



## **State of Missouri 2010 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity Executive Summary**

**Team Name:** Puppies for Parole  
**Nominating Department:** Dept. of Mental Health [approved by the Dept. of Corrections]  
**Nominator:** Judy Finnegan  
**Category:** Innovation

***Summary:*** This program was not developed specifically to address any initial challenge. Rather, the Department of Corrections is constantly seeking ways to enhance their rehabilitative efforts and in the most cost effective manner. At the same time, the business of corrections is a community effort and the DOC's partnerships reflect that. This program offered a new way for the department to give back to Missouri communities by providing a service to local shelters.

As DOC moved forward with establishing Puppies for Parole, they hoped to emulate the success of the C.H.A.M.P.S. service dog program at the Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic Center in Vandalia, Missouri. The institution saw immediate success with the program's inception in 2002. Offenders who desired to participate in the program had an incentive to maintain good conduct; offenders who participated in the program learned the skill of training both rescue dogs and service dogs. Furthermore, it was noted the presence of the dogs improved the overall tenor of the facility. Director Lombardi felt these results could be duplicated in the department's men's prisons and it was his vision to achieve this.

As institutions have committed to establishing the program, staff developed policies for the program, identified local shelters, and drafted memorandums of understanding (MOU). Once the MOU's are finalized and the offenders receive basic training, the dogs are brought into the various institutions.

As the program continues to expand throughout the Department of Corrections, positive feedback from the staff, offenders, and community continues to be received. The support and community interest in the Puppies for Parole program has far exceeded expectations.

Six months into the program, the results are astounding. Already 86 offenders are learning the skills of dog training, developing responsibility, and repaying the community through their work. Even offenders not directly involved in the program show their support by making donations through offender organizations. An additional benefit not anticipated, is the impact on hospice and dementia offender patients. Introducing the dogs to this population has had a profound and therapeutic effect on their treatment. It seems to help the offenders in their daily activities and/or assist them in recalling a more normal or realistic part of their life.

Because of the work by DOC's offenders, 28 of 51 dogs have completed the program and have been adopted. We anticipate DOC's program will inevitably help decrease the number of homeless dogs euthanized in the state of Missouri.



State of Missouri  
2010 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

NOMINATION FORM

GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Missouri Department of Corrections

1. Project or team name.

Puppies for Parole

2. List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or community organization. [please list alphabetically by last name]

- Bisel, Janita: Functional Unit Manager – Western Missouri Correctional Center; Cameron, MO
- Crews, Ryan: Deputy Warden – Western Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center; St. Joseph, MO
- Goebel, Timothy: Corrections Supervisor I – Crossroads Correctional Center; Cameron, MO
- Holland, Tina: Institutional Activities Coordinator – South Central Correctional Center; Licking, MO
- Layden, Michael: Deputy Warden – Missouri Eastern Correctional Center; Pacific, MO
- Lombardi, George A.: Department Director
- Peppers, Kristen: Functional Unit Manager – Eastern Reception Diagnostic & Correctional Center; Bonne Terre, MO
- Wansing, Cindy: Executive II – Jefferson City Correctional Center; Jefferson City, MO

3. Describe the project (200 words or less)

Puppies for Parole is the result of DOC's partnerships with animal shelters and animal advocate groups throughout the state. Selected offenders work as dog trainers to rescue dogs in the program, teaching basic obedience and socialization skills to the canines ultimately making them more adoptable. Once the dogs have successfully completed the program they are placed up for adoption. In just four months, 28 dogs have found new homes, saving them from euthanization.

The benefits of this program are countless. Puppies for Parole gives offenders the skills necessary to support successful rehabilitation and reentry, ultimately improving public safety. At the same time, offenders are afforded an opportunity to give back to Missouri communities. This program has a profound effect on the inmates and staff, increasing the safety and security of each facility. The same dogs spend time with DOC offenders in the hospice unit and those battling mental illness. The impact the animals have had on this population is remarkable.

The results of this program come at no cost to Missouri taxpayers. Puppies for Parole uses no general revenue and operates solely on private donations and donations from offender organizations.

4. Nomination category.

(Check only one)

☒ INNOVATION

☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☐ EFFICIENCY/PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

5. Describe why you selected this nomination category.

This program was selected for the innovation category because of the unique and extraordinarily fruitful partnership between the Department of Corrections and the community. Missouri canines in shelters across the state stand to benefit from this program. It is proven that Puppies for Parole has taken dogs potentially headed for euthanization and given them a second chance. Offenders train the dogs, making them more adoptable. This will reduce the number of homeless canines euthanized in Missouri each year. The offenders in the program receive skills and training that will enhance their rehabilitation, supporting the department's reentry efforts. These benefits and others are part of this groundbreaking program that comes at no cost to Missouri taxpayers.

## II. BACKGROUND

1. When did the team begin?

The decision to pilot the program came in August 2009.

2. When did the team implement this project?

Jefferson City Correctional Center was the first institution to receive dogs in February 1, 2010. Missouri Eastern Correctional Center followed shortly after on February 10, 2010. Nearly half of Missouri's correctional facilities now have the program in place.

3. How long has the project been implemented?

☐ 0 - 3 Months

☐ 4 - 6 Months

☒ 7 - 9 Months

☐ 10 - 12 Months

☐ 12 or more

☐ On-going Project

## III. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. What did the team accomplish? (150 words or less)

This team, comprised largely of volunteers from each site, established and implemented a new rehabilitative/vocational program at no cost to Missouri taxpayers. Those involved effectively established partnerships with several local Missouri animal shelters and animal advocacy groups, resulting in the successful adoption of 28 shelter dogs to date.

2. Which of the following describes the benefits of the accomplishment? (Check all that apply and provide an explanation)

☐ cost reduction

☐ time savings

☐ improved process

☒ other: provides rehabilitative services to offenders, provides vocational training to offenders, established new community partnerships with the Department of Corrections, rescues and rehabilitates homeless canines resulting in adoption, helps supplement care for offenders in hospice and battling mental illness, improves the tenor of Missouri prisons.

3. Explain how the accomplishments of the team are beyond regular duties and responsibilities (150 words or less).

The DOC staff members involved in the Puppies for Parole program have done so on their own accord. This has been a large volunteer effort from Central Office to each of the institutions. Staff who were particularly excited about the program showed great leadership meeting with local shelters, developing memorandums of understanding, policies and criteria for the program, selecting and bringing dogs to the facility, and assisting with training. All of these tasks have been outside the normal working duties of each employee extending into their personal time. Without help from these dedicated individuals Puppies for Parole would not exist.

## IV. MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION

1. Describe how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved. (description should not exceed 300-500 words)

The department is in the process of gathering information to determine how to evaluate the success of the program. At the present time, much of the success is anecdotal. Measures they are looking at include examining the behavioral history of offenders' involved and behavioral history involving the housing units where the dogs are located. The clear outcomes are that more offenders are learning skills, discipline and responsibility. As for the community benefit, the adoption numbers tell the story. Many if not all of these dogs

could have been subject to euthanization because of shelter overcrowding. DOC's own staff are taking the lead in adopting Puppies for Parole dogs.

2. Are the benefits derived from this project: (Check only one.)

☒ Recurring ☐ One-time

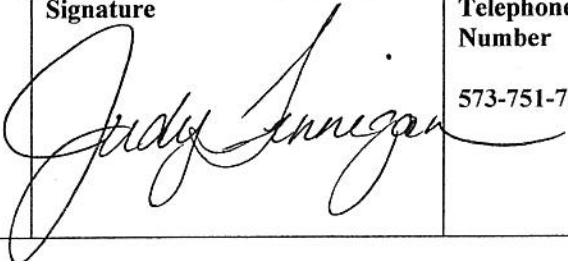
#### V. RECOGNITION/AWARDS

1. Has this project ever been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?  
No.


2. If yes, for which category was it nominated?  
No.

3. Has this project received any other awards or recognition in the past? If yes, describe.  
No.

#### VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

| NOMINATING DEPARTMENT                                                                               |                                                                                     |                  |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Name                                                                                                | Signature                                                                           | Telephone Number | E-Mail Address           |
| Judy Finnegan,<br>Department of Mental<br>Health, Office of<br>Comprehensive Child<br>Mental Health |  | 573-751-7519     | Judy.Finnegan@dmh.mo.gov |

#### VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

| DEPARTMENT   |                                                                                     |                  |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Name         | Signature                                                                           | Telephone Number | E-Mail Address          |
| Janet Gordon |  | 573-751-8067     | Janet.Gordon@dmh.mo.gov |

#### VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

| DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S NAME | DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE*                                                     |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Keith Schafer, Ed.D.       |  |

Nomination must be signed ONLY by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration.  
Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned.