residents that a future of personal success and fulfillment is not beyond their grasps. Each My Story poster, displayed proudly throughout the Suffolk County House of Correction, highlights the accomplishments of women formerly incarcerated there. The project also invites My Story's returning citizens to share their stories of triumph with currently incarcerated female residents, who may learn from or feel seen by their experiences.

This latest inspirational event, conducted in Contact Visits, had an especially positive theme to the hour: paying it forward. The two featured women invited to tell their truth coincidentally both work in the recovery and social services sector today. Meet Kathy Curley and Terez Durbano, who found healing through their advocacy for others.



Kathy Curley: With wisdom and gratitude pouring from her spirit, Dorchester native Kathy Curley is a testament to the age-old phrase: "miracles happen every day." After overcoming a decades-long battle with addiction and approximately two years cycling between the Suffolk County House of Correction and the Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Framingham, Kathy now proudly celebrates eleven years in recovery and serves as a Senior Recovery Coach at North Suffolk Community Services. While sitting in the House of Correction day room at 46 years old, she recalls having a hard conversation with herself about what the remainder of her life would look like if she continued down the path she was on. "All of the times that I came in [to the House of Correction], I was broken. However, I would not let you see that I was broken, so I would make jokes." She continued, "That [last] time when I came in [to the House of Correction], I would sit at the table and cry. I felt like someone had a blowtorch on my heart and my soul. The pain was so great, but I didn't believe that pain would ever go away without a substance."

After seeking long-term treatment and years of weekly therapy upon her final release, Curley found sobriety and staunch self-worth. Every day of sobriety proved she could defy the insurmountable, so she observed daily victories. Recalling her first job out of jail at Dunkin' Donuts, Curley beamed, "It was $8 an hour, but I was the happiest worker because I was so grateful to get that little check every week… Like 'Oh my God, I can do this.'" Speaking to the sacredness and protection she feels for her body, Curley recounted rougher days on "Mass Ave," showing empathy for the women who can relate. "I don't have to do that anymore, and that's not who I am. I'm not that person," she explained.

To the women who came to listen to her story and to those who participated in her relapse prevention groups, she encourages them to stay connected to the support services that they received while incarcerated — not as an advisor, but as an equal. All people are deserving of a chance, because as Curley proclaims, "where there's breath, there's hope."



Terez Durbano For Terez Durbano, recovery became the foundation for a life she once struggled to imagine. After battling heroin addiction, which she describes as her "demon," and serving two years at the Suffolk County House of Correction back in 2018 followed by two years of probation, she made the decision to invest in herself and her future. More than ten years into her recovery journey, Terez has earned her bachelor's degree, is currently in her second year of pursuing a master's degree in social work, and hopes to earn a Ph.D in the near future. As part of the My Story Program, Terez returned to share her journey with women who may be uncertain about what lies ahead after incarceration. Her message was one of resilience, determination, and self-belief. "I just want people to know that you can do it too," she said. "Being in here is not easy. It can be isolating and depressing, and you wonder, 'What's going to happen to me after I leave here?' But you can do anything you set your mind to." Terez encouraged participants to believe in their ability to create a new future through education, meaningful careers, and positive relationships. She also emphasized the importance of building a support system, especially during the first few years of recovery. "Even if you don't have a lot of family or social support, I would recommend finding some sort of recovery network," she noted. "It's really important to have people you can call on when the world feels like it's on fire."

Among attendees included, Recovery Coach Melissa Maragioglio of North Suffolk Community Services, among others. Maragioglio regularly visits the HOC to connect women with services and resources that support their recovery and successful reentry into the community. "I love being a part of a community of women," she shared. Reflecting on the My Story Program, she emphasized the impact of hearing firsthand accounts from women who have successfully navigated the challenges of incarceration and recovery. "Many of the women who participate in My Story are people I know either personally or professionally," she shared. "It's important for incarcerated women to hear stories from others who have been through the judicial system and come out on the other side. Those stories remind them that there is life and hope beyond incarceration."

Special thanks to Kathy Curley, Terez Durbano, and all the My Story participants, who, through their bravery and vulnerability, give hope to those struggling that they are worthy and capable of leading better lives.

THE FREEDOM TO CREATE: AFFIRMING HUMANITY THROUGH ARTISTIC EXCHANGE



"The caged bird sings with a fearful trill of things unknown but longed for still and his tune is heard on the distant hill for the caged bird sings of freedom."

— Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

How can a caged bird sing, if not given the pen and voice for song?
For eight weeks this spring, an act of transcendence took place inside the Suffolk County Jail. Through music, poetry, storytelling, movement, visual arts, and shared reflection, six young Boston University artists and change-makers joined incarcerated residents as people united by the capability to create and be moved by creation.

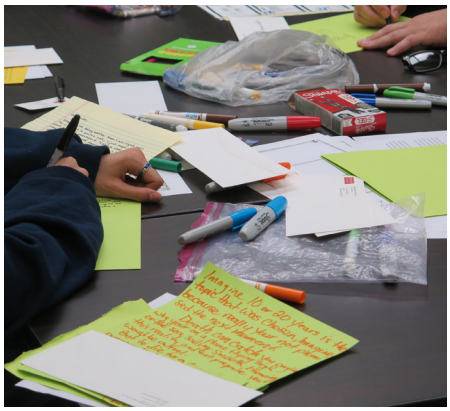
Since 2018, Boston University's Race, Prison, Justice Arts (BURPJA), from the College of Fine Arts, has paid visits to individuals experiencing incarceration within the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's facilities. Led by acclaimed educator, conductor, ethnomusicologist, writer, prison abolitionist, and human rights advocate Professor André de Quadros, the program has become a familiar and welcome presence within the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, returning year after year with the mission to foster spaces of expression and break down barriers of shame and social stratification.

"People feel liberated in this space," explained Professor de Quadros on his reason for this mission. "They feel humanized in a way that they don't feel at any other time during the week." For over a decade, Professor de Quadros has brought volunteer students into correctional facilities across Massachusetts, adapting through the virtual meeting challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing to evolve with each new cohort of students.

This semester's group included current students and alumni from diverse academic and artistic backgrounds, several of whom recently completed their graduate studies at Boston University. Weekly workshops explored themes of anger as a catalyst for social change, Black resilience and identity, abolition versus reform, and radical hope. De Quadros recounted this semester's most memorable moment as an exercise in which participants imagined their future lives; another included the delivery of an original rap recited entirely from memory. Residents engaged with prompts through poetry, short stories, visual art, mask-making, performance, and personal reflection, with the opportunity to be published in the next issue of "One Sky, Many Destinies," a BURPJA book featuring works by incarcerated artists.

On April 29, 2026, BURPJA concluded its semester-long artistic exchange for an afternoon filled with gratitude reflections, letter writing, and live violin accompaniment. Justin Ouellet, a Master of Music Education student at Boston Latin School, recalled his experience on the final day, noting, "It was an emotional end to our classes since we had so many weeks together." In working with one group for eight weeks, a growing trust gave the men the conviction to find power in their vulnerability.

Within the workshop space, distinctions between student and resident, teacher and learner, fade into the background. What remains is the shared essence of the human experience. "We are not here to teach you. We are here to learn together, to share together, to be compassionate together, to be kind together, to be artistic together. This is what we are doing," de Quadros emphasized.



"You made us feel more human again." These were the closing words of one self-described "shy" participant during final reflections. "To be able to come down here weekly always brings a sense of peace; to express ourselves with no type of judgment, and with peers I've built strong relationships with. It was truly a blessing."

Fortunately, BURPJA's story at Suffolk County is far from over. As they have for many years, Professor de Quadros and future cohorts of BURPJA students look forward to returning once again and actualizing the belief that every person has a story worth telling.

AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY

SCSD ASSISTS RUNNING OF BOSTON MARATHON:



Members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department proudly provided mutual aid alongside fellow law enforcement agencies during the 130th running of the Boston Marathon. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Jarrod Trovato, the Department deployed six teams of officers — three from the Suffolk County Jail and three from the Suffolk County House of Correction — including two K-9 teams, to support public safety efforts along the race route. The Department was also proud to celebrate Jail Officer Jessica Egan, who participated in the Marathon in support of the Michael Burke Foundation and was welcomed at the finish by a fellow SCSD member, highlighting both the Department's commitment to service and the spirit of camaraderie that defines its staff.





