



State of Missouri

2013 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

Executive Summary

Project or team name: Potosi Correctional Center Reintegration Unit

Nominator: Troy Steele, Warden

Nominating Department: (Nominations must include names of all agencies/departments/organizations/businesses, etc.)

Department of Corrections

Category: Innovation

Executive Summary: (Executive Summary page must be 500 words or less, 12 points, Times New Roman font, and left justified. Attach the Executive Summary to the front of the nomination.)

Since the 1990s prison populations in Missouri have increased dramatically. During this same period, community mental health services have dramatically decreased. This resulted in the Missouri prison system becoming over crowded with offenders, many of whom suffer from mental illness. This in turn caused a sharp rise in rates of misbehavior and violence within the facilities. In response to what many perceived as unmanageable prisons, the Department of Corrections often turned to lock down and administrative segregation as a way to manage the violence and misbehavior. States have realized that not only were long-term administrative segregation units expensive to maintain, but recidivism rates as well as suicide rates had risen. Studies have shown that utilization of long-term segregation to curb violent behavior has not been successful, and the idleness and isolation tended to amplify and even create psychiatric conditions and/or symptoms.

In early 2009, dialogue began at the Potosi Correctional Center about the possibility of providing long term programming to offenders mandated to solitary segregation confinement. Although the discussion seemed to be a lofty idea at the time, the idea was in line with the nationwide trend of decreasing the amount of segregated offenders. By early 2011 a written proposal had been submitted for consideration and by April 2011 a strategic plan was established.

A treatment team initially comprised of eighteen staff members from various departments and disciplines met with the common goal of reintegrating segregated offenders into general population. Staff discussions were held to answer questions and address any challenges to be faced. The most common concern expressed was the safety of offenders and staff. We were proposing to allow offenders who had committed brutal assaults or had committed murder while incarcerated an opportunity to be released back into the general population.

The group devised a multidisciplinary approach in which each offender would be evaluated and programming tailored to their individual needs. It was established that each discipline would have an equal say in both the progression and regression of the offender through the process. Safety protocols were put in place in the programming rooms, and specialized seating was established for both programming and recreation.

In October 2011, offenders began to arrive for the program. Each offender was individually assessed, and was provided IQ testing if not already available. After this assessment, offenders were assigned to programming appropriate for their needs. In some instances, this programming had to be developed. Offender progress through the classes was monitored, as well as their behavior and conduct. Modifications to classes and privileges were made as offenders earned or forfeited them through conduct.

Recurring benefits of utilizing this process are not only measured by a consistent decrease in conduct violations, uses of force, staff injuries and property damage but also by the noted increase in appropriate offender behavior.

Prior to utilizing this process, isolated offenders were warehoused in the segregation unit with little to no social interaction. We have shown that through this program that offenders can be reintroduced safely into population.



State of Missouri – 2013 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Department of Corrections

1. Project or team name: Potosi Correctional Center Reintegration Unit

2. List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or community organization: *(Please list alphabetically by last name – 2 to 20 team members maximum.)*

Aubuchon, Elaine	Volunteer in Corrections	Alternatives with Education
Bailey, Rick	Corrections Case Manager II	Department of Corrections
Brannum, Carl	Corrections Officer II	Department of Corrections
Burch, Eric	Corrections Case Manager III	Department of Corrections
Comer, Phillip	Corrections Officer I	Department of Corrections
Conley, Herb	Chaplain	Department of Corrections
Crump, Jamie	Assistant Warden	Department of Corrections
Dix, Elaine	Functional Unit Manager	Department of Corrections
Dunn, Greg	Corrections Supervisor II	Department of Corrections
Glore, Vickie	Corrections Officer I	Department of Corrections
Griffith, Cindy	Deputy Warden	Department of Corrections
House, Karla	Director of Nursing	CORIZON
Hovis, Dave	Corrections Officer I	Department of Corrections
Kircher, Nena	Psychologist	Mental Health Management
Lawson, Teri	Functional Unit Manager	Department of Corrections
Pruett, Stan	Corrections Case Manager II	Department of Corrections
Senter, Phil	Institutional Chief of Mental Health	Mental Health Management
Stuart, Vince	Volunteer in Corrections	Alternatives with Education
Dr. Whitehead, Alwyn	Psychologist	Mental Health Management
Wilson, Scott	Corrections Officer I	Department of Corrections

3. Nomination Category: *(Check only one.)*

☒ INNOVATION

☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☐ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

4. Describe why you selected this nomination category:

Innovation was the selected category based on the program's unique approach of utilizing a multi-disciplinary team to provide programming to offenders that have special security concerns due to the violent aggressive histories that are resulting in their assignment. We have created specialized security chairs to enhance programming capabilities, developed curriculums and adapted individualized goals to meet the needs of the offenders as they arise. As a result, these offenders are returning to less restrictive environments as more productive members of their community both in prison and the public.

II. BACKGROUND

1. When did the team begin its work?

Original proposals were presented in the beginning of 2011.

2. What date did the team initiate the implementation phase of the project?

The first offenders arrived at PCC for programming on 10/4/2011

3. Is the project:

☐ Time Limited

☐ Completed

☒ Ongoing

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Why was the project needed?

The idea of the project is based on the philosophy an offender's overall well-being can be compromised due to long periods of isolation which subsequently contributes to increased amounts of conduct violations, Uses of Force, staff injuries, property damage, and man hours required for processing. Our goal is to eliminate the need for mandated long-term segregation.

2. What were the primary goals of the project? *(150 words or less.)*

When the unit was in the beginning stages our primary goal was to eliminate the need for mandated long-term segregation. As we have pushed forward, we realized that our goal was not meeting the needs of the offender and institution. So, we focused our efforts and realized our primary goal is similar to that of the Department of Corrections Missouri Re-Entry Process. We need to prepare these offenders who have demonstrated maladaptive behaviors in violent and aggressive acts for release either to general population or for release from prison back to their communities. By closely monitoring these offenders and providing intensive programming we are enabling them to develop frustration tolerance, life skills, victim awareness and personal insight. We believe that through this program these offenders will leave administrative segregation with the tools needed to succeed whereas they have failed in the past.

3. Describe the project: *(200 words or less.)*

The Potosi Reintegration Unit was designated as a 24-bed Segregation unit housing mandated long-term single cell offenders. Offenders housed in this unit have been recommended and accepted through the approval of the Deputy Director in an attempt to transition long-term segregation offenders into two-man cells and eventual general population assignments or release from prison to the community. They have each agreed to participate and are individually assessed and monitored through program management team meetings consisting of Custody, Classification, Medical, and Mental Health staff. Furthermore, monthly oversight meetings are conducted to discuss each offender's progress to identify problem areas and to discuss the development of the overall process. Expectations are that they remain conduct violation free, remain medication compliant, participate in individual/group therapy, and attend programming all in an attempt to direct them towards re-socialization. Offenders who refused to participate despite staff interventions are returned to segregation. Once an offender has met all expectations, a recommendation is sent to the Deputy Director for release to general population.

4. Explain how the accomplishment of the team exceeds their regular duties and responsibilities. *(150 words or less.)*

Staff assigned to this unit are going above and beyond normal expectations when interacting with these offenders. It is not uncommon for staff to spend significant amounts of time discussing issues with offenders in an effort to help them process the material they are learning. Volunteers in Corrections have began conducting classes with these offenders. This required the modification of current institutional programs, which prior to this were not offered to segregation offenders. In addition, staff researched and developed new programs through a multi-disciplinary approach which were geared to the specific needs of the offender; i.e. IQ and language barriers. Special security chairs were designed and installed by the staff. Finally, as this program evolves special accommodations are made in order to individualize the program for each offender and their specific needs requiring staff to spend additional time and resources that would not have been utilized previously.

5. Which of the following describes the intended benefits of the project? *(Check all that apply and provide an explanation.)*

☒ Cost Reduction

☐ Time Savings

☒ Increased Effectiveness

☒ Improved Process

☒ Other: Describe

We have enhanced safety and security of the institution through offender modified behavior.

IV. RESULTS / MEASUREMENT

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

Twenty one offenders have actively participated in the unit. A file review for offender conduct violations over the three year period prior to each offender's assignment was completed. Conduct violations are used to report infractions of facility rules and negative behaviors. These violations were utilized to determine the correlation of the improved institutional conduct of the participants. It was discovered that the participants, during that three year period, received 468 conduct violations. In the two years since assignment approximately 30 violations have occurred. Our findings show that the offenders accrued \$558.86 in property damage due to behavioral misconduct prior to placement. Since assigned to the unit, the offenders have not accrued any additional debts due to damage of state property. Of the 367 violations received over the prior three year period, 62 were for assaultive/ aggressive behaviors and 95 were for sexual misconduct. In comparison, since assigned to the unit, participants accrued three violations for sexual misconduct and six for assaultive/aggressive behaviors, all of which were adjudicated as minor conduct violations. In addition, there were approximately 62 reported uses of force prior to the offenders' placement and zero after their arrival to the unit. Finally, offenders were placed on suicide watch/close observation a total of 40 times in five years prior to assignment, and only six times in the last year. This is an estimated 63% reduction in suicide watches/ close observations.

While there were 21 offenders assigned to the program, seven offenders have been discharged. Of these, six offenders were considered successful and have been released to the community or back to the general population in their assigned institutions. These offenders have demonstrated the ability to modify their behaviors. They have not incurred any violations for aggressive behaviors. In addition, they have not been placed on suicide watch or close observation. One offender was considered an unsuccessful discharge due to his unwillingness to participate in the program.

To address cost savings, the overall reduction of conduct violations, offender property damage, and uses of force has resulted in a reduction in staff/offender injuries, an increase in staff productivity, and allowed for reallocation of state resources. In addition, the reduction of suicide watch and close observation placements has resulted in a reduction of custody and mental health interventions. In conclusion, the reintroduction of these offenders into the prison population has resulted in a safer environment for both staff and offenders.

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

☒ Recurring

☐ One-time

- 3. If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained?** (Explain in 150 words or less.)

The program management team will continue meeting with offender participants individually and also in group settings, closely monitoring their behavior and participation levels. Individual problem areas will continue to be identified through team discussion each month. Areas of concern will be addressed utilizing a multidisciplinary approach. Programming will continue to promote offender skills such as self-awareness, frustration tolerance, conflict management, victim awareness and coping. Each offender will be working toward gradually developing self-motivation and positive change through increased levels of social interaction coupled with small incentives. Monthly evaluations through staff and offender feedback will be an integral part of improving offender participation and continued success of the unit.

V. RECOGNITION / AWARDS

- 1. Has this project previously been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity?**
If yes, when?

Yes, 2012

- 2. If yes, for which category was it nominated?**

Efficiency/ Process Improvement

3. Has this project received any other awards or recognition in the past? If yes, describe.

No

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

Nominating Department: Department of Corrections

Name: Troy Steele, Warden

Signature:

Telephone Number: 573-438-6000

E-Mail Address: Troy.Steele@doc.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR'S INFORMATION

Name: Mary Ann Reeter

Signature:

Telephone Number: 573-526-6553

E-Mail Address: MaryAnn.Reeter@doc.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

Department Director's Name:

George A. Lombardi

Signature:

Telephone Number: 573-526-6607

E-Mail Address: George.Lombardi@doc.mo.gov

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