



# NEO NEWS



**NEOCAP staff partnered with Someplace Safe, a local domestic violence shelter, and the Warren Family Mission to collect toys and clothing for holiday gift giving.**

**The Management Team would like to wish all the best to you and yours this holiday season.**



**Jake E. Jones, Sr.  
Executive Director**



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*Happy Holidays*

## WELCOME ABOARD



Jessica Dell, Case Manager

On October 4, 2022, former employee **Jessica Dell**, returned to NEOCAP as a Case Manager at the Male Facility. Jessica originally came to work at NEOCAP in 2015 as a Resident Supervisor and moved into a Case Management role the same year after graduating from Kent State University with a bachelor's degree in criminology. In 2018 Jessica made the decision to explore other employment opportunities that included working at Portage County Adult Probation Department and as a counselor at Pinnacle Treatment Program. We are excited to have Jessica rejoining our team.



Nicole Baker, Treatment Specialist

**Nicole Baker** joined the NEOCAP team on October 11, 2022 as a Treatment Specialist at the Female Facility. Nicole completed her bachelor's degree in 2013 majoring in Psychology from the University of Phoenix. For five years she worked with at-risk youth providing life skills groups and case management services. She is certified in Cognitive behavioral Therapy and has been trained in trauma informed care. Nicole is excited to join our team and is looking forward to teaching our residents the skills they need to be successful.



Christian Wormley, IT Specialist

**Christian Wormley** accepted the position of IT Specialist and joined the team on October 3, 2022. Christian spent 3 years in the Army working in the technology field, was a field engineer for an Akron based technology company, and worked as an independent contractor performing a variety of help desk and IT special projects for many different companies.



Eric Ewertz, Maintenance Coordinator

**Eric Ewertz** joined the team as Maintenance Coordinator on September 6, 2022. Eric has extensive training in the maintenance field and was an inspector for the state of Florida before he moved to Ohio last year.

*Please take the time to welcome them if you have not already done so!*

## Recent Promotions - Moving on Up!



Yvette Martin — "Go To"

**Yvette Martin** was promoted on September 8, 2022 to the "Go To" position on afternoon turn at the Female Facility. Yvette demonstrated total understanding of the importance of following the facility's "play book." She is committed to doing what is in the best interest of the residents. We are certain that she will give this new challenge her total commitment and effort.

*Congratulations*



Abigail Wollom — "Go To"

**Abigail Wollom** was promoted on September 8, 2022 to the "Go To" position on afternoon turn at the Female Facility. Abigail joined the NEOCAP team on April 11, 2022 working as a Resident Supervisor at the Male Facility and on May 2, 2022 was re-assigned to the Female Facility. Over the several months that she has been at the Female Facility, she has assimilated onto the team and she has demonstrated a genuine concern for the residents and the program.



# JUDGE W. WYATT MCKAY, JUDICIAL ADVISORY BOARD (JAB) RETIRES

BY: JAKE E. JONES, SR.

A long and successful judicial career nears its completion. Judge W. Wyatt McKay of the Trumbull County Court of Common Pleas will be retiring at the end of December 2022. In a recent email exchange with Judge McKay (as seen below), he explained his decision to retire and shared some very heartfelt thoughts on his career, his involvement with NEOCAP, and future plans.

## What led to retirement?

The Ohio Constitution aged me out.

## How long have you served on the Bench?

36 years.

## How would you describe your involvement or experience with NEOCAP?

I was involved with the initial founding of the organization and along with the other judges from our 5 counties interviewed and hired our director, secured funding from Ohio with local match and was Chair of the local governing board from its inception. From my point of view it is the one addition to a judge's continuum of sanctions that was not only necessary, but it is instrumental in the rehabilitation of local offenders. They needed the structure and assistance of this facility to stand a chance to get off drugs, career and job training, general education, counseling, and interactions with our society and the chance to not recidivate. Additionally, this is accomplished without the stigma of prison. Unfortunately, before NEOCAP, the only option for judges to consider when defendants failed local community control sanctions, was a prison sentence. This has become the last chance given to many from our judiciary to have the last chance to succeed. How wonderful for them and for our judiciary. I have been proud to be associated with this wonderful program that was only made possible through an accomplished, well trained, involved and dedicated staff.

## Concluding comments:

I will conclude with the memorable words of Robert Burns, the national poet of Scotland, in his epic poem, "To a louse." It was about a huge bug that climbed on the back of a female patron in church. She was decked out in her finest Sunday regalia and thought that the church audience was admiring her outfit due to the murmurs by the parishioners. The reality was that they were laughing at the bug (the louse) on her




Left to Right: Trumbull County Judges:  
W. Wyatt McKay, Ronald J. Rice, Peter J. Kontos,  
Andrew D. Logan, and  
NEOCAP Executive Director Jake Jones

dedication to a population that all too often is overlooked by many, but not all. Keep up the good work!! I loved the time I spent with you and congratulate you on your professionalism and competence.

back. To which, Rabbie Burns penned these unforgettable words: "Oh wad some power the gift to give us, to see ourselves as others see us." While this is laudable, it is terribly difficult to accomplish under most circumstances. Therefore, I will tell NEOCAP what I think. I believe that a whole lot of people see NEOCAP and their staff as being extremely helpful to our community. You are to be admired and complimented for your commitment and

# HAPPY Retirement



Honorable W. Wyatt McKay  
Trumbull County  
Court of Common Pleas

## How do you want to be remembered?


*Just as one judge among many others that cared.*

## What will you miss?

*The comradery of everyone, staff, judges, commissioners, and state personnel that made this project possible. (good lunches too)*

## What are your future plans?

*For right now, I plan to become a visiting judge and I also plan to mediate cases, but that could change. I am looking forward to the next challenges in my career and I can assure you that I will tackle them with the same diligence and vigor as I have done in the past.*



Celebrating  
10 years



# Milestones

## DENISE SMITH—10TH ANNIVERSARY



Denise Smith  
Shift Supervisor

Denise joined the NEOCAP team as a Resident Supervisor on February 13, 2012. Prior to joining the team, she was employed at the Warren Alternate Sentencing Program (WASP) as a Security Technician. Denise made the jump from working at WASP, a driver intervention program that averaged three DUI offenders daily, to NEOCAP that housed 130 felony offenders. Denise will tell you that the major reasons she accepted the job at NEOCAP was for job security and stability. Her desire to have security and stability is evident by her “old school” work ethic. Over the years, she has taken on increasing responsibilities such

as becoming a shift supervisor and supervising the resident kitchen crew. Denise has filled in as the shift supervisor at the female facility, which required late night travel from Warren to Painesville and working through the wee hours of the night. To know Denise is to know that she has “never met a stranger.” Denise is very comfortable meeting and getting to know anyone. With the personality of a movie star, she takes time and pride in getting to personally know her team members. Congratulations to Denise for this milestone accomplishment.

## 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY! 2002 TO 2022



Robert Blower  
March 20, 2002

Rob joined the NEOCAP team on March 2, 2002 as a Data Specialist. Over the past two decades, Rob’s level of duties, responsibilities, and authority have grown considerably. Rob is highly regarded for fiscal management intelligence. Rob is often called upon to assist other correctional facilities who are experiencing difficulties in the areas of budgeting, intelligents, grant manuals, and other fiscal duties and responsibilities. As the Business Director, Rob serves on the agency’s Executive Management Team.



Lisa Rowe  
October 15, 2002

Lisa was hired as a Resident Supervisor on October 15, 2002. Lisa has worked in various capacities since joining the team before settling in as the Operations Director. Lisa spent years working in both Operations and Treatment which makes her one of the most diverse and qualified Operation Directors in the Ohio Community Based Correctional System. As the Operations Director, Lisa serves on the Management Team.

Celebrating  
20 years



Lisa Rowe and Rob Blower  
showcasing their  
20th Anniversary NEOCAP Briefcases



# FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

## MASSARY AND CARR JOIN THE LCDCIII CLUB — BY: BEN DEGENNARO

On December 9, 2022, Kimberly Massary and Natalie Carr's determination, hard work and preparation paid off as they passed the state examination to become Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDCIII) in the State of Ohio. They both worked tirelessly to meet the qualifications necessary to be eligible to take the examination. To put this in perspective, in order to qualify for Ohio licensure, applicants must have a bachelor's degree in a behavioral science, 2,000 clock-hours of work experience, including 220 clock-hours in the "twelve core functions," and 180 hours of chemical dependency specific education in nine specific content areas. This is no small feat and Kimberly and Natalie rose to the occasion!

Kimberly and Natalie are now included in the 13 staff members with licensure. In addition, 8 staff members have started the process to become licensed. Having licensed staff members ensures that NEOCAP is providing quality chemical dependency treatment to offenders, and assists in meeting standards set forth by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) and Bureau of Community Sanctions (BCS). In closing, hats off to Kimberly and Natalie. Well Done!



Ben DeGennaro  
CQI Administrator

**Congrats!**  
**Bravo! Well Done!**

## AMERICAN CORRECTIONS ASSOCIATION (ACA) - MONITORING VISIT

On December 14, 2022, ACA auditor John Sargent visited NEOCAP's male and female facilities for the purpose of conducting a Standards Compliance Monitoring Visit. Mr. Sargent was one of two auditors that conducted the September 15-17, 2021 audit that subsequently resulted in the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections retracting the original September 2021 audit findings of 100% compliance, and found the agency was non-compliant on one specific mandatory standard. During the close-out session, Sargent expressed that it is his finding that the agency has made the warranted correction and is in full compliance with the standard in question, "offenders must have unimpeded access to medical care." Sargent also expressed that, "as much as I was impressed with the program last time, I'm more impressed now; because the residents spoke very highly of it and they were all sitting there very actively engaged in their treatment work."

With the successful completion of the Standards Compliance Monitoring Visit, the Agency should be receiving its ACA Renewal Certificate during, or shortly after, the January 2023 ACA Winter Conference.



ACA Auditor John Sargent  
Interviewing a resident  
as part of his Compliance  
Monitoring Visit

## AGENCY ATTORNEY SET TO RETIRE — BY: JAKE E. JONES, SR.

Curtis Ambrosy became the agency's attorney in 2016. Attorney Ambrosy is set to retire from his legal practice at the end of December 2022. He replaced Attorney John Gargano who served as the agency's counsel since its inception in 1997. In 2016, Attorney Ambrosy came to NEOCAP as we were in the midst of negotiating a lease agreement with the Lake County Commissioners to lease their vacant minimum security jail to house our female resident program. It was also at this time, we were developing an agreement with Trumbull County Adult Probation to develop and operate the Trumbull County Day Reporting Center. Attorney Ambrosy "hit the ground running," providing his legal expertise and for the six years he has served NEOCAP well. He will be greatly missed. We wish him a long, happy, healthy retirement! We have started our search for a new attorney.



Curtis J. Ambrosy

**Officially**  
*retired*

# FROM THE BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

## WARREN FACILITY RECEIVES GRANT FOR NEW FLOORING

BY: ROB BLOWER



Rob Blower  
Business Director



The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections awards Capital Improvement grants, on a bi-annual basis, that are separate from our Operating grant and earmarked for specific facility renovation projects. The last major project we completed was replacing our HVAC system. The next major project that NEOCAP was recently awarded is to replace all the flooring (that has not already been replaced) throughout the Warren facility. These areas include common areas, resident dorms, group rooms, offices, closets, kitchen, and all restrooms. We will be going out to bid in the beginning of February and hopefully start the project in April of 2023. We will keep everyone posted when we get closer to installation.

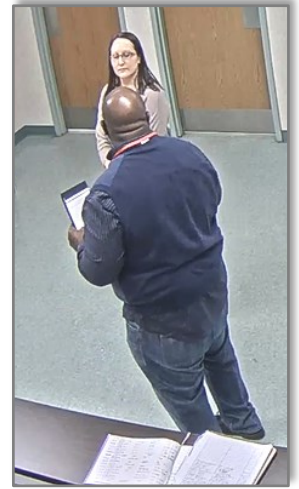
## BCS MAKES UNANNOUNCED VISITS

On December 9, 2022 Program Analyst James Dowdell of the Bureau of Community Sanctions (BCS) a division of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) conducted an unannounced site visit at both NEOCAP locations. Mr. Dowdell arrived at the Warren facility around 10:30 am for the purpose of conducting a building inspection. Dowdell explained that BCS is in the process of making unannounced building inspections throughout the state's Community-Based Residential Correctional facilities.

After a complete and thorough inspection at the male facility, which included cleanliness, floors, ceilings, lights, etc., he traveled to the Female Facility to duplicate the inspection process. Dowdell expressed that he found both facilities to be in good "shape." There are a few areas of concern that the Maintenance Department will need to address. Executive Director Jones expressed that the agency makes every effort to keep the facilities clean and in good repair. According to Jones, "If you stay ready, you don't have to get ready."



Male Facility  
James Dowdell BCS, Lisa Rowe Operations Director and Kim Massary Deputy Director



Female Facility  
Rachel DeFazio, Operations Administrator and James Dowdell BCS

## TRACY HUNT—NEW TRUMBULL COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

Tracy Hunt, who has served as a probation officer with the Trumbull County Adult Probation Department for the past 22 years, has been named Chief Probation Officer of the department. Ms. Hunt will be taking over for longtime chief Keith Evans who is set to retire at the end of December 2022. Hunt graduated from Newton Falls High School where she held the distinguished honor of Valedictorian. Hunt is a 1999 graduate of Baldwin Wallace University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. Before joining Adult Probation, Hunt was employed as a correction officer for the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center. She is presently the President for the Forensic Psychiatric Center of Northwest Ohio Board of Directors. Hunt expressed that she is "interested in utilizing and expanding the skills and training gained over the past twenty-two years to lead the department and contribute to the goals of serving the court and the community."



Tracy Hunt preparing to conduct a mock group during the Thinking For A Change training sponsored by NEOCAP during the month of May 2022.



ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT



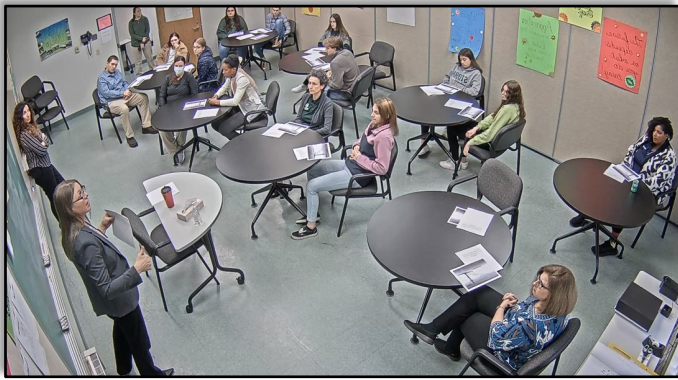
## LAKE ERIE COLLEGE CLASS VISIT TO THE FEMALE FACILITY

BY: KRISTINA HENIK

On November 1, 2022, NEOCAP hosted two (2) faculty members and 11 students from Lake Erie College at our Painesville location where the group spent time with Female Facility Director Jennifer Melvin and Clinical Director Kristina Henik learning about the NEOCAP mission and day to day application of the CBT modality of treatment.

The students are currently enrolled in an Honors course at Lake Erie College, learning about the Opioid Epidemic. The course includes three (3) components: biology, criminal justice and literary and affords the students an opportunity to explore the overwhelming impact of the Opioid Epidemic on society as a whole.

Ms. Jeanna Purses, the professor who teaches the literary portion of the course, became familiar with NEOCAP when she worked with Aspire and taught GED classes in the NEOCAP female facility several years ago. Ms. Purses reached out and requested a tour with her class as she remembered the 'professional staff and structured, safe treatment environment' NEOCAP provided when she was frequently working in the facility with the residents.



and 'happy' to do the job they are doing. Thus, the students were inspired to believe that one can pursue a career that one is passionate about and be happy doing the work.



*Kristina Henik (right) Clinical Director, explains various operational procedures to college students while touring the facility.*

After time spent learning about the program, asking questions and touring the facility the students offered thoughts about their exposure to NEOCAP. Students mentioned their surprise that staff members did not carry weapons and admiration for the staff members as they seemed 'passionate' about their work

Be  
INSPIRED

## AGENCY UNDERGOES OMHAS RENEWAL AUDIT

On November 17, 2022, the agency underwent its Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) 3-year certification renewal audit. OMHAS representatives Cheryl Casto and Abraham Rubinelle's auditing regiment included reviewing agency case files, administrative records, and a facility walk-through. Except for a few minor recommended changes and adjustments, the audit went well. On December 14, 2022 the Agency received its 3-year Residential Substance Use Disorder Services Certification Certificate.



Abraham Rubinelle, Kristina Henik, Cheryl Castro

MENTAL HEALTH &  
ADDITION SERVICES  
**Ohio**







Warren Facility Staff Enjoying the Holiday Luncheon



**2022 Holiday Committee Members:**

Eric Anderson, Nicole Baker, Tim Bongiorno, Ben DeGennaro, Kristina Henik, Jean Lynch, Kim Massary, Jennifer Melvin, Cheryl Moran, Samantha Neiheisel, Alyssia Sheid, Brenda Waters, Christina Xenakis



Staff from both facilities enjoyed great food, fun and fellowship at the December holiday luncheons.

**2023**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**Newsletter Committee**

Editor: Jake Jones  
 Writers: Jake Jones  
 Kim Massary  
 Rob Blower  
 Kristina Henik  
 Ben DeGennaro  
 Proofreaders: Natalie Carr  
 Kristina Henik  
 Kim Massary  
 Samantha Neiheisel  
 Layout: Cheryl Moran



Pin the Snowball Contest Winners  
Garret Vaught (left) & Eric Ewertz (right)



Christmas Ornament Contest Winners  
Brenda Waters (left) & Jean Lynch (right)



Raffle Basket Winners  
Kim Massary (left) & Jean Lynch (right)



Jeopardy Winners  
Kristen Helle (left) & Jennifer Melvin (Right)



Christmas Tree Tearing Contest Winners  
Nicole Baker (left) & Samantha Neiheisel



Candy Guessing Contest Winners  
Nicole Baker (left), & Eric Anderson (right)



Ugly Christmas Contest Winners  
Nicole Baker (top left), & Cheryl Moran (top right)  
Male Facility Group (bottom)



Christmas Tree Decorating Team Contest Winners  
Christina Xenakis (left photo, right side)  
Heather Kovac (right photo, right side)



Female Facility Staff Enjoying the Holiday Luncheon