NEOcap turned 20 years old this year. Since accepting our first residents into the facility in October of 1997, we have undergone some significant changes and growth during our first 20 years.

As one of the first people hired by Executive Director Jim Corfman, I can remember the anxiety and excitement that I felt when the first residents arrived at the facility on October 8, 1997.

The opening of the facility was very special to me because as a boy who grew up less than two miles from this facility, it represented an opportunity to fulfill a personal goal of helping those in need of treatment and making a difference in my community.

Hired as the Program Director, I had the great fortune of teaming up with Corfman and Deputy Director Tony Noday to lead a team of 30 employees down the road of residential community based corrections with all its challenges, excitement, and growth potential.

With our opening, NEOcap had become the eleventh (11th) Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF) in the state of Ohio; we now have eighteen CBCFs covering Ohio’s 88 counties. The initial 60 bed male only facility in 1997 was expanded in the summer of 2000 when we added a 30 bed female addition onto the west side of the facility, while at the same time expanding the male living area to be able to accommodate 100 male offenders.

I could not have imagined that today we would be operating two separate facilities, one hour apart from each other. Indeed, our Warren Ohio 125-bed male facility, sits 48.6 miles away from our new Painesville Township 60-bed female facility.

From day one it has been our mission to meet the needs of our courts, offenders, and communities. Expanding our bed capacity to serve more offenders is just one of the ways we have strived to embrace the mission.

Obtaining a federal RSAT Grant in 2002 to start the Dual Diagnosed program to address the chemically dependent, mentally ill offenders of the NEOcap region; assisting Trumbull County Court of Common Pleas in 2000 to develop the first Drug Court in the NEOcap region; and in 2016 developing the first and only Day Reporting Center in the NEOcap region, are just a few other ways NEOcap has been the leader in providing evidence based treatment to the criminal offenders of Northeast Ohio for the past twenty years.

With the 2014 retirement of Jim Corfman and the 2011 retirement of Tony Noday, the torch was passed to me and others to continue to build and grow the agency into the future.

I am one of three current staff, the others being Kim Massary and Gary Davis, that can say that they had the privilege of enjoying the growth and excitement of NEOcap’s first twenty years of operation. I can also say without reservation “time flies when you are having fun!”

This edition of the NEO NEWS is dedicated to our 20th year anniversary.

Sincerely,
Jake E. Jones, Sr.
Staff came together to enjoy pizza, ice cream and cake in celebration of our 20 year milestone.

These three represent the remaining original NEOCAP staff members. The three served as the honorary cake cutters during the November 10, 2017 Anniversary Luncheon Celebration.

It was twenty years ago when Jake, Kim, and Gary were hired and introduced by the Executive Director as follows (source NEOCAP archives):

**Jake Jones** will start on February 10, 1997, as Program Director. Jake is currently with the Trumbull County Probation Department. He holds a Master’s degree in correctional treatment and administration from Youngstown State University. Jake is a Licensed Social Worker (LSW) and a certified Ohio peace officer. He is a limited service faculty member at YSU and is active in the Warren community. Jake is president of the board of directors of a local women’s residential treatment program.

**INTAKE OFFICER**: Kim Carvin recently graduated from Youngstown State University with a B.S. in Criminal Justice. She interned with the Trumbull County Adult Probation Department for two summers, the second without credit. She volunteered to gain as much experience as possible to enter her chosen career.

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**: Gary Davis brings to this position a savvy that can only be gained through experience in community residential corrections. Gary was with Community Corrections Assoc. in Youngstown as a Senior Resident Supervisor before joining our team. Gary has 13 years military experience and graduated from military police school and corrections officer training academy. Gary is currently attending YSU and is near completion of his degree with a criminal justice major.

Congratulations Jake, Kim, and Gary and thanks for your years of dedication and commitment!!!
I cannot think of any better way to celebrate NEOCAP’s 20th Anniversary than traveling with a team of NEOCAP staff to Columbus, Ohio to receive the prestigious Clifford Skeen Award. This award is given out annually to residential and non-residential programs in recognition of commitment and excellence in Community Corrections. The Clifford Skeen Award is given in honor of the late eight-term Ohio Representative, Clifford Skeen, who sponsored the Community Corrections Act passed by the Ohio Legislature in July of 1979. The purpose of this act was to reduce the number of non-dangerous offenders being sent to state prisons.

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) Director Gary Mohr and Chris Galli the Chief of the Bureau of Community Sanctions presented the award to NEOCAP on October 12, 2017 during the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJAAC) Conference Luncheon held at the Columbus Crown Plaza.

We were honored to have Don Emerson the Vice Chair of our Facility Governing Board (FGB) give a great acceptance speech during the ceremony. We were also honored to have Vince Peterson and his wife Evelyn in attendance. This marks NEOCAP’s third time receiving the award, the agency was also the 2004 and 2009 award winner.

Congratulations to You and Staff upon NEOCAP being chosen as the recipient of the Cliff Skeen Award for 2017! All of you, with your hard work, commitment and dedication, brought this distinguished honor and recognition to the program. Your services are greatly appreciated, not only by me and the other board members, but by the community at large, including those who you help turn their lives around on a daily basis.

Sincerely, Judge Richard L. Collins, Jr. – Lake County Common Pleas Court and Judicial Advisory Board Member
Anniversary Milestones
By: Jake E. Jones, Sr.

Angela Obradovich and Khaled Amireh Celebrate 10 Years

Angela joined the NEOCAP team as a Resident Supervisor on November 6, 2007. She is a 2003 Warren G. Harding graduate where she was a member of the National Honor Society. She received her Bachelor’s degree from Ohio University in 2007. While in college, Angela interned with the Athens County Victim’s Assistance program, where she learned firsthand the consequences that citizens suffer at the hands of the criminal offender. During Angela’s initial interview for hiring, she asked the question “is there a large opportunity for advancement?”

Ten years and 4 promotions later, her question has been answered. Over the past ten years she has served in the capacity of Resident Supervisor, Case Manager, Community Treatment Specialist, Treatment Specialist, and she is now the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Administrator.

On January 2, 2007 Khaled was hired as a Resident Monitor. Khaled graduated in 2001 from Liberty High School. He received his Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice from Youngstown State University in 2005. Khaled grew up working in his family owned supermarkets which prepared him for a career of working in a setting where the “customer is always right.” Khaled, just as his co-worker Angela, has received many promotions over his ten years of employment. After being hired in as a Resident Monitor, Khaled’s promotions included Resident Supervisor, Operations Manager, Operation Administrator, and he is currently a Treatment Specialist.

Khaled and Angela have more in common than being members of the 2007 class who have held numerous positions, they are both avid Pittsburgh Steelers fans.

Training Local Law Enforcement Officers
By: Jake E. Jones, Sr.

On October 6, 2017, Vince Peterson, Darryl Rodgers and I were invited to be guest presenters at the annual Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training held at the Trumbull Metropolitan Housing Authority.

CIT training is conducted for law enforcement officers to educate them on effective ways to respond to people experiencing mental health and other crisis.

Law enforcement officers from Warren City Police Department, Trumbull County Sheriff’s Office, Howland Township Police Department, Hubbard Township Police Department, Niles City Police Department, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol were in attendance as Peterson, Rodgers and I presented on the tools and techniques officers could utilize to be more successful at communicating and interacting with the African American male population they are more likely to encounter in their communities.

Kent State University-Ashtabula Facility Tour

Clinical Director Kristina Henik spent the morning of November 10, 2017, walking several members of the Kent State University-Ashtabula Corrections class around the Warren facility and instructing them on NEOCAP’s various treatment curriculums.

After spending the morning at the Warren male facility, the class traveled to the female facility in Painesville for a tour and presentation on female programming.
Clinical Director, Kristina Henik, organized a team of NEOCAP staff to participate in the Fifth Annual Rally for Recovery held on September 9, 2017 at the Eastwood Field in Niles, Ohio. It was a beautiful fall day for the event and our team of 8 staff members, along with some family members, joined together with hundreds of others to celebrate drug free recovery.

We walked one mile around Eastwood Field to show support for those in recovery and in remembrance of those that lost their battle with addiction. In addition to the walk, we enjoyed various competitions, food and music, and were able to meet with local recovery agencies and obtain information on the services they offer which can be of benefit to our residents.

ISP officer Vince Peterson gave a moving speech on how addiction does not have to define you and that there is hope for recovery.

Vince Peterson
Source: Tribune Chronicle

---

By: Natalie Carr

Rally For RECOVERY

One Saturday morning I was at the Eastwood Mall and walked into Chess Is Life founders Jeff Butts and Myles Johnson in the food court teaching and playing chess with children as young as four years old, teens, and adults of all ages.

I quickly became impressed with the enthusiastic fun approach they took in teaching such a serious complex game. Jeff and Myles were teaching more than just chess, they could be heard teaching concepts such as: “think before you make a move,” you can’t take it back once you’ve made it,” “you need to know what your end game is with every move,” or “understand your opponent, predict what they will do so that you know how to react.” Does any of this sound familiar? Yes, the Cognitive Behavioral Principles are woven into Jeff and Myles’ program.

As I watched I thought: We could use these guys at NEOCAP, and I was very excited that they agreed to bring Chess Is Life to the residents as a meaningful leisure time activity. Two Saturdays each month, a group of 8 to 10 residents attend one hour sessions learning about the game of chess and its relationship to living life.

The program has been running for almost three months and each session residents are engaged in Jeff and Myles’ enthusiastic teachings. Oh yeah, the residents learn how to play chess too!

According to Jeff, “it is such an amazing experience working with and being able to teach these young men a LOT more than they thought they were going to get.”

I encourage you to take a trip to the Mall one Saturday morning and watch Chess Is Life being conducted, better yet challenge them to a chess game. They may teach you a lesson or two.

By: Kim Massary

---

Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.

Benjamin Franklin
Taking Time to Sharpen The Saw !!!

From September 25th to 28th 2017, nineteen staff members from the Warren and Painesville facilities came together for four intensive days of training with Executive Director Jake Jones, Clinical Director Kristina Henik, and Deputy Director Kim Massary.

On Day One the nervousness, fright and apprehension were very noticeable on the face of the staff as they entered the training room at the Trumbull Metropolitan Housing Authority. Everyone was well aware that the training was going to be challenging, interactive, thought-provoking, and yes full of group activities and role-playing, “Yuck!”

This intensive training was designed to enhance and sharpen staffs’ skills. Day One focused on “Understanding and disrupting Criminal Logic”; Day Two was dedicated to “Being an Effective Role Model”; Day Three focused on “Using Consequences to Change Behavior”; and Day Four was devoted to “Effectively Using Authority and Conflict Resolution.”

The nervousness and apprehension slowly faded and the room gradually filled with smiles and laughter as staff came to realize that they all struggle with the same issues on the job and that they had more in common than differences.

By the end of the four-day training, many staff could be heard expressing how much better prepared they felt about doing their job, and that they could not wait to return to work and implement their new knowledge and skills.

“I bet you didn’t know”
Staff Hidden Talents and Interests
By: Kristina Henik

“We’re all weird, now go practice”

I am often told that I have good posture; I know I have Mrs. Hubley to thank for that...my first piano teacher. Then, Mrs. Riceborough taught me that without hard work, there is no success and excuses are a useless waste of words. Finally, my ability to listen to a tune and then play it on the piano without sheet music was reinforced by Patrick. My three piano teachers who all held me accountable to do my best and stay focused on the goal were a greater influence on me and I appreciated at the time; thank goodness my mom knew what was good for me.

I began taking piano lessons at the age of six (6) and stopped going to formal lessons when I entered high school and took up percussion. In addition to learning how to read music, play the piano, and sit up straight while keeping my wrists off of the keyboard, I learned that to be successful at something, hard work is required. I also found a great deal of comfort and satisfaction in sitting at the piano and making music with the keys. It still takes me to a place of peace and comfort when I have the opportunity to play.

I wore out our family piano playing songs by Heart, Roxette, ‘Bon Jovi, Guns n’ Roses and Richard Marx in addition to the many untitled songs I wrote. Like many things, I didn’t appreciate what it meant to have a piano in my home until I moved out. To my delight, this past Christmas my husband surprised me with a piano for our home. Music is a great love of mine and I am so very grateful that the rule in our house was that every child had to take piano lessons.

No matter what story I told, her response was the same, “We’re all weird, that doesn’t mean you can’t learn something from them. Now go practice.”
**CQI Spotlight**
By: Angela Obradovich

**Treatment:** During the most recent case file audits, Natalie Carr had zero deficiencies and passed the audit with 100%.

This is the second time she has had a perfect audit since this procedure was implemented, which was no easy feat.

When asked what the secret behind her organization is, Natalie said lists! She keeps running lists of due dates and reminders for several tasks. She also said that coming from a mental health background, if something wasn’t filed it was like it never happened, and that has stuck with her.

**Operations:** Leaky ceiling tiles, broken ice machines, heating/cooling issues, power outages, and hanging that picture in your office are just a few of the many endeavors that the Maintenance Department here at NEOCAP have to contend with. Andrew Sanders and Adam Ramos have been quite the team in handling all of the challenges that come with maintaining the two 24/7 facilities that we operate, and might I say, they are doing a fantastic job of doing so.

Monthly Building Inspections conducted by the CQI department are proof of just how efficient Andrew and Adam are as a team. Issues and deficiencies that have plagued our facility for years have been remedied, and their work towards fixing the cause of our problems, rather than the symptoms, has resulted in lasting solutions to reoccurring problems that we encounter. Please take a moment to recognize Andrew and Adam for their continued hard work and dedication to both of our facilities and for working so hard to ensure we have a safe and comfortable facility to provide treatment to the residents that we serve every day.

**Medical:** Prescription medication audits often turn up a whole slew of errors. In order to address those errors, recent trainings were held. In Painesville, training was conducted in July with the hopes to reduce errors. Even though the ultimate goal would be to have a perfect audit, it was never expected to happen. Yet come to see, the very month after the training, the staff in Painesville received a perfect score on their audit.

They have continued to do an excellent job in the months since.

**Recent Promotion – Preparation Meets Opportunity**
By Jennifer Melvin, Female Facility Director

Erin Mooneesawmy was recently promoted from Resident Supervisor to Case Manager. Other than having the longest last name on staff, Erin brings with her a solid background in employment and education.

Erin’s background includes serving eight years in the U.S. Navy where she worked as a Flight Planning Supervisor and Manager, as well as an Air Traffic Control Instructor before Honorably Discharging in June 2009.

Her education consists of a 2008 degree from Columbia College in General Studies and a Master of Forensic Psychology from Walden University in 2010.

Erin’s employment history includes working as an Eligibility Specialist for the Cuyahoga County Department of Jobs and Family Services, and working as an Emergency Communications Dispatcher for the Escambia County Board of Public Safety in Pensacola, Florida.

Erin has indeed prepared herself to be a case manager and I am confident she will do excellen with this opportunity and be an asset to our treatment team and residents.
Facility Maintenance Updates

We were able to rest comfortably during the recent November rain storms knowing that the newly installed rain and sewage pumps were doing their job. We have more capital improvement projects slated to begin sometime in early 2018, at the Warren facility.

We have been awarded Capital Improvement Funds from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to upgrade the facility’s twenty-year old Access Control Key System and repave the deteriorating parking lot.

The new Access Control System will replace the outdated key system that often cause frustration as the keys frequently malfunction. The new electronic key system will utilize a swipe card system.

French Toast Bake – Quick and Easy Holiday Brunch

By: Cheryl Moran

Ingredients:
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 2 cans (12.4 oz. each) refrigerated cinnamon rolls with icing
- 6 eggs
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans and 1 cup maple syrup (optional)

Directions:
- Heat oven to 375°F. Pour melted butter into ungreased 13x9-inch glass baking dish. Separate both cans of dough into 16 rolls, set icing aside. Cut each roll into 8 pieces. place pieces over butter in dish.
- In medium bowl, beat eggs. Beat in cream, cinnamon and vanilla until well blended; gently pour over roll pieces. Sprinkle with pecans; drizzle with 1 cup syrup.
- Bake 20 to 28 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 15 minutes. Meanwhile, remove covers from icing; microwave on medium (50%) 10 to 15 seconds or until thin enough to drizzle.
- Drizzle icing over top, sprinkle with powdered sugar. If desired, spoon syrup from dish over individual servings. Serve with the additional ½ cup maple syrup.