



Volunteer Today

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Volunteering is Everybody's Business

Sal Seanez, Assistant Director, Community Corrections and Detention Division

Ms. Sharon Capeling-Alakija, Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers stated, "If volunteerism is to be transformational in coming years, if it is to cement societies together, if it is to be an "engine of renewal", it needs to figure more prominently in public policy and gain recognition as a valuable, and valued, form of activity. The work of volunteers needs to be honored and celebrated...Affirming that caring matters and that economies exist for the sake of society, not the other way around."

This year, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is proud to have over 15,000 citizens who volunteer their time in institutions and agency facilities. During Volunteer Appreciation Week and throughout the year, we celebrate our staff and citizens who give unselfishly of their time and energies.

We are particularly honored this year to have had one of our institutions selected to receive the Attorney General's Community Service Award. This award is one of two selected from a pool of outstanding candidates nominated by all Department of Justice components. The Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Seagoville, Texas, was selected this year to receive this prestigious award. Staff from Seagoville were recognized by Attorney General John Ashcroft on Thursday, May 24, 2001, as part of the celebration of volunteers by the Department of Justice.

In his remarks following the presentation, the Attorney General gave special accolades to correctional staff who find ways to enhance the quality of life in their local community. There are many worthwhile projects performed by staff at Seagoville. The Affirmative Action Committee established a Student of the Month and Scholarship Program to recognize outstanding seniors at Seagoville High School and provide scholarships to culturally and ethnically diverse students needing assistance to attend college. Through activities sponsored off-site by the Employees' Club, \$6,000 in scholarship funds were raised. These funds were awarded to ten students in a special recognition ceremony at the FCI during May 2000.

A second service activity sponsored by FCI staff is the Talking to Youth Program, which was implemented in 1996 by drug abuse treatment staff. Inmates who are participating in or who have completed the 500-hour residential drug abuse program talk to students at local schools about the mistakes that led to their incarceration. They discuss the importance of staying in school and the choices that young people must make to live a drug-free lifestyle. The feedback received from the schools has been extremely positive. The students tend to place more credibility in the inmates' presentations than they do on training presented by professional educators. Since its inception, the Talking to Youth Program has reached more than 10,000 students. More than 100 employee hours and 150 inmate hours were spent speaking to youth during 2000.

We take this opportunity to congratulate staff at FCI Seagoville for their outstanding work.

Promising Practices

Addie Richburg, Program Coordinator, Volunteer Management Branch

Staff from BOP institutions and administrative offices across the country provide thousands of hours of volunteer service to the communities in which they live. Each year, several of them are recognized; however, the efforts of many more remain unnoticed. This article provides just a sample of some of the outstanding volunteer efforts performed by BOP staff:

Staff at the FDC in Houston have volunteered their time in many efforts to include the construction of a fence for the Eva Maria House, a local residential facility serving mentally disabled tenants.

The Computer Services Department at the Federal Correctional Complex(FCC) in Butner, North Carolina has established a Partnership in Education with Hawley Middle School located in Creedmoor, North Carolina. Weekly for two-four hour sessions, two students from Hawley Middle School visit the Computer Services Department and observe various areas of responsibility. Students are provided an overview of how a computer network system works.

Each computer services staff member provides an overall review of their responsibilities and duties while working in a correctional setting. Additionally, A.F. Beeler, Warden of the Federal Medical Center at Butner, provides an overview of the extensive responsibilities of the computer services department which include services for over 800 staff members at the Federal Correctional Complex.

For the past two years, staff at FCI Ray Brook, New York, their families and friends have sponsored an aid station in the running portion of the IRONMAN USA Lake Placid Triathlon. This was one of only 11 licensed universal IRONMAN races. Over 1,700 athletes from 27 different countries competed in this race to qualify for the National Ironman Triathlon World Championship, which was to be held in Hawaii in October. National television coverage of the entire event appeared on ESPN in October 2000.

The Central Office in Washington, DC, sponsors a day for staff to bring their children to work, known as BOP Kids' Day. Youth have an opportunity to participate in structured activities as well as shadow their parents to gain an interest and appreciation for their work.

