

PRRS Chief's Report

November 19, 2009 to January 21, 2010

Highlights

- **DOCR Budge Reductions:** Due to the County's precarious fiscal challenges, DOCR was required to reduce spending in the current fiscal year (FY'10) by \$977,940. For PRRS, this meant that two vacant case manager positions will remain frozen through June 30, 2010. For FY'11, the DOCR faces reductions of \$4,513,600 or 7% for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. All recommendations will be reviewed by the County Executive prior to his submission of the FY11 Budget to the County Council in March, 2010.
- **Accreditation:** PRRS underwent a follow-up audit by Gina Clay, a representative from the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards, who reported that PRRS program will be recommended for a 100% compliance award. At the conclusion of the audit she indicated that PRRS had shown great effort to address the two (out of 76) standards that it had failed during the April audit – controlling syringes and controlling CDS medication – and she provided a passing rating. In addition, she noted with appreciation our demonstrated effort to implement all of the 14 recommendations that she had made during the prior audit. During her remarks, she noted how unique PRRS is in Maryland in providing such expansive community corrections operations for such a challenging population, and she considered our demonstrated practices in a range of areas among the best. She was generous in praise for all PRRS staff, and singled out RS Karla Rhodes and RS Jaspar Ezeigbo for their excellent preparation of the audit materials, and Nurse Practitioner Lynn Williams for her efforts to raise our standards in medical services across the board
- **Recidivism Study:** PRRS, working with a consultant Justice Strategies and Solutions, presented the findings of its two-year recidivism report before the County Council's Public Safety Committee on December 3 and before a "Statestat" meeting on 12/16 organized by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. Assessment and Quality Services Manager (AQSM) Tina Michael presented the findings of the study at a workshop at the most recent conference of the American Society of Criminology Conference held in Philadelphia held on 12/4. A one-page summary of the study is attached to this report, and the findings will be discussed at length in a subsequent Community Advisory Committee hearing. Importantly, the study was not a program evaluation of PRRS, but provided recidivism statistics for a representative sample of sentenced offenders who left DOCR custody in 2003/2004 from the two jails and PRRS.
- **December Storm:** PRRS continued normal operations through the County-declared emergency on 12/18-21 through the great efforts of staff members many of

whom had to sleep onsite and work multiple shifts at the facility during the duration of the storm. They were recognized for their outstanding service to our program during this significant storm event.

Program Developments

- **Staff Training on Mental Health Issues:** Dr. Gus Weiland, who provides 10 hours of psychiatric services at PRRS weekly, provided an hour-long training to approximately 20 staff members on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Approximately 7-9% of PRRS residents have this diagnosis, and the purpose of the training was to discuss the medication options and behavioral treatment used to address this condition.
- **University of Pittsburgh's Institute of Politics' Reentry Report:** This report profiled PRRS as a model program in a publication meant to assist statewide efforts to improve reentry efforts in Pennsylvania. The link to the report is: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/doctmpl.asp?url=/content/docr/PRRS/jailrecidivism.asp>
- **FBOP Contract Renewal:** PRRS submitted a renewal application with the Federal Bureau of Prison to continue to transition returning federal offenders through our program. The three-year renewal would begin April 1, 2010 and run through March 31, 2013. PRRS calculated is per diem rate at \$150.79 which is higher than our current rate of \$113.47.
- **Family Justice Grant:** The DOCR's PRRS and MCCF Reentry programs are being considered for participation in a national program funded by the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance. The program will assist DOCR further its involvement of family members in the delivery of its reentry services.
- **Community Service in celebration of MLK Day:** PRRS interns and residents collected food items and monies to benefit Manna Food on Saturday and Sunday (1/17, 1/18) in front of the Giant Grocery Store at Montrose Crossing. The response from the public was excellent, and hundreds of dollars worth of food and cash were collected.
- **Let's Talk Employment:** PRRS Work Release Coordinators and Unit Manager Chris Johnson have begun a monthly meeting with workforce development staff from other agencies in the county that work with hard-to-employ individuals. The meetings involve upwards of 20 individuals and include representatives from the County Shelter, Drug Court, Parole and Probation, Montgomery Works, Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers, and the Department of Economic Development Workforce Investment Board, and serve as an excellent networking opportunity.
- **Conservation Corp:** In November of 2009, several staff members including WRCs Sylvia Hernandez and Hillel Raskas joined in the twenty-fifth celebration of the founding of the Montgomery County Conservation Corps. The event, led by County Chief Executive Isaiah Leggett and Council Chair Phil Andrews, recognized the Corps for providing training and educational opportunities for out-of-school and unemployed youth ages 17-25 in conservation, woodworking and landscaping. Many PRRS residents have joined the Corps, earning their GED, valuable work experience and financial vouchers for future educational efforts.

