



The Congratulations Chronicle

Volume 1, Number 1

November 2016

The Massachusetts Probation Service

Autumn Greetings:

Welcome to the first issue of The Congratulations Chronicle, a publication that celebrates the great work of Probation employees.

This quarterly publication was created to highlight the many work-related awards, acknowledgements, and accomplishments of Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) employees across the Commonwealth.

It is no coincidence that Congratulations Chronicle is making its debut a day before the Thanksgiving holiday.

This first issue is a reminder that Commissioner Edward J. Dolan and the administrative office of the Massachusetts Probation Service recognize and appreciate your talent, drive and passion for the work you do. Keep up the good work! Also, please inform us of any Probation employee who is receiving or has received an award or recognition for their Probation-related work.

Thank you and happy reading!

Sincerely,

Coria Holland,
Communications Director
617-624-9319
coria.holland@jud.state.ma.us

Department of Defense Honors Suffolk Superior Chief

The Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) honored Suffolk Superior Court Chief Probation Officer Erie Cabral Contreras with a Patriot Award in recognition of "extraordinary support of employees who serve in the Massachusetts National Guard and Reserve.

Contreras was recommended for the award by Suffolk Superior Probation Officer Salvador Bolanas who is a member of the Army National Guard. ESGR representative John Pelrose presented the award to Contreras.

During the ceremony, First Deputy Commissioner Lydia Todd signed a pledge on behalf of the Massachusetts Probation Service to support employees called to duty.

"The Patriot Award was created by ESGR to publicly recognize individuals who provide outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to their employees, who like the citizen warriors before them, have answered their nation's call to serve," stated ESGR Massachusetts Chairman Earl Bonett.

Bolanas, who recommended Contreras for the award said, "Chief Contreras earned this award due to her never ending support of the military. She understands my commitment to not only serving the Commonwealth of Massachusetts but to the United States Of America. Chief Contreras understands what duty and honor entails. These characteristics are why she was nominated and earned the Patriot Award."

Contreras said of this recognition, "I am deeply honored to receive this award. Probation Officer Bolanas is a very dedicated and conscientious employee. We are all proud of service to the country and to Probation."



Left to right: ESGR representative John Pelrose, Probation Officer Salvador Bolanas, and Suffolk Superior Chief Erie Cabral Contreras.

Commissioner and Middlesex Chief are Recognized by Juvenile Clinic



Commissioner Edward J. Dolan and Middlesex Juvenile Court Judge Jay Blitzman.

Commissioner Edward J. Dolan and Middlesex Juvenile Chief Probation Officer Stephen Allsopp were both recognized by the Adolescent Consultation Services (ACS), the Juvenile Court Clinic for all of Middlesex County at ACS' Annual Fall Event held at the Union Club in Boston on October 27th.

Dolan was honored with the "Outstanding Leadership" award. He was recognized for demonstrating outstanding leadership in his work with court-involved children and families as well as for making an outstanding contribution to the knowledge base that helps serve children more effectively, according to Dr. Leah Kelly, ACS executive director. Previous recipients of this award include Presiding Justice of the Middlesex Juvenile Court Jay D. Blitzman.

"He sets a standard of excellence for everyone who works in our field," Kelly said.

Dolan commenting on his award said, "I am deeply honored to receive this award. Juvenile probation is about delivering the right services at the right point to prevent deeper penetration into the court system."

Allsopp was presented with the "Indispensable Friend" award for his more than 30 years of service to court-involved children and their families.

"Chief Allsopp's extraordinary leadership and dedication to the most vulnerable children in our community has enabled him and those who work with him to change thousands of lives for the better," stated Kelly.

Commenting on his award, Allsopp said, "I am grateful for the recognition of my years of service knowing that I work everyday with an amazing staff who are equally deserving."



Dr. Leah Kelly, ACS executive Director, and Middlesex Juvenile Chief Stephen Allsopp.

Community Service Receives Award

The Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program was presented with the "Community Partner of the Year" Award by the Norfolk Juvenile Court on Monday, November 14th, at Norfolk Juvenile's Dedham site.

"We are absolutely honored to be named "Community Partner of the Year." The Norfolk County Juvenile community service program wouldn't have been possible or successful without the insight and dedication from the justices, probation and community service staff," said Community Service Statewide Supervisor David Skocik.



Clients tending to plants at Elm Banks.

"Community service is most commonly thought of as punitive or a means to comply

with court fees; however, the rewards are much more important. It is our goal, through social modeling and education to provide our participants with the skills needed to be successful. Our participants often gain a sense of pride and accomplishment while contributing or completing meaningful community projects."

Skocik acknowledged Community Service Assistant Court Services Coordinator John Glennon who he said has been instrumental in community service's work with Norfolk County juveniles particularly his efforts in expanding an existing partnership with Elm Bank, the host of the Annual Flower Show in Boston. The Elm Bank project includes an educational component with master gardeners.

"Our juvenile participants are taught everything from planting, growing and picking vegetables as well as pruning flowers and shrubs. The vegetables grown at Elm Bank help to provide fresh produce for food pantries. An estimated 2.5 tons of vegetables have been grown and distributed," Skocik said.

Left to right: David Skocik, Norfolk Assistant Chief Probation Officer Christopher Aylward, Christopher Cannata, John Glennon, Vincent Lorient. In front are Case Specialist Becky Moegle and Probation Officer Kate McDonough.

Barnstable Juvenile Probation Officer is Honored Twice for Saving Life

Barnstable County (Town of Plymouth) Juvenile Probation Officer Julie Hall was honored by the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) with a "Humanitarian Award for Excellence" for saving a five-week-old baby's life this summer. Hall was also recently notified that she is the recipient of a 2016 Trial Court Excellence Award which will be presented on December 6th at the John Adams Courthouse in Boston.

During the NAGE ceremony—attended by US Congressman Joe Kennedy, Attorney General Maura Healey, and State Treasurer Deb Goldberg—she was showered with praise by all three for making a snap decision on that fateful day this past summer. The NAGE event took place in October.

On one hot day in July, Hall decided to make an unannounced visit to a client and discovered the baby boy home alone in a sweltering apartment. She walked up to the door and heard the baby crying. When no one responded to the bell or her knocks on the door, she went to "every window and door" and knocked before she realized no one was home. She also felt the air conditioner to see if it was on and found that it was off.

Hall said she panicked and called 911, the family's social worker and then her boss, Assistant Chief Probation Officer Ann MacDonald. The police gained entry into the apartment. Hall found the baby dressed in two outfits and covered with two blankets and soaked in urine. Once Hall picked the baby up to change his diaper, he stopped crying. The baby was taken to Cape Cod Hospital and later placed in foster care.

"I was incredibly relieved when the police arrived and then emotional once I was able to pick the baby up and know he was okay. He is now being well cared for," Hall said.



Barnstable Juvenile PO Julie Hall

Middlesex Juvenile Chief Is Recognized By Peers



Chiefs Association President Alfred Barbalunga presents Middlesex Juvenile Chief Stephen Allsopp with Jim Minton Award.

Middlesex Juvenile Chief Stephen Allsopp has been honored twice in the past month.

First, Chief Allsopp received an "Indispensible Friend" award from the Adolescent Counseling Service (ACS), the Juvenile Court Clinic for all of Middlesex County. (See story on front page.) More recently, he was selected by his fellow Chief Probation Officers to receive the Jim Minton Excellence Award.

The Jim Minton Award was established in memory of the Brookline District Court Chief Probation Officer and long-time member of the Chief Probation Officer's Association. The award is presented each year by the Association. The award was presented to Allsopp on November 3rd at the Cranwell Resort in Lenox.

"Although there were many outstanding nominees for this year's Jim Minton Excellence Award, CPO Allsopp was the obvious choice. He is a valued resource for his court and communities, and is always a consummate gentleman. Additionally, this year's conference had more of a juvenile theme, so we believed Stephen to be the perfect choice to win this well deserved recognition," said Alfred Barbalunga, President of the Chief Probation Officers Association.

"I am honored to be recognized by my colleagues and am grateful for the opportunity to serve in the area of Juvenile Probation. I consider it a privilege to walk into my office knowing I am able to help children and families get the help that they need to get them back on the right track in life," Allsopp said.

As the Chief Probation Officer at Middlesex Juvenile Court, Allsopp oversees probation operations at the Cambridge, Framingham, and Lowell offices which comprise the Middlesex Juvenile Court.

Allsopp began his probation career as an intern and volunteer in 1978 at Middlesex Juvenile Court while a student at Northeastern University. Shortly after graduating from Northeastern, he was hired as a Probation Officer at Cambridge District Court. He was promoted to Assistant Chief Probation Officer at Middlesex Juvenile Court in 1998 and First Assistant Chief in 2005. In 2011, Allsopp became Chief Probation Officer at Middlesex Juvenile Court.

Middlesex Probate & Family Assistant Chief Receives Appreciation Award

Edwin "Ted" Welch, Middlesex Probate & Family Assistant Chief Probation Officer, was presented with the Appreciation Award by the Greater Lowell Bar Association at its Annual Dinner Meeting held at the Four Oaks County Club in Dracut last June.

"As the Chief of Middlesex Probate & Family Court, I am proud of the recognition that Assistant Chief Probation Officer Ted Welch received from the Lowell Bar Association for his commitment and service to the people of Middlesex County," said Middlesex Probate & Family Chief G. Scott Angelo.

Angelo added, "This award is affirmation that, as an office, we are meeting the needs of the individuals, families, and children that we serve. It is with the dedication of Trial Court employees like ACPO Welch that we are able to provide access to a fair, equitable and efficient forum to resolve family issues," said Chief G. Scott Angelo.



Edwin "Ted" Welch

Middlesex Juvenile Probation Officer Is Lauded For His Work



Middlesex Juvenile Court Probation Officer Paul Nwokeji was lauded for his work with a student and his parents by an attorney who wrote him a glowing letter describing the experience.

The attorney wrote, "You were kind enough to come upstairs and engage in a rigorously inspiring conversation with my client. When you were done with him, I believe you had, at least incrementally, changed his perspective towards school, and his parents' philosophy on supervision of his school and work behavior."

He added, "Your knowledge of his teachers and coaches and fellow team players gave your arguments great credibility."

Berkshire Superior Chief Is Recognized At Red Mass

Berkshire Superior Chief Probation Officer Clifford J. Nilan was honored with the St. Thomas More Award by the Springfield Diocese during the Annual Red Mass held on October 2nd at the St. Michael's Cathedral in Springfield.

The 36-year Probation employee was among a group of eight recipients feted for their work in the criminal justice system.

Hampden Superior Court Judge Richard J. Carey, Administrative Law Judge Peter J. Martinelli and Berkshire Probate & Family Court Judge Richard A. Simons were also among the honorees.



Clifford Nilan

Franklin-Hampshire Juvenile Court Probation Officer Is Recognized



Left to right: Kristal Cleaver, FRC Program Director, CPO Vincent Penna, POII Brian Crowley, and Kelly Thibodeau, Family Partner.

Franklin-Hampshire Juvenile Court Probation Officer II Brian Crowley was recognized by the Bridge Family Resource Center (FRC) in Hampshire County at a Partnership Luncheon which celebrated the Center's one-year anniversary last summer. Crowley, a 20-year employee at the court, was lauded for his work with children and families and his referrals to the center, collaboration, and commitment.

Crowley said, "On a daily basis, the Family Resource Center provides invaluable services to the Franklin-Hampshire Juvenile Court. I thank the FRC staff for recognizing my efforts, but mostly for the hard work they do to assist children and families in Franklin and Hampshire counties."

Franklin-Hampshire Juvenile Chief Probation Officer Vincent Penna commented on the award, "I am very honored that the Franklin-Hampshire Juvenile Court was recognized for our dedication and commitment to working with children and families. I am especially proud of Probation Officer Brian Crowley who deserves to be acknowledged for his tireless efforts and commitment to children under supervision."

The Bridge Family Resource Center is a community-based, family-driven program supporting families and their children ages, infant to 18 years old. It is one of 18 statewide FRC's.

Middlesex Probate & Family's Kristin Connor Shares Success Story

Middlesex Probate & Family Court Case Specialist Kristin Connor was invited to address the graduating class of her former high school, the Curtis Tufts School in Medford, at its 35th Annual Commencement Ceremony, last June.

The talk was more than just an obligatory speech in a sea of high school and college ceremonies held during commencement season. For the students at the alternative public high school— established to help children who struggle with disabilities and personal struggles— Connor's speech and her presence was like a door of opportunity swung wide open revealing a world of possibilities. It was proof that they too could find success.

It was also a strong testament to how far Connor, a 2006 Curtis Tufts graduate, has come in her life— first as a troubled and angry teenager who suffered abuse to a confident, hopeful, and empowered young woman and mother working in the court system interacting with families who are dealing with their own personal strife. Connor is valued and respected by her bosses in the Middlesex Probate & Family Probation Department and her colleagues as well.

Connor attributes her success and positive outlook on life to her time spent at the school. She began working at the court in March.

She told the graduating students, "Everyday that you wake up, you have a choice. You can make it a miserable day or you can choose to find happiness, support, 'positivity', and give yourself a chance at a better life."

Middlesex Probate & Family Chief Probation Officer G. Scott Angelo said, "It is this quote from Kristin's speech that speaks volumes about her, and shows why she is a great fit for the Probate & Family Court."



Curtis Tufts Guidance Counselor Lance Yodzio and Middlesex Probate & Family Court Case Specialist Kristin Connor.

Berkshire Probate & Family's Empowering Families Receives National Award

Berkshire Probate & Family Chief Probation Officer Amy Koenig and Berkshire Probate & Family Judge Richard Simons were presented with the Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award at the 53rd Annual Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) Conference, titled "Modern Families: New Challenges, New Solutions" in Seattle in June for their program, Enhancing Families Through Literature.

Koenig and Simons established the program two years ago at the Berkshire court. This program is derived from the Changing Lives Through Literature Program model. Empowering Families, however, offers a different approach. "It unleashes the power of literature to change the manner in which disputing parents communicate and co-parent with each other, modeling how parents can incorporate reading into the fabric of parenting," according to Koenig.

Parents read and discuss books. The children meet in a separate room and participate in a curriculum created to promote literacy among children 18 months through age 7. Dinner is served each week before the session to promote interaction between the parents and the children.

The Irwin Cantor Innovative Program Award was created to recognize innovation in court-connected or court-related programs.

Congratulations To Worcester Juvenile Resource Center Participants on Poster Award

The poster art work of students at the Worcester Juvenile Resource Center (JRC) was selected as the winner of Y.O.U., Inc.'s Diversity Awareness Council's "Creative Challenge." The Worcester group was selected as the winner out of six competing groups.

Y.O.U, Inc. is Youth Opportunities Upheld, Inc., a private, non-profit child welfare and behavioral health organization serving at-risk children, adolescents and families in the Worcester County area.

Participants were encouraged to demonstrate through a skit, poster, collage, photography, video, and sculpture to express what the phrase, "There is strength in diversity" means," according to Daniela S. Lopes, Regional Program Manager at the Office of Community Corrections.

"The programs were encouraged to be creative and push beyond the typical images of diversity in this challenge. Diversity was not based solely on culture or ethnicity but rather celebrating all differences that make us unique," Lopes said. "The poster was affectionately termed 'The Diversity Lion'."

The poster is on display at the WJRC and at all YOU, Inc. facilities.



Worcester Juvenile Resource Center JRC participants' winning poster.

Probation Employees Selected To Receive Trial Court Excellence Awards

Julie Hall, Barnstable County (Town of Plymouth) Juvenile Court Probation Officer

Julie Hall came to the aid of a five-week baby left home alone by his mother in a sweltering apartment on a hot day in July. Hall was on an unannounced visit to the infant's mother who was the subject of a Care and Protection case. She alerted police who gained entry. Once inside, Hall removed blankets and layers of clothing, changed the child's diaper, and comforted him. "PO Hall's decisive, quick actions were deemed life-saving by the police and reflect her commitment and dedication to the public," according to the award announcement.

Berkshire County Probation Project Team Developed Certified Treatment Program

Southern Berkshire District Court Chief Probation Officer (CPO) **Alfred Barbalunga**; Intimate Partner Abuse Program (IPAP) Instructor **Jeff Boyd**, Office of Community Corrections (OCC); Deputy Director **Patricia Horne**, OCC; Regional Program Manager **Kevin Kearney**, OCC; Berkshire Superior Court CPO **Clifford Nilan**; Fiscal Manager **Kim Norton**, OCC; Regional Supervisor **Francine Ryan**; **Kim Norton**, OCC; **Kyle Shadler**, OCC; Pittsfield District CPO **Matthew Stracuzzi**; IPAEP Administrator/Instructor **Teri Trufant**, OCC; and Northern Berkshire District CPO **Donald Wright**.

This team developed the Berkshire County Intimate Partner Abuse Program and was awarded interim certification by the state Department of Public Health to run the program. The award announcement states, "This group demonstrated excellence in collaboration and teamwork to respond to a demonstrated need, advocate for Probation as an appropriate vendor to DPH, and resolve logistical challenges, including transportation for program participants."

Juvenile Court Probation Risk Assessment Team

Bristol Assistant Chief Probation Officer (ACPO) **Kim Banville**, Hampden Probation Officer (PO) **Kristen Hurst**, Norfolk PO **Erin Lynch**, Worcester PO **Cynthia McConville**, Essex ACPO **Colleen O'Leary**, Essex ACPO **Todd Rogato**, Hampden ACPO **Karen Sullivan**, and Barnstable CPO **Lonnie Welchman**.

The team implemented the Ohio Youth Risk Assessment (OYAS) tool after carefully researching it. They underwent training for the purpose of sharing this knowledge with 200 fellow Juvenile Probation Officers. Team members wrote the supervision standards to govern the work. The OYAS was fully implemented by May.

The standards increase the supervision of high and moderate risk offenders and provide Evidence-based Community Supervision practices to assist in changing delinquent activity. "The transition to the new standards was seamless due to the quality of training provided and standards written," the award announcement states.

Domestic Violence Training Development & Implementation of e-Learning Center

Statewide Training Director **Patricia Gavin** and Project Manager **Diane Richard** were part of a 17-member team that created five Domestic Violence Training modules and implemented the eLearning Center which resulted in establishment of the DV training as the first online training through the new learning management team. According to the award announcement, "The collective efforts of these team members not only enabled compliance with a legislative mandate but also created a system for future training and development that will benefit greatly from their tireless efforts and experience in building and delivering the Domestic Violence modules."

The Congratulations Chronicle



Probation Update is an internal publication featuring the current news of The Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS).

Please forward newsletter story suggestions or comments to:

Coria Holland, Communications Director
The Massachusetts Probation Service

617-624-9319; CP: 617-429-5629

coria.holland@jud.state.ma.us