SCSD JOINS MOTHERS WALK FOR PEACE:

On In honor of Mother's Day and in support of families impacted by violence, SCSD proudly participated in the 30th Annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace, hosted by the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. The milestone 5K brought together approximately 5,000 participants who walked through the streets of Dorchester in a powerful show of remembrance, healing, and community solidarity, culminating in a first-ever post-walk concert at Town Field. Among correctional officers and administrative staff, SpecialSheriff Mark Lawhorne paid a special visit, arriving before dawn to help staff set up.

The Department was honored to stand alongside survivors, advocates, and community members in support of those navigating trauma and grief, and extends its gratitude to the Peace Institute for its longstanding partnership and to all mothers throughout Suffolk County.

UMASS BOSTON TOURS JAIL:



On April 16, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department was pleased to welcome back Gerald "Gerry" Walsh, former Deputy Superintendent of the Suffolk County House of Correction and current Associate Lecturer at UMass Boston, for a visit to the Suffolk County Jail alongside his students. A familiar face to many across the Department, Walsh's return to our facilities was a welcomed reunion and an opportunity to reconnect with a longtime member of the SCSD family. Led by officers from the External Affairs Division, students received an inside look at the daily operations of the Suffolk County Jail and engaged in meaningful discussions with residents in the care and custody of our correction officers, offering a firsthand perspective on corrections and the criminal legal system.

If you have a group interested in visiting the Suffolk County House of Correction or the Suffolk County Jail for educational purposes, visit our website to learn how to schedule a tour: **scsdma.org/divisions/jail-tours/.**

AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY

SCSD AIDS IN MEMORIAL DAY FLAG PLANTING:



To remember the lives lost of those who have served in the armed forces, External Affairs, correctional officers, and members of our Community Works Program (CWP) gathered at Mount Hope Cemetery in Mattapan to plant flags for veterans. Between May 18 and May 23, in the days leading up to Memorial Day, SCSD volunteers gathered under a brooding Summer sun to pay homage to our nation's veterans. On Saturday, May 23, a memorial ceremony was held at the Veterans monument, against a moving backdrop of flags assembled by the community.



With heavy hearts, the Department extends its immense gratitude to those who have served and those who have lost loved ones in battle. We remember our veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice and stand with the families who continue to carry their legacy forward.



SCSD JOINS MOTHERS' DAY SOCK HOP:

On May 20, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department joined the Rossetti-Cowan Senior Center for its monthly Mother's Day Sock Hop, celebrating the birthdays of their members. Approximately eighty seniors enjoyed an afternoon of music, dancing, laughter, and food, while our staff assisted with serving meals and supporting the event. Through continued participation in community events, the Department remains committed to building meaningful connections within Suffolk County's senior community. As Susan Martelli, Administrative Clerk of the Rossetti-Cowan Senior Center, shared, "I would like to give a special shout out to the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department for helping us at all our monthly events here at the Revere Senior Center and at St. Anthony's Church."



SCSD LENDS SUPPORT TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS OF MASSACHUSETTS:



On June 5, members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard and External Affairs Officers participated in the Opening Ceremony of the Special Olympics Massachusetts Summer Games at Boston University's Nickerson Field. Alongside law enforcement officials, thousands of athletes, coaches, volunteers, and supporters, SCSD helped to welcome participants by forming a celebratory tunnel filled with high-fives, cheers, and encouragement. The ceremony marked the beginning of a week of competition and celebrated the dedication, perseverance, and achievements of athletes from across the Commonwealth.



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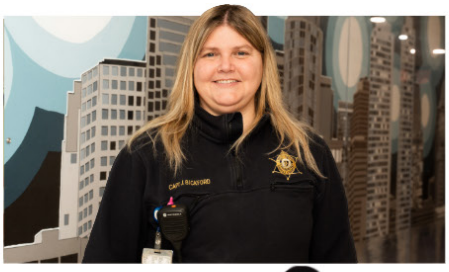
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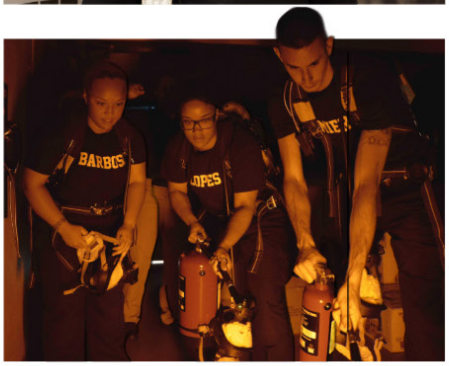
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