- **New Montgomery Works Location:** In December of 2009, WRCs Sylvia Hernandez and Hillel Raskas attending the opening of the new location based in the Upcounty Regional Services Center in Germantown. Montgomery Works provides services for both job seekers and employers and opens its doors to PRRS residents upon release. The WRCs are in continuing contact with Montgomery Works and partner with the agency in offering job fairs and training for PRRS residents.
- **Further Workforce Development Efforts:** As a follow-up to last quarter's Community Advisory Committee, Co-Chair Diane Scott-Jones and WRC Hillel Raskas met with the store manager of the new Harris Teeter located across the street. The purpose of the visit was to encourage Harris Teeter to consider applicants from PRRS for employment in the future, and the meeting proved enormously successful. Also the WRCs worked with Barbara Kaufman, Executive Director of the County's Workforce Investment Board and Ed Roberts from Montgomery College to explore training program opportunities for our residents in weatherization.
- **Federal Grants:** The federal government announced seven grant solicitations under the auspices of the Second Chance Act of 2007 that will provide \$90 million in awards. DOCR is reviewing these solicitations and looking at a number of partnerships to determine whether it will apply for funding.
- **NACO Award:** In December, County Executive Leggett recognized all county agencies that earned NACO Achievement Awards. Out of thirteen received county-wide, DOCR accounted for three including PRRS' Respect Opens Doors program.
- **Medication Protocol:** PRRS Nurse Practitioner Lynn Williams and DOCR Health Services Administrator are developing an improved protocol governing the receipt of medication and records during the transfer of residents to PRRS.
- **Staff Meeting:** In order to further communications within the Division, the weekly staff meeting was made open to all staff members beginning October 29. The meeting time and day was changed to Thursday at 1pm to allow more staff to attend.
- **Transport Incident:** On 12/4, several staff were assaulted during a transport of an uncooperative resident from Unit 1 back to the jail. Fortunately, the assault and resulting injuries were minor, but as is policy, criminal charges were filed against the resident. A critical debriefing on the incident occurred on 1/20/10.

Personnel

- **Resident Supervisor Garrick Peterkin:** PRRS welcomed this 12-year veteran of corrections to the program on 12/7. Garrick worked for the Maryland Division of Correction from 1997 -2007, and joined DOCR as a correctional officer in January 2008. In his career, he has worked Death Row, and prior to coming to PRRS, took second jobs at two halfway houses in Baltimore to develop his interest and experience in community corrections. He is currently completing a Bachelors Degree in Information Science from ITT Technical Institute which he expects to receive in June 2010.
- **Intern Appointment:** Jonathan Bruser joined PRRS in December as part of the county's Customized Employment Public (CEP) Intern Project. In these challenging fiscal times, the DOCR has proactively sought to identify resources outside of the Department's budget that might assist us carry our mission. Jonathan provides

administrative support to Unit 3 Tuesday through Fridays from 10am – 2:30pm. He is a Montgomery County resident and recently earned his associates degree from Broward County in Florida.

