

FRONTLINE NEWS

DC Department of Corrections Newsletter

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DOC Honor Guard celebrates our fallen heroes at annual Wreath Laying Ceremony.
Photo credit: Darby Baham

DOC Participates in Annual Ceremony

With the sun shining bright on a Saturday morning in the District, employees from DC DOC and other area jurisdictions joined together at the National Law Enforcement Memorial to honor correctional employees from across the country killed in the line of duty.

This annual ceremony, usually marking the beginning of National Correctional Employees Week, is always well attended, reflecting the camaraderie of public safety professionals. The program, which was emceed by Director Faust, included speakers from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund. The Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, Paul Quander, also delivered remarks during the ceremony, which included a special tribute to FEMS Chief, Kenneth Ellerbe, for his ongoing support of the event.

After the remarks were delivered, members of the Honor Guard teams laid single roses to pay respect to each fallen correctional professional and their families. The white doves that have been a long standing favorite were released in reverence to the fallen correctional professionals.

"The Honor Guard's salute to fallen correctional officers was moving and highly professional," said Director Faust. "The presence of the honor guards always is both inspiring and moving at the Wreath Laying Ceremony."

As always, the crowd became exuberant with the start of the honor guard competition—where PG County, Montgomery County, Fairfax County, Alexandria and the District showcased their skills. The Alexandria Sheriff's Department won this year's competition with DC DOC placing third.

By Darby Baham

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- Thomas Faust, Director of the D.C.

Department of Corrections



DOC Adds Facebook Account as Part of New Media Efforts



A look at the DC Department of Corrections' Facebook page.

DOC encourages everyone to regularly visit the page and recommend it to others interested in learning more about the Department and other D.C. government initiatives.

DC DOC joins the ranks of a number of DC government agencies and other public entities seeking to create an online imprint through social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. These include Mayor Vincent Gray, Councilmember Tommy Wells, the Department of Public Works, the District Department of Transportation and more. For more information on DC DOC's social media efforts, visit the Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/dccorrections> and the tumblr page at <http://dcdoc.tumblr.com>. Both websites can also be found by visiting the DOC's main website page: <http://doc.dc.gov>.

By Darby Baham

FBI Awards Two DOC Employees for their Assistance

After working collaboratively with the FBI last summer on a very important project, two Department employees were surprised with special awards in March, acknowledging the roles they played in making the investigation a success.

Wanda Patten, Chief of Investigative Services, and Ponti Andrews, IT Specialist, both received certificates from the FBI—extending their appreciation and gratitude for a job well done.

Ms. Patten was pleased to receive the award, primarily because it represented an acknowledgement of the Department's working partnership with the FBI.

"The agency has been working hand-in-hand with the FBI for quite some time, and it was rewarding to be acknowledged, not so much for myself, but really for the agency and the Office of Investigative Services," said Ms. Patten.

Mr. Andrews agreed. "It was special," he said. "It's good to know that people you worked with appreciate you helping them out." As for where he decided to place his award - "it's on my desk right now," he said, smiling.



Director Faust presents Wanda Patten and Ponti Andrews with certificates from the FBI . Photo credit: Darby Baham

By Darby Baham

Getting to know Mr. Ramirez

Michel Ramirez was born and raised in San Cristobal, Dominican Republic. The second child out of three brothers, he was into adventure, enthusiastic and enjoyed outdoor activities from an early age.

In 1998, he graduated from the Instituto Politecnico Loyola, the most famous technical institute in the Dominican Republic with an Associate Degree in Digital Electronics Technician. He began working in the field as a Service Repair Tech for a US manufacturer, Security Alarm Company (NAPCO) and later joined the IT department of the Dominican Republic Revenue Service Office.

Ramirez began pursuing his Bachelor's Degree at the Instituto Tecnologico de Santo Domingo (INTEC) in 1999 while also working full-time for one of two Telephony Services Company (TRICOM) in the Dominican Republic and part-time at INTEC. He graduated four and a half years later with a B.S. in Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering and credits this time as "hard, but worth it."

In November 2005, Ramirez moved to Bayonne, New Jersey and then joined the DC DOC agency in August 2006. He considers DC DOC part of his family, since this was his first job in the United States. He is currently a part of the OMITS team and works as a Network Engineer located in the D.C. Jail.

Profile:

Meet Michel Ramirez, Network Engineer

In 2006, Michel Ramirez joined the Department as a Network Engineer. Since then, he has worked on several projects within the agency, including assisting the Office of Government and Public Affairs in translating vital documents. Read on to learn more about Michel:



Q: What led you into your current career?

A: As a child, I was always disarming all my electronics toys just to see [their] mechanisms inside. As time passed, it turned into a passion that led me to my current career.

Q: What are some special projects you've worked on while at DOC?

A: Migration from Inmate Telephone Management (ITM) to the Offender Communication System, OCS
The CCTV system installation (1st Phase, 2nd Phase and the ongoing 3rd Phase)
The Video Visitation Center
Data Center renovation
The IPC project
The Automatic Inmate Sick Call System (ASCS)

Q: Tell us a bit about yourself. What are your hobbies? Where are you from?

A: I came from New Jersey to the Washington D.C. area to fulfill my career, which began back in 1998. By this time, I'd graduated from a technical institute with an Associate degree in Digital Electronics and then continued my studies earning a BS in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering.

In my spare time, I spend time with my family, go fishing and ride my bike.

Did You Know—Tips from the Let’s Move Campaign

First Lady Michelle Obama’s “LET’S MOVE” campaign focuses on physical activity and healthy eating, but it also reminds us that some activity is better than none and changing your eating habits requires patience and a commitment to small changes. Here are some great tips from her website, www.letsmove.gov, that we can all work to incorporate in our lives.

Exercise: Plan activities (i.e. plant a garden, ride a bike, Zumba, etc.) that are fun for you. You’ll be more likely to continue doing them if it’s something you enjoy. Plus, there are great benefits to exercising!

- Prevents weight gain and maintains weight loss.
- Combats health conditions, such as heart disease and high blood pressure.
- Relieves stress and gives you an emotional lift.
- Can improve your muscle strength and boost your endurance.
- Can help you fall asleep faster & deepen your sleep.
- Leaves you feeling energized and looking better.

Healthy Eating: Healthy eating is NOT a diet, but by eating healthy, you can live longer. Some great tips for eating healthy include:

- Adding more vegetables, fruits and whole grains into your meals and cutting back on foods with fat, salt and sugar.
- Focus on making small changes, such as setting an easy goal to reach and making long term goals, like trying a vegetarian meal once a week. <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/tc/healthy-eating-overview>
- Balance your calories by eating less and avoiding oversized portions. A great way to accomplish this is by making half of your plate fruit and vegetables. You can also try simple substitutes like switching to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk and choosing foods with lower sodium. www.choosemyplate.gov

By Judy M. Poole & Gloria J. Robertson

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Directors Honor Promoted Officers

Director Faust and Deputy Director Cross recently joined newly promoted officers during their supervisory training sessions to express congratulations and award them with certificates and medals.

During the ceremonies, the Director and Deputy Director took time to speak with the men and women about the duties and responsibilities that come with taking on a bigger role, and to talk about how rewarding it can be as they advance professionally.

According to Training Academy Administrator, Michael Brown, these ceremonies have had a positive impact on the officers and personnel in attendance. “Prior to the Director’s arrival, you could feel the anticipation in the air. The fact that he was taking time to personally pin the officers was a big morale booster,” said Mr. Brown. “The majority of DOC personnel believe in the Director’s vision, and his participation in the promotion makes them feel as if they are a part of the process.”

The Department expects to continue these award ceremonies throughout the year and as officers are promoted within the agency.



Director Faust, Deputy Director Cross, and Training Administrator Brown pose with three newly promoted officers. Photo Credit: Darby Baham

By Darby Baham