In addition to these, there are many outstanding volunteer programs throughout the BOP.

This month, our institution and administrative office staff have been challenged to celebrate volunteerism by joining hands with their communities and colleagues to perform a vital service. We realize volunteerism is often a thankless job. It is the experiences that are invaluable.

VOLUNTEERISM AROUND THE NATION

FCI Bastrop, Texas

Using plants decorated with flags from around the world to commemorate the International Year of Volunteers, FCI Bastrop hosted a volunteer appreciation brunch on Saturday, April 28, 2001.

A total of 56 volunteers from the local community were entertained by the camp inmate choir along with two inmate speakers who expressed their gratitude for the volunteers. In addition, tote bags were awarded to the volunteers and three large plants, grown by inmates in the institution greenhouse, were given as door prizes.

Most BOP institutions across the country host an annual banquet in the evening honoring volunteers. FCI Bastrop broke with tradition by hosting a Saturday brunch.

During Correctional Workers Week Recall on May 18, 2001, staff who had completed self-

nomination forms were recognized. Each received a tote bag and a certificate from the Public Employees Roundtable for Exemplary Community and Public Service.

Although those who choose to volunteer their time prefer most often to remain unrecognized, a sense of fulfillment and pride was experienced at Bastrop by staff and community volunteers, who through their actions, have enriched the lives of others.

FCI Marianna, Florida

Since September 1989, volunteers from Jackson County and surrounding areas have provided services to the inmates incarcerated at the FCI Marianna, Florida.

On Monday, April 23, 2001, staff at FCI Marianna expressed their gratitude to all who had volunteered their talents, time and energy during the prior year.

Approximately 90 volunteers, community relations board members, staff volunteers and their families attended the recognition ceremony held at the Employees Training Center. The keynote speaker was Alice DavisJohnson, Administrator, Volunteer Management Branch, Central Office.

In addition to the banquet, 13 staff submitted self-nominations to the Department of Justice this year to be recognized by the Attorney General. The nominations revealed that staff were engaged in a multitude of activities which are extremely beneficial to the community at large.

At FCI Marianna, volunteerism is in fact everybody's business.

FCI Seagoville, Texas

On April 19, 2001, the Federal Correctional Institution and Federal Prison Camp at Seagoville hosted its annual volunteer appreciation banquet. Approximately 50 community volunteers and their guests, 25 staff and 99 inmates attend.

Throughout the evening, guests were treated to a variety of musical compositions by three inmate bands. A special treat of the evening was a performance by a chapel volunteer who had been inducted into the Poet's Hall of Fame. In addition to citizen volunteers, 33 inmates were acknowledged with certificates for their volunteer contributions.

Two citizen volunteers were selected to receive "Volunteer of the Year" awards. One of the recipients had served as a religious volunteer for the past ten years. The second recipient had served as a volunteer in conducting Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings at the satellite camp for the past four years. Both recipients displayed the positive attributes of outstanding volunteers.

In keeping with the tradition of the prior year, the recipient of the Volunteer of the Year award from the previous year, Mr. Juan Puente, served as the 2001 guest speaker.

Mr. Puente delivered his banquet speech in both English and Spanish. In his own words, he stated his rationale for volunteering as, ". . . just following the Lord's example . . ." In addition to serving the local Hispanic mission, Mr. Puente also performed volunteer work in county jails. He presently conducts weekly Bible study classes and a basic seminary course for inmates at FCI Seagoville. As the only Hispanic volunteer at the institution, his service has been a tremendous asset to the institution.

Institution staff and inmates are pleased each year to honor the work of dedicated local citizens who, like Mr. Puente and others, share their time and energies.

FCI Tucson, Arizona

FCI Tucson observed its annual volunteer appreciation by hosting a banquet on Thursday, April 19, 2001.

The banquet was an evening dedicated to persons from the community who have chosen unselfishly to share their time and energies as volunteers. At Tucson, volunteers from the local community have provided positive strength and support not only for inmates, but also the programs in which they are involved.

Volunteers were presented with certificates, institution-made plaques and were entertained by music provided by the inmates.

At Tucson, volunteers are really viewed as shining stars.