- **Intern Program:** The internship program – consisting of paid Community Correction Interns, Social Work Interns, and Non-Credit Interns -- has been an integral and operational part of PRRS throughout its history, and also prepares individuals for careers in corrections and other social services. Currently, 25% of PRRS staff began their careers at PRRS as interns. The current roster of interns includes:
 1. Margherita Bebi (Supervisor – Reentry Assessment Specialist Kendra Jochum) who began her internship June 10, 2009. She has a degree in medical anthropology from Anthropology State University of Perugia in Italy. Margherita spent six years providing relocation services to Burmese refugees before moving to the United States. She is multi-lingual, mother tongue is Italian, fluent in French and English, and advanced skills in Spanish, Norwegian and Burmese.
 2. Becky Segal (Supervisor – Resident Supervisor Will Brown) began her internship June 10, 2009. She is a graduate of Purdue University with degrees in Youth, Adult and Family Services and Law and Society. Along with her internship, she is working with the County's Volunteer Fire Department and working towards her EMT certification.
 3. Karen Padilla (Supervisor – Case Manager Tyrone Alexander) began her internship August 12, 2009. She has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from The George Washington University. Karen works on Unit 3 and also provides assistance to screening by completing intakes for state and federal offenders.
 4. Quentin Thomas (Supervisor Resident Supervisor Paola Zapata) began his internship September 5, 2009. He has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland and is working towards his Master's Degree in Homeland Security. Quentin maintains the intern statistics and provides transportation and coordination for the residents to obtain clothes at Interfaith.
 5. Camille Duncan Supervisor (Supervisor Work Release Coordinator Sylvia Hernandez) began her internship June 10, 2009. Camille is working on her bachelor's degree from Trinity University. She demonstrates her creativity in maintaining the recreation trip board and assists in the Career Resource Center. She worked on Unit 3 and moved to Unit 4 a few months ago.
 6. Denise Tennant-Brown (Supervisor Case Manager Cindy Boyd) began her internship December 21 and is a graduate of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. She worked for the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia for over five years as Community Supervision Officer.
 7. Monica Davalos (Supervisor Work Release Coordinator Carlos Mellott) began her internship on December 21. She has a bachelor's degree in Psychology for the University of California Santa Cruz and a Master's Degree in International Peace and Conflict Resolution. She worked in Guatemala in a program targeting ex-gang members and at-risk youth to decrease gang violence. She begins her internship on Unit 3 on December 21, 2009.

Over the course of several years, Unit Manager Jim Shannon cultivated relationships with many universities to develop our social work intern program. His dedication to making PRRS a "teaching program" has earned great respect and we have far more requests for placements than we can accommodate. Requirements of social work programs in all of these universities are some of the most demanding that exist in any field. We are fortunate to have four students, two working towards Bachelor's of Social Work degrees at UMBC and two working towards Master's Degrees at the University of Maryland. Supervision for these students requires a commitment of time, energy, enthusiasm, as well as licensure. Unit Manager Pat Braun and Reentry Assessment Specialist Kendra Jochum epitomize the characteristics required for the role of social work supervisors, clinical skill, commitment, and support.

Our social work interns are:

1. Esther Hadoto and Karen Silva are academic social work interns through the undergraduate program at UMBC. They will provide case management services to a small caseload of participants on Unit 1 as they learn about social work and reentry practices. Both Karen and Esther work Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-9pm, and they will be with us through May 2010 as they complete this field internship. In addition to individual case management services, they will be assisting with the weekly women's group as well as providing specialized assistance to the unit through short term projects and task assignments.
2. Luci Quinn is a foundation student in the social work program at the University of MD, Baltimore. In 2009 Ms. Quinn graduated from the University of Maryland (College Park) with a BS in Psychology and Minor in Conflict Management and International Development. Ms. Quinn's prior field related experience includes a position as a campus peer counselor at the University of MD HELP Center; an internship with Conflict Solutions International; Research Assistant in the Memory and Decision Lab for the University of MD Psychology Department and volunteer experiences at the Shepherd Pratt Health System's psychotic disorders unit. Ms. Quinn notes a special interest in multiculturalism and social justice.
3. Marwan Castellani is also a foundation student in the social work program at the University of MD, Baltimore. In 2006, Mr. Castellani earned his BA in Psychology from the University of MD (College Park). In addition to his studies, Mr. Castellani is employed by the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC as a Child Psychiatric Specialist. He has also had experience working with autistic adults and children. Mr. Castellani is fluent in French and has a particular interest in working with adolescents and children experiencing life transitions and the delivery of mental health services after completion of his MSW.
4. Jessica Montgomery is a fourth-year student at Washington Theological Union, and she will graduate this May with a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies. She did her undergraduate studies at Georgetown University, graduating with a Bachelor in Foreign Service with an focus on International Politics and African Studies. She was born in Paris, France, and is fluent in French and Spanish. She is using her fluency to teach a bi-weekly ESL class at the PRC for Spanish-speaking residents. She is also mentoring a young woman resident. She receives

supervision from Melissa George, a former Community Corrections Intern and current Welcome Home Program Coordinator.

- **Shift Assignments:** Staff assumed their new shift assignments on January 3 based on scheduled that they bidded on by seniority in October. Newly promoted Case Managers Andrew Lautar and Andrea Baker

Facility

- **Solar Panels:** The County's Department of General Services (DGS) is funding a project to reduce energy usage at the PRRS which will include replacing the solar panels on top of the building which have not been used for decades. Additionally, the facility will undergo a modest weatherization improvement.
- **Fire Alarm System:** The new PRRS fire alarm system is near completion, and will be activated in the next several weeks. The new system has smoke/heat detectors in all rooms and locations in the building, and will provide audible and visual notification of alarms.
- **Generator:** DGS arranged the installation of the first of two new back-up generators for PRRS. The current generator replaces one that failed in the fall of 2008, and powers basic life/safety systems in the building. The second generator, to be installed later this winter, will provide enhanced back-up of additional lighting, HVAC, and security equipment. The total project cost is estimated at \$170,000.
- **Sewer Right of Way:** The County and the LCOR development company are planning to lay a new sewer pipe in an easement between the Pre-Release Center and the Washington Gas Company. The project will require the removal of a number of trees in the back of the parking lot, but new trees will be planted as part of a well-conceived landscaping plan.
- **Drug Testing:** Resident Supervisor Ivan Downing, Assessment and Quality Services Manager (AQSM) Tina Michaels, and Unit Manager James Shannon assisted PRRS migrate to a more advanced drug testing software system throughout the state of Maryland. Almost all staff have been trained on the new system.
- **New ID System:** Assessment and Quality Services Manager Tina Michaels assisted in the implementation of a new ID system that provides a more professional and secure identification system for residents and staff. The previous system used Polaroid pictures and typewritten cards, which have been upgraded considerably with the latest technology. Resident IDs are color coded.

Other Visits/Events/Meetings:

- **National Institute of Correction/Urban Institute (1/20):** Several program officers from the Urban Institute and a representative of the National Institute of Corrections visited PRRS in the morning and MCCF in the afternoon. The Urban Institute is managing a NIC-funded Transition to Jail and a Justice Reinvestment Technical Assistance Project in nine counties across the country, and the purpose of the visit was to share with them the well-developed Reentry Models in Montgomery County.
- **America Works (12/21):** Pete Wikul, a 39-year retired veteran of the Navy Seals, visited PRC on behalf of America Works, a well-regarded for-profit job placement

organization based in NYC. He is leading the effort of his organization to open up an office in Washington DC that will serve veterans, and was referred to our program by a number of organizations in DC. He met with the Work Release Coordinators and the Division Chief, spoke with residents, and was provided a tour of the facility. As he was leaving, he was effusive in his praise for the quality of the staff and program.

- **Federal Bureau of Prison (12/15):** FBOP conducted a quarterly monitoring visit and found no deficiencies in the program. The Contract Oversight Manager interviewed federal residents, inspected several rooms, and spoke to staff, and was extremely complimentary of the services provided by PRRS. He indicated that the program continues to be among the best funded by FBOP anywhere in the country.
- **American University (11/30):** Unit Manager James Shannon lectured a class of 135 undergraduates at American University's who were studying Justice and Public Policy. He provided a basic overview of corrections in the US and drilled down to reentry efforts at the local level. Several PRