



# IN THE CENTER

## News from Community Corrections

### The Numbers.

- *2,753: number of new Intermediate Sanction Level (ISL) III/IV participants in 2011.*
- *64%: percentage of 2011 ISL III/IV participants not arraigned for new offense as of December 31, 2012.*

## COLLABORATION CORNER: SPECIALTY COURT AND THE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS CENTER

On a Friday morning in late August the Plymouth Community Corrections Center (CCC) is quiet. About 60 of the Intermediate Sanction Level (ISL) III/IV participants from the **Plymouth District Court** have a hearing before **First Justice Rosemary Minehan**. Thankfully, they are not in court because of new arrests. These probationers have a bi-weekly status hearing in a specialty court known as the Intensive Probation Supervision (IPS) session. The IPS session is a four-phased pro-

gram for high risk probationers.

"Based on our assessment using the Level of Service/Risk, Need, Responsivity tool, IPS participants are usually at high risk for substance abuse disorder and likely to re-offend without intensive intervention," says Plymouth CCC **Treatment Manager Flojona Desroches** of **Bay State Community Services (BSCS)**.

Like drug court, the IPS seeks to direct probationers to treatment services in order to reduce their recidivism risk. Typically probationers are referred to ISL III/IV for phase three after a period of time in a secure residential treatment setting. These probationers benefit from the substance abuse treatment, life skills and job development services available at the Plymouth CCC while integrated sanctions and increased surveillance support positive behavior and public safety.

Before the court session gets underway

**Acting Chief Probation Officer Tim Norris**, and Plymouth CCC **Probation Officers In-charge Trayce Hillman** and **Sean Houghton** meet with First Justice Minehan, and defense counsel to exchange information about ISL III/IV participant progress. BSCS staff from the Plymouth CCC attend the hearing for moral support. Through this approach the court attempts to impose a process that is collaborative rather than adversarial.

According to First Justice Minehan the IPS session encourages collaboration amongst strong community resources, "The most important aspect of the Plymouth Court's IPS session, is the utilization of existing resources such as local DPH treatment providers, the CCC and the probation department." For participants it means a change of pace on Friday morning.

*Written by Vin Lorenti*

*Bay State Community Services Job Developer Dan Monteiro works with ISL III/IV participants at the Plymouth CCC.*



## COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKS: CURBS AND COBBLESTONES IN LOWELL

Lowell is now part of the **Blue Star Memorial Highway** thanks to a collaborative led by **Curbs & Cobblestones Garden Club (CCGC)**, and supported by the **Greater Lowell Veteran's Council**, **Trial Court Community Service Program (CSP)**, **Lowell Parks Division**, and **Consumer Auto Parts Store**.

Since October 2010 CCGC has been responsible for the development of green space at the corner of Bridge Street and the VFW Highway. The cornerstone of their effort to beautify a once blighted space is a WWI memorial on a "wedding cake" multi-terrace surrounded by perennials, shrubs and a flagpole. The project has

been recognized by the **National Garden Club** for the Blue Star Memorial Highway.

According to CCGC President and **Middlesex Superior Court** Judicial Secretary **Bonni L. Dinneen**, gardening has benefits, "...gardening is a healthy, emotional, spiritual therapy." Dinneen adds that working with probationers has had an impact, "A probationer said, 'I was here when it was a dirt patch. Look what I did!' Another probationer asked, 'Can I still work on this project? [when community service is over].'"

The CSP has pledged continued support of the project and Dinneen is grateful, "...our

deep appreciation for always being respectful, courteous, conscientious...and for all your labor intensive hard work. It's a beautiful job well done!"

*Compiled by Vin Lorenti with Bonni Dinneen*



*Probationers work in Lowell to beautify the highway site which now encompasses the newly dedicated Frank J. Lyons Memorial Park.*

## MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT OFFICE OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Pat Horne, Deputy Director  
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### IN THE CENTER

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**ABOUT:** Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 211F, the Massachusetts Trial Court, Office of Community Corrections (OCC), is charged with implementing intermediate sanctions through the development of community corrections programs. Among the initiatives of the OCC are the Trial Court Community Service Program and the state's 18 Community Corrections Centers. The Community Service Program administers community service as a sanction, or in lieu of fees, for probation departments across the state. Community Corrections Centers facilitate intensive supervision by delivering integrated services and sanctions via Intermediate Sanction Level (ISL) III/IV. ISL III/IV combine services such as: substance abuse treatment, education, job development, life skills and vocational training with sanctions such as: drug testing, community service, electronic monitoring and day reporting. Community Corrections Centers provide an alternative to incarceration for offenders on probation, parole, or in the custody of the sheriff, Department of Correction or Department of Youth Services thereby reserving prison space for the most dangerous offenders.

## THANKS: MAKING AN INTENSIVE COMMITMENT II

Recommending Intermediate Sanction Level (ISL) III/IV supervision in the center is an intensive endeavor requiring cooperation amongst criminal justice professionals and extra attention from probation, parole and corrections officers. Last year we published our first list of the top ten ISL III/IV referral sources. This year we provide another look at the organizations that have made an intensive commitment. These are probation, parole and sheriffs offices that have made the commitment to evidence-based, intensive, community supervision in the center by making the greatest number of referrals to ISL III/IV as an alternative to incarceration in 2012. This year three sheriff's departments make the list while Haverhill District Court appears for the first time.

1. Massachusetts Parole (statewide)
2. Essex County Sheriff's Department
3. Lawrence District Court
4. Quincy District Court
5. Plymouth District Court
6. Worcester County Sheriff's Department
7. Lynn District Court
8. Lowell District Court
9. Hampshire County Sheriff's Department
10. Haverhill District Court

## ACHIEVERS: ONE YEAR LATER HAMPSHIRE COUNTY MAN GOES TO WORK INSTEAD OF PRISON

**I**n September 2012, Adam Y's future did not look bright. He had two criminal cases and was worried that he might be facing a stint in the house of correction. Though he did not realize it at first, his luck was about to turn. Within days of each other his cases resolved with **Honorable David S. Ross** of the **Orange District Court** and **Honorable Jacklyn Connly** of the **Northampton District Court** ordering intensive supervision via Intermediate Sanction Level (ISL) IV and III consecutively at the Northampton Community Corrections Center (CCC).

Adam struggled at first. He was frustrated that at just 18 years old he was on a path that subject him to so many restrictions. However, instead of becoming overwhelmed, Adam sought to make his intensive supervision at the CCC a transformational experience.

Having dropped out of high school, Adam was placed in GED classes. Thanks to nearly perfect attendance he attained his diploma

in May of 2013. With the prompting of CCC staff, including substance abuse counselors from **Community Improvement Associates** and job developer **Jeff Konieczny** of the **Hampshire County Sheriff's Department**, Adam found a job where he remains happily employed. And this month, after a year of ISL III/IV, Adam made a successful transition to standard supervision.

About his experience Adam said, "It gave me a lot of structure that I needed. It's kept me on such a good path that I don't want to go back to the way I was before I came here. Mentally, it's basically erased the devil that was in my head before. Everyone that works here is pretty straight forward. They want to help you. I've attained my GED, I've attained employment, and I'm on my way to completing probation. This program has done me a lot of good. It's opened up a lot of windows for me. I can go to college. There are a lot more job opportunities that are open to

me now. I'm thinking about taking some classes at Greenfield Community College or going to Springfield Technical College."

Regarding his current employment, Adam remarked, "It's awesome. I'm working four or five days a week. It's put a little money in my pocket, so I can start paying my fees off. I like who I work with. They are positive people."

A year after contemplating life behind bars, Adam now speaks of how the CCC prepared him for life at work, "The weekly schedule of attending here and the consequences of not coming helped me not only get through this but it helped me when it comes to working. If I don't go to work I'm going to lose my job. If I don't come here I'm going to get in trouble. I kind of use the structure that this corrections facility gave me at my workplace."

*Submitted by Thane Thomsen*

*Edited for privacy, length*