



NEO NEWS

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

HIRING AND RECRUITING DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

We are
HIRING

During what seems to be a never-ending pandemic, we have had an abnormally difficult time hiring and retaining qualified staff – hiring struggles are not just a NEOCAP problem, but a nationwide issue. This hiring crisis was summed up best on June 1, 2021, CNN Business Journal article – “America’s worker shortage is real and getting worse by the day.” Our staff shortage has impacted no one more than security/operational staff. Resident Supervisors (RS) and Shift Supervisors (SS) have been asked to maintain our standards and high level of performance with less help. Each RS and SS corps member has been called upon to make personal sacrifices to sustain our 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year operation.

Over the past 18 months, we have had numerous interview appointment “NO SHOWS” and new hires quitting before the first day of work. I can promise you that we will not get discouraged and will continue our daily efforts to recruit and hire qualified individuals to join our team.

We will also continue our efforts to provide a competitive wage and health care package second to none.

On behalf of the Facility Governing Board and the Management Team, we thank you for your commitment to the mission and residents of NEOCAP.

Sincerely,

Jake E. Jones, Sr.



Jake E. Jones, Sr.
Executive Director

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welcome
SPRING

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR PROMOTION



Mike Stassinis
Lead Community Specialist

MIKE STASSINIS - LEAD COMMUNITY SPECIALIST

After more than three years working as a Community Specialist serving the needs of the Portage County Court of Common Pleas, Mike Stassinis has accepted a new challenge within our Intake Department. On February 18, 2022, Mike was promoted to Lead Community Specialist. As the Lead Community Specialist Mike will be responsible for managing the Portage and Trumbull County caseloads, auditing case files, and providing support to the intake staff. We have every confidence that Mike will approach this new responsibility with the same dedication and professionalism that he has always had.



Kristy Bradley
Shift Supervisor

KRISTY BRADLEY - SHIFT SUPERVISOR

Kristy Bradley has been promoted to Shift Supervisor on afternoon turn. Kristy joined the NEOCAP team on February 8, 2021, with a degree in Criminal Justice and 13 years of experience in Loss Prevention and Security. Once hired, Kristy quickly demonstrated that she had the ability to handle stressful situations and that she was capable of openly communicating with her supervisors. As a result, she was reassigned to the Female Facility where she accepted new challenges, such as learning to pass medications, handling property, and modeling effective interactions with residents with a positive attitude. Since returning to the Male Facility on December 6, 2021, Kristy continues to prove that she has the leadership skills necessary to be an effective Shift Supervisor.

Please take time to congratulate Kristy on her promotion!

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

VICTORIA CORNER JOINS THE NEOCAP TEAM

Victoria joined the NEOCAP team as a Case Manager for the Male Facility on January 18, 2022. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Bluefield College, Bluefield, VA in December of 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. Most recently, Victoria has been working at the Mahoning County Career and Technical Center in the classroom setting teaching classes about the history and current nature of the Criminal Justice System as well as working with students with behavioral issues.



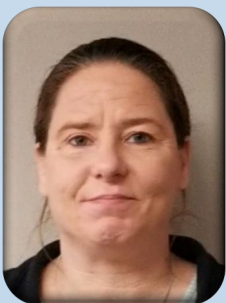
Victoria Corner
Case Manager

WELCOME KANDY TAYLOR

On March 14, 2022, Kandy joined the team as a Treatment Specialist at the Male Facility. She is a 2005 Kaplan University graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. Kandy also completed work toward a master's degree in the field of Science and Psychology at Capella University. In March of 2021, she obtained her CDCA and she plans to pursue her LCDC III here at NEOCAP.

Over the past ten years, Kandy has worked for several behavioral health care agencies in Northeast Ohio and Western PA. While working at these various agencies, she has been responsible for duties that included providing residential supervision, case management, and facilitating therapeutic groups to troubled youth and their families and chemically dependent and mentally ill adult clients.

We are excited that Kandy has chosen to bring her education, knowledge, and work experience to NEOCAP.



Kandy Taylor
Treatment Specialist

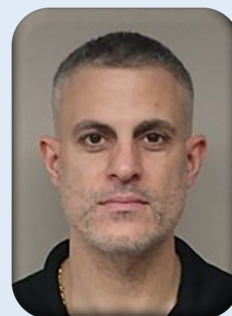
SUBSTANCE USE CURRICULUM UPDATE—WELCOME MODIFICATIONS!

by: Ben DeGennaro, CQI Administrator

With 95% of our resident population suffering from substance use and abuse issues, a quality substance use and abuse curriculum is necessary. The recent modifications the University of Cincinnati (UC) made to its Cognitive Behavioral Interventions – Substance Use for Adults curriculum should serve our residents well.

Clinical Director Kristina Henik and I received training from UC on the curriculum modifications and then worked to ensure all of our Treatment Specialists received their training by the end of February 2022. Program Specialist Samantha Works and Treatment Specialist Kristin Helle are currently piloting the revised curriculum and we anticipate fully implementing it over the next several weeks. The modifications challenge the substance-abusing offender to examine beliefs, attitudes, and values that drive problem behaviors. Below is a summary of the changes:

- Motivational Engagement is the focus throughout the first 10 sessions and was enhanced to include an examination of any problem behavior, not solely substance use.
- A new Module was added ‘Setting the Stage for Success’ that supports the development of a solid aftercare plan.
- All Modules were enhanced to include skills practice in every lesson, thus providing needed reinforcement of the material in role-play practice for a full Cognitive Behavioral experience.



Ben DeGennaro
CQI Administrator

ADVANCED FIRST AID TRAINING

We are pleased to announce that on February 16, 2022, Medical Compliance Manager Brenda Waters was certified by the American Red Cross in Adult and Pediatric Advanced First Aid. In addition to First Aid, CPR and AED, this intensive training curriculum also certified Ms. Waters to be a trainer in the administration of Naloxone, Epinephrine, Rescue Inhalers, and the application of Tactical Medical Tourniquets. Despite the difficulty of this training program, Ms. Waters pursued this specialized certification so that she could continue to provide quality First Aid Training to the staff of NEOCAP.



Brenda Waters
Compliance Manager



Jake Jones
Executive Director

DIRECTOR JONES SERVES AS LUNCHEON SPEAKER

Executive Director Jake Jones served as the guest speaker at the Kiwanis Club luncheon meeting held at the Buena Vista Café on March 31, 2022. After a 25 minute presentation on NEOCAP’s mission, goals and treatment programming, Mr. Jones conducted a question and answer period.

“The members in attendance seemed very interested in hearing about the program and they asked several insightful questions” according to Mr. Jones.

THE KIWANIS MISSION

Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world one child and one community at a time.



Kristina Henik
Clinical Director

NEOCAP *Aspire(s)*® TO MEET EDUCATION NEEDS OF RESIDENTS

BY: *KRISTINA HENIK, CLINICAL DIRECTOR*

Several years ago, NEOCAP partnered with the Trumbull County Career and Technical Center to provide Adult Education (GED) classes to the NEOCAP residents in Warren.

Aspire is a state funded adult education program that provides an opportunity for adult learners to pursue high school equivalency education (GED) and higher education. Our partnership with Aspire has provided uninterrupted GED classes to the male residents for over 10 years and since 2012, 139 residents earned their GED while in residency.

The current Director of the Aspire program, Beth Trace, has worked closely with NEOCAP during the last 10 years to navigate the ever changing landscape of the GED testing and she ensured that NEOCAP had the teachers needed to provide the classroom instruction on site. Beth announced recently that she is retiring at the end of June 2022. She recently visited NEOCAP to introduce the new Director, Teri Lacy, to our program. We thank Beth for her commitment to our goal of providing residents an opportunity to pursue formal education. We look forward to working with Teri to continue our successful partnership with the local Aspire program.



(left) Beth Trace and (right) Teri Lacy



Rob Blower
Business Director

NEW PHONE SYSTEM COMING TO THE MALE FACILITY IN WARREN

BY: *ROB BLOWER, BUSINESS DIRECTOR*

In mid-March the Warren location transitioned to a new phone system. The adage “they don’t make things like they used to” definitely applies to this update as the current system is 22 years old! To put that into perspective, there was no such thing as an Android smart phone when this system was installed. When we needed to replace a phone, I would search eBay hoping to find a 10-year-old used model for sale.

The new phone system is a cloud-based VoIP system and will include all the normal features we are accustomed to, plus the added features of migrating the Ops mobile phone as an internal phone and a video conference feature for internal use. Included in the upgrade will be integrated video phones for the staff posts, eliminating the current video doorbell system which is consistently spotty. All staff will be trained on using this system.



FEMALE FACILITY

We have experienced a significant decrease in female offenders placed in the program. The decline in placements can be traced to the impact that COVID-19 has had on all components of the Criminal Justice System.



Before the pandemic, our 60-bed Female Facility's (two dorms of 30 beds each) daily capacity percentage was 100% with a two to a three-month waiting list. Today, our daily capacity is around 30 to 32 residents, and no waiting list. With this low capacity, we have decided to temporally stop placing residents in Dorm A and put all residents in Dorm B.

Although we have had a decrease in placements, this has not affected each resident's high level of treatment services. We will continue to work toward returning to pre-pandemic capacity.

MALE FACILITY

Before COVID-19, our 125 beds (Unit 2's 95 beds & Unit 1's 30 beds) were full with a one to two-month waiting list. During the early stages of the pandemic, we lowered our bed capacity from 125 to 95 beds for social distancing, developing quarantine space, and preventing the spread of the virus. On December 13, 2021, we returned our Male Facility to full capacity.

Returning to total capacity, we repurposed Unit 1 to serve as our new 30-day orientation dorm. New residents entering NEOCAP are assigned to Unit 1 to complete their program's Orientation Phase (Level 1). Unit 1's Treatment Team initiates the treatment process. This process includes assisting the residents in developing their case plan, removing barriers to treatment (i.e., medical issues), and engaging them in activities designed to enhance motivation to participate in the treatment process and cognitive-behavioral curriculum.



According to Clinical Director Kristina Henik, "This adjustment is a much needed therapeutic response to addressing barriers residents present on intake." Residents complete the orientation phase programming by demonstrating the ability to be compliant with the basic expectations of the program. Once this is accomplished, they are transitioned to Unit 2, where they participate in other programming designed to address the criminogenic needs identified in their case plans.

JEIGH MAYNARD



Jeigh Maynard

On February 28, 2022, Female Facility Program Administrator Jeigh Maynard was reassigned from her duties at the Female Facility to the Intake Department at the Male Facility. In her new role, Jeigh spends most of her time in the field interviewing offenders for placement and collaborating with court and probation personnel in the NEOCAP region to assist in bringing both facilities back to pre-pandemic utilization.

Jeigh's versatility and willingness to step-up and meet the new challenge is greatly appreciated.



Dr. Edward Latessa

Tribute

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO EDWARD J. LATESSA

BY: JAKE JONES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I heard that Edward Latessa, Ph.D. age 67, passed away on January 11, 2022 of pancreatic cancer, I first thought, "the world has lost a great man." You would be hard-pressed to find anyone to disagree that Dr. Latessa has been one of the top national and international leaders in corrections over the past four decades.

On February 10, 1997, my first day of employment with NEOCAP, I was extremely fortunate to attend a workshop where Dr. Latessa presented. NEOCAP and all of Ohio's community corrections residential facilities were very fortunate to have Dr. Latessa's expertise during the 1980s and 1990s, during the peak of community-based correctional facilities' development. One of his research colleagues at the University of Cincinnati Correctional Institute made a statement in an article congratulating Dr. Latessa on his retirement.

"Today, there are few correctional systems in this country that have not felt the direct engagement of Ed. As a result, he has been referred to as a pioneer, a founder, and a force to be reckoned with."

Dr. Latessa made his home in Cincinnati, Ohio. He served on the faculty of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati and was the Director of the University of Cincinnati Correctional Institute. Latessa was born and raised in Youngstown; thus, he would make the 4 hour, 280 mile trip across the state to train NEOCAP staff and other criminal justice stakeholders. After the training, he would travel 17 miles and spend time with family in Youngstown. Dr. Latessa often joked that "growing up in Youngstown made him appreciate how he could have easily ended up on the other side of the criminal justice system." Dr. Latessa will be greatly missed.

ORAS CERTIFICATION CLASS

Deputy Director, Kim Massary conducted a two-day ORAS certification class for Community Corrections Professionals. Participants included staff from the Lake County Adult Probation Department, the Portage County Adult Probation Department, and NEOCAP staff. The training was held on March 3rd and March 4th at the Trumbull Metropolitan Housing Authority.



Kim Massary, Deputy Director

UPCOMING EVENT - MAY 2022 MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

The theme for this year is "back to basics." The toolkit provided by Mental Health America provides free, practical resources to introduce mental health topics like recognizing warning signs, knowing the factors that can lead to mental health conditions, maintaining mental wellness, and seeking help for mental health.

The Mental Health planning committee designed the t-shirt (left) and is planning events throughout the month of May that will focus on this theme.



REGIONAL COURTS RECEIVE RECOGNITION

GEAUGA DRUG COURT — BY: *KIM MASSARY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR*

We would like to congratulate Judge Paschke and the Geauga County New Leaf Drug Court Program treatment team for being named one of just ten national mentor treatment courts by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and the U.S. Department of Justice.

As part of the Mentor court network, the New Leaf Program will help develop, identify, and test national best practices and provide technical assistance to jurisdictions interested in implementing an adult drug treatment court, including hosting site visits by team members from other jurisdictions from around the country. Judge Paschke states “We are very happy for the opportunity to help courts in other jurisdiction establish and/or improve their programs.”

NEOCAP Community Specialist Jan Amstutz, who is a member of the Geauga County New Leaf Program treatment team, says “it is gratifying to represent NEOCAP and work with Judge Paschke and other community partners in the New Leaf Program. For me, the national recognition of the New Leaf Program acknowledges the team’s commitment to integrity and professionalism by utilizing evidence-based practices to address offender’s needs, reduce recidivism and enhance public safety.” We are very fortunate to be in partnership with such an outstanding staff and program.



Program Coordinator, Maureen Maruna (left)
Judge Carolyn Paschke (center)
Probation Officer, Greg Potts (right)

Congratulations

JUDGE MARIANNE SEZON APPOINTED TO SERVE ON THE COMMISSION ON SPECIALIZED DOCKETS—BY: *KIM MASSARY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR*

We would also like to congratulate Judge Sezon for being appointed by the Supreme Court of Ohio to serve as a member of the Commission of Specialized Dockets. Judge Sezon was nominated by the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association as the Mental Health Court Judge member, for a three-year term, beginning January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024. The Commission on Specialized Dockets is a multidisciplinary group, made up of representatives from across the State of Ohio, meeting to discuss and address issues impacting specialized docket courts. Judge Sezon states, “I am honored to be appointed and look forward to working with the Supreme Court of Ohio’s Specialized Docket Section and other members of the Commission related to issues concerning specialized dockets in Ohio Courts.” We wish Judge Sezon the best as she takes on this important assignment.



Judge Marianne Sezon
Ashtabula County
Court of Common Pleas

HIRING

UPCOMING AUDITS

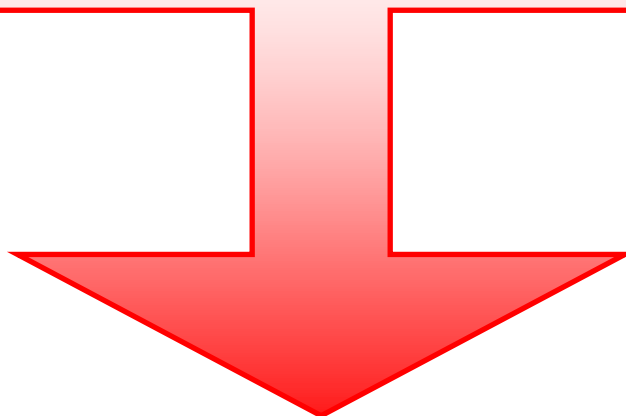
Bureau of Community Sanction
Program "Site Visit"
9am - Wednesday, May 18, 2022

PREA AUDIT
July 13 and 14, 2022

Newsletter Committee

Editor: Jake Jones
Writers: Jake Jones
Kim Massary
Rob Blower
Kristina Henik
Jennifer Melvin
Proofreaders: Natalie Carr
Kristina Henik
Jennifer Melvin
Layout: Cheryl Moran

Attention: WE NEED YOUR HELP!



HIRING AND RECRUITING OF NEW STAFF

Marketing is very important when trying to recruit and hire the most qualified people for the job. That is why we are asking you to participate in our flyer advertisement contest.

INSTRUCTIONS: Develop an advertisement flyer for the hiring of Resident Supervisors here at NEOCAP. Be sure to discuss the character, attributes, and personality traits needed to be a successful Resident Supervisor as well as the personal and financial benefits gained from employment here at NEOCAP. BE CREATIVE!!!

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

All NEOCAP staff are eligible to participate.

WHEN IS FLYER DUE?

The flyer must be turned in to Cheryl Moran no later than 4:00 PM on FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2022.