

FRONTLINE NEWS

DC Department of Corrections Newsletter

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Photo: Darby Baham

DC DOC Mourns the Loss of Carolyn Cross, Deputy Director for Operations

With immense sadness, DC DOC announced on Monday, September 8 that Deputy Director Carolyn Cross was found dead in her Alexandria apartment the Sunday before.

Ms. Cross, a native Washingtonian who attended high school and college in the District, was an accomplished public safety/correctional professional who had a tremendous impact on the department and the progress made in moving it forward.

Following her death, the agency worked together to spearhead efforts in honor of her memory and mission while alive. Those efforts included a candlelight vigil, tributes to her on social media, the wearing of purple ribbons (her favorite color), a luncheon and more.

"We mourn the loss of our dear friend and a highly valued member of the Corrections family who worked tirelessly throughout her 30-year career in public safety to advance the profession and to promote best practices throughout the field of corrections," said Director Tom Faust.

Ms. Cross had a wealth of knowledge and experience that began on the front lines, where she served as Correctional Officer, then Sergeant followed by her promotion to the supervisory role of Correctional Lieutenant at Lorton's Youth Center 2. She rose through the ranks further, serving in Deputy Warden and Warden roles before returning to DC DOC as Deputy Director for Operations.

She was an active member of a number of professional organizations, including the American Correctional Association, the American Jail Association, Women in Corrections, Juvenile Justice Executive Women in Corrections, and more. She leaves behind 4 children and an agency of over 900 whom she considered her "babies."

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"We mourn the loss of our dear friend and a highly valued member of the Corrections family..."

*-Tom Faust,
Director*



By Sylvia Lane

A Tribute to Deputy Director

*"I know from firsthand knowledge that Carolyn Cross was a top-notch professional who made an enormous difference at DOC. She was instrumental in ensuring that the Department achieved national accreditation, and she did a lot – working with Director Faust, his leadership team, and all of you – to make sure DOC is an organization for which you are proud to work. This is a terrible loss for the Department and for the District." ~ **Mayor Vincent C. Gray***

*"On behalf of myself and the CIC we are so sorry for this tragic loss. This is incredibly sad and we are in shock. This is a huge loss not only for DC Department of Corrections, but for the entire District." ~ **Cara Compani, Esq., DC Corrections Information Council***

*"We are thinking of all of Ms. Cross's friends and family at this time. She had such a wonderful impact on those of us who worked with her only peripherally – I can only imagine the loss for those who knew her well, worked with her daily, and loved her. Her service and leadership to so many was remarkable, and she will be sorely missed." ~ **Katharine Huffman, DC Corrections Information Council***

*"Carolyn was my rock here at DOC and also a true friend." ~ **Tom Faust, Director***

*Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and loved ones of Carolyn Cross, who served our region for more than 35 years.
~ **Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton***

*Ms. Cross had a deep passion, love, and commitment to the agency. She worked tirelessly and her fine leadership was exemplary. I looked forward to our countless conversations after work, which included lots of laughter. Ms. Cross was more than my supervisor. She was a dear friend, trusted confidant, and second "mom." I will miss her dearly...Gone too soon! ~ **Dr. LaToya Lane***

*My enduring Carolyn memory was an aspect of her performance in the project to prepare Maximum Security Facility for ACA accreditation. She elected to temporarily move to the Facility, instead of staying in the comfort of her Grimke office. At the facility, an office space was assigned to her in the administrative building, but she placed a second desk in the middle of the big hallway; her "command center." Positioning, visibility, orderliness – all mattered to her in getting the job done. She was the lone, bright, beautiful and lovely Moon in the Maximum Security Facility accreditation process, and I was, proudly, one of those in her orbit. She did get the job done. ~ **Segun Obebe***

*My favorite quote or saying from Ms. Cross was "Come on Baby!!" She was always attentive to EVERY one. Even if she had someone in her office and you needed to speak to her, she would not let you leave. She would say, "Come on Baby!" That made me feel like she wanted to know what was going on, she cared, and she wanted to help you in any way possible! I love and miss her so! ~ **Angela Samuels***

*I had a unique relationship with Ms. Cross. She was not only a co-worker, but a friend. I could ask her opinion about any and everything and she would let me know if I was on the right or wrong path. She was an inspiration to me. She was a person that I could confide in and knew that it would stop right there. Sometimes when I was in a mood, she would say "girl you better forget about that and move forward. You are wasting your energy on something unnecessary." She was a mentor encouraging me all the time. When she was nominated for the Carl Robinson Award, it was a job keeping it a secret from her. However, I succeeded until approximately 24 hours from the time that she was presented the award. She was still surprised, though, because she didn't know that we were going to be there supporting her. After that, she would say "how did you pull that off, and I didn't know about it?" I will miss her, but I am glad that God saw fit for our paths to cross and for me to meet such a dynamic lady. ~ **Sallie Thomas***

Carolyn Cross

~ **Amazing Bosses** know how to instill a deep sense of personal satisfaction and accomplishment in individual team members. They help employees develop a strong sense of self-confidence and self-praise that outweighs any pat-on-the-back or award provided.

Ms. Cross was my "BOSS LADY" as I affectionately called her. She was beyond being an amazing boss. She was my mentor, mother figure, leader, and most importantly she was my saving grace. Many years ago when I was young and new to corrections she believed in me before I even knew how to believe in myself. I respected her and she respected me. I was not just the help to her; I was a young woman who had potential to achieve greatness in the work force. "You can never learn too much, keep that young brain fresh" "You are going to do what I know you can do" she would tell me. For that I say THANK YOU Boss Lady you saved me and I will strive to be the best I can because of you. You will always be a part of me because you helped mold me. There will be no other like you. Rest In Paradise "Boss Lady" until we meet again. ~ **Elaine Rhem**



Photo: Darby Baham

There are so many things I will miss about Ms. Cross—she was absolutely one of a kind. I loved her beautiful clothes, shoes and coats, the way she laughed, made me feel special when she'd say "hey baby," always guide me in the right direction on issues no matter how large or small, answer her cell phone whenever I reached out or return my calls within minutes, respond to my emails morning, noon or night, compliment me on the things I did well but also gently let me know when I was headed in the wrong direction. Ms. Cross valued my strengths, understood my uniqueness—whew, and let me cry on her shoulder, sometimes about the silliest of things. Her knowledge of corrections was amazing and she was so clearly dedicated to making this department and all of us the best we could be. We will never again encounter a spirit like hers but I will be forever grateful to have known her. With tears of sadness! ~ **Sylvia Lane**

I was thinking about Ms. Cross recently and as I looked into the Heavens my eyes kept gravitating to one particular star. I thought about how far away this star must be but yet it was close enough to provide light in a dark sky, powerful enough to draw my attention to its lone majestic strength and loving enough to warm my heart in awe. Ms. Cross will forever remain a phenomenal woman and leader in the Criminal Justice Hall of Fame but to me she will always be our star. ~ **Regina Gilmore**

I sit on the DC DOC Transgender Committee where Carolyn and Director Faust host quarterly meetings with transgender and committee members discussing how to assure that transgender inmates are receiving the proper treatment while incarcerated. Carolyn has always been fair and had true compassion for the transgender community dating back to the Lorton prison old days. This is a true loss for DOC, but also for the transgender community. You just don't get many like Carolyn Cross and I for one will miss her. I send my deepest condolences to the family and DOC in the loss of this great woman. My prayers are with the District of Columbia during this most difficult time and we strive to remember her. ~ **Earline Budd, DOC Transgender Committee Member**

Our thoughts are with the DC Department of Corrections today with the news of the tragic murder of their Deputy Director, Carolyn Cross. Ms. Cross was a key member of the DOC's Transgender Housing Committee and will be deeply missed. ~ **DC Office of GLBT Affairs**

There was a time when she and I were having coffee after a meeting, and I asked her what was "it" that kept her in this business for so long. She went on to tell me about her career and how hard things were for women when she entered into the field of corrections, and then she said this, "Shannon baby, things are different now. We didn't have officers coming in with Masters degrees like you. But don't ever forget, no matter how many credentials you have behind your name, if you can't communicate with people at their level, you're ineffective. Remember to keep it simple." In essence, what she was saying was education is great, but it doesn't take away from the basic correctional fundamentals and some good ole common sense, and it was those things that were the foundation to her illustrious career. I will miss her dearly because I knew I could always depend on her to "give it to me straight." ~ **Prechelle Shannon**

Inmate Reception Center is Dedicated to Deputy Cross



Photo: Bridget Reavis-Tyler

In conjunction with Mayor Vincent C. Gray, DC DOC officially opened the doors to its new Inmate Reception Center on Friday, September 26.

The ribbon cutting ceremony, which featured remarks from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Paul Quander, Director Tom Faust, Department of General Services Deputy Director June Locker and members of the District Council, also included the Mayor's announcement that the facility would be officially named "The Carolyn A. Cross Inmate Reception Center" in honor of our fallen Deputy Director.

"I'm excited to announce the opening of this new state-of-the-art facility which through the co-location of critical services, will streamline the Department's intake and release protocols and enable more efficient processing of the offender population," said Mayor Gray. "And in tribute to Deputy Director Cross, the Inmate Reception Center is being officially named in her honor. With the naming of this facility, we preserve her legacy and honor her memory forever."

The center will serve as the centralized point of entry and exit for DOC inmates, and will feature new technologies such as iris scanning and digital fingerprinting, as well as an automated property storage system, a closed circuit television surveillance system and more. "Our new Inmate Reception Center was designed to maximize resources and ensure that vitally important services are provided in the most productive way possible," said Director Faust. "Construction of this center has been a long time in the making. The project was a massive undertaking that involved the collective dedication of staff from both DOC and the Department of General Services, and we are very proud that in working together, we made this vision for change a reality," he said.

By Darby Baham

Mayor Orders Flags Lowered in Honor of Deputy Director Cross

On September 9, two days after Ms. Carolyn Cross was found slain in her Alexandria apartment, Mayor Vincent C. Gray ordered all District Public Safety buildings to lower flags in her honor.

The flags were lowered from that Wednesday morning, September 10 to Sunday, September 14, and represented one of the first public ways the District went on to honor Ms. Cross' service to her hometown and community.

In front of the Reeves Center, the headquarters location for the Department, both the District and United States flags could be seen lowered to half mast. While the act could not bring her back, the symbolism was not lost on the many co-workers and employees who served along side Ms. Cross in that very building five days a week.

"We are grateful to Mayor Gray for honoring Ms. Cross in this manner," said Director Faust. "We appreciate his swift action in acknowledging her contributions and service over her 30 plus years in Corrections."



United States and District flags fly at half staff in front of Reeves Center.

Photo: Darby Baham

By Darby Baham

DC DOC Holds Candlelight Vigil in Honor of Deputy Director

Standing with purple ribbons, purple clothing, and lit candles in their hands, a crowd of over 200 people (including family, friends, and co-workers) gathered in front of the D.C. Jail on the evening of Friday, September 12 to pay their respects to Ms. Carolyn Cross. They came with stories of their time spent together. They cried on each other's shoulders. But most importantly, they came to honor the woman they all missed very dearly.

The evening featured remarks from Director Faust, Deputy Mayor Paul Quander, and a prayer from Chaplain Betty Green, as well as singing by Lt. MaRion Boyd II and the dedication of a magnolia plant in Ms. Cross' honor.

What began as a very somber event eventually turned to one of uplifting, especially when Director Faust pointed out the symbolism of one of the flowers already beginning to bloom on the plant. It was as if Ms. Cross was winking at everyone and giving her blessings.

Before the night ended, several purple balloons were lifted up and released in her honor.

The candlelight vigil was planned by a small group of Ms. Cross' employees who sought to celebrate her memory with their DOC family. Within days, they had presented the idea to Director Faust and worked with each other to execute it to perfection.



By Darby Baham

Photo: Regina Gilmore

Cross Memorial Held at Greater First Baptist Church in D.C.

On Friday, September 19, with the sun shining brightly, Ms. Carolyn Cross had her home-going service at The Greater First Baptist Church, a church in N.W. Washington located not too far from the Department's headquarters building.

The service included an opening hymn, readings from the Bible, musical selections from Lt. MaRion Boyd II and Gary McNair, as well as reflections from Mayor Vincent C. Gray, Deputy Mayor Paul Quander, Director Tom Faust, D.C. Councilmembers and more. During the Mayor's reflections, he presented a proclamation announcing September 19, 2014 as a day in memory of Ms. Cross and gave her a posthumous medal of honor.

One of the more touching moments came when her youngest daughter, Clarissa "Reesie" Davis, read a tribute to her mom through a swelling of tears and determination. Following the acknowledgements and a silent reading of the obituary, Reverend Dr. Winston C. Ridley delivered Ms. Cross' eulogy, expounding on the meaning of her name as he gave examples of her generosity, strength, and character.



Photo: Bridget Reavis-Tyler

The D.C. Department of Corrections' Honor Guard served as Ms. Cross' official pall bearers, but the COG Honor Guard was also in attendance to honor the fallen Deputy Director.

A Life Worth Living

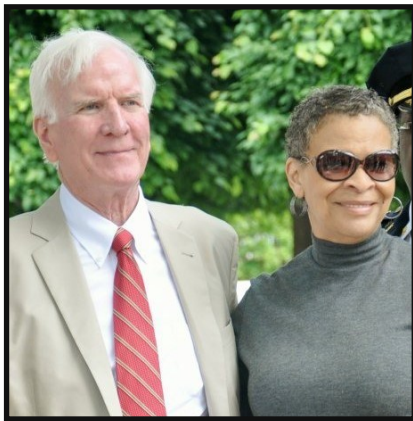
Ms. Carolyn Cross lived a fulfilling life, one marked by her accomplishments and the people she helped along the way.

She was an accomplished public safety/professional who had a keen sense of the administrative, operational and programmatic protocols required to safely and efficiently operate jails/prisons and to ensure full compliance with standards set by the American Correctional Association (ACA).

As a testament to her commitment to excellence, Ms. Cross spearheaded efforts that resulted in ACA accreditation of the Maximum Security Facility at Lorton, and then followed that up with her designation as a Senior Compliance Monitor for the Department as well as an auditor for the ACA—a role that called for her to travel around the country auditing both large and small correctional facilities.

She was an active member of a number of professional organizations, as well as charitable organizations, including but not limited to Voices for a Second Chance, formerly known as the Visitor's Center — an organization providing critical support services to the offender population. She was most recently the recipient of the Carl Robinson Award given by the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association (MASCA) for demonstrating extraordinary leadership and making significant contributions to the field of corrections.





Photos courtesy of Darby Baham and Bridget Reavis-Tyler



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Office of the Director

Washington, D.C. 20534

September 8, 2014

Thomas Faust, Director
Department of Corrections
1923 Vermont Ave. NW, # N-203
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Tom:

On behalf of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, I want to express our condolences to you and to the family of Carolyn Cross, Deputy Director for Operations. Her untimely death touches all of us in the law enforcement community, and words simply cannot convey the sadness and sympathy that we feel for her family and colleagues.

On both a personal and professional level, the loss of a law enforcement official is a tragic event for all of us. We are reminded that law enforcement professionals put their lives on the line every day to protect the American public.

Please share our expression of sympathy with the family, friends and colleagues of Deputy Director Cross. We stand ready to offer our support in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles E. Samuels, Jr.", is positioned above the typed name.

Charles E. Samuels, Jr.
Director

Proclamation



IN MEMORY OF *Ms. Carolyn Cross*

SEPTEMBER 19, 2014

WHEREAS, Ms. Carolyn Cross was a native Washingtonian, attended D.C. Public Schools, graduated from Coolidge High School and further pursued her education at Strayer University and the University of the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, during her career with the D.C. Department of Corrections, she held several positions working her way through the ranks serving as a Correctional Officer, a Correctional Sergeant, a Correctional Lieutenant, the first female supervisor assigned to the Lorton, Virginia Youth Center Two and most recently as Deputy Director for the department; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cross was honored with the Carl Robinson Award for demonstrating extraordinary leadership and making significant contributions to the field of corrections; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cross touched the lives of many and will be remembered for her dedication, commitment, positive attitude, and compassion, all of which earned her the respect and admiration of those who knew her:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim September 19, 2014, "**IN MEMORY OF MS. CAROLYN CROSS**" in Washington, D.C. and call upon all the residents to remember her contributions that helped to enrich the quality of life in this community.

Vincent C. Gray



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT



Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

September 19, 2014

The Family of Carolyn Ann Cross
c/o The Greater First Baptist Church
2701 13th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009


To the Family, Friends and Colleagues of Carolyn Ann Cross:

It was with deep sadness that we received the news of the unexpected loss of our beloved Carolyn. On behalf of the Metropolitan Police Department, I would like to express our sincere condolences to Gwendolyn, Reginald, Clarissa, Robert, Daniel, Shayla, and LaTonya, and the many relatives and friends of Ms. Cross.

Carolyn was not only a trusted professional colleague she was a dear friend. I find comfort during this time knowing that she touched countless lives and enriched so many throughout her accomplished career in the field of corrections. Carolyn will undoubtedly be remembered for excelling in her groundbreaking roles as first female supervisor of the Youth Center II facility at the Lorton Correctional Complex and as the head administrator who oversaw the accreditation process of Lorton by the American Correctional Association. However, Carolyn's legacy is not only centered in her work within correctional institutions. She loved her community. Let us not forget her dedicated efforts to both assist families of inmates and provide services to returning citizens in hopes of disrupting the cycle of recidivism and perpetual return to the very facilities that she was charged with managing. Additionally, Carolyn was an inspiration and a mentor to me and other rising professionals. She was never hesitant to take the time to offer professional advice. It is an honor to have had the privilege of working with her on numerous public safety projects. Her wise counsel and profound institutional knowledge are irreplaceable. The absence of Carolyn's grace, tenacity and leadership will be felt not only within the Department of Corrections and the public safety cluster but throughout the District of Columbia.

To all who knew and loved Carolyn, be guided by the strength and fortitude Carolyn always displayed. Take comfort in knowing that your extended family at the Metropolitan Police Department stands ready to assist you during this difficult time. We are sorry for your loss. You are in our prayers.

Sincerely,


Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police



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September 15, 2014

Thomas Faust, Director
Department of Corrections
1923 Vermont Ave. NW, #N-203
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Director Faust,

Like everyone, I was absolutely devastated at the tragic loss of our colleague and dear friend, Carolyn Cross. When I became director of DCDC in 1999, one of the first persons that all staff wanted me to meet was Carolyn Cross. I went on to know her both personally and professionally. She truly embodied the best in DCDC and our profession.

Please accept my deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy during this difficult time. I hope that with time the pain will subside and we can collectively celebrate all the great accomplishments of Carolyn.

Sincerely,

Odie Washington

Continuing Carolyn Cross' Mission



Photos courtesy of Darby Baham and Bridget Reavis-Tyler

Standing in front of the 13-04 graduating class, Deputy Cross spoke about her expectations for them as they joined the agency. "If you feel pride, professionalism, and passion today, wait," she said. "That sense of pride, professionalism, and passion will only be heightened as you move forward in your career. You are becoming a member of a very large and very professional organization. You are also becoming a steward of an agency that is working to become a benchmark correctional agency that other correctional agencies look up to."

This message was especially significant because Ms. Cross played a key role in creating the Department's vision — for the agency to be a benchmark corrections agency where people serve with pride, professionalism, and passion in caring for human lives. She lived that vision throughout her life and especially during her tenure at the DCDOC.

The legacy she leaves behind should motivate us all to be passionate about our work and to strive for excellence in all we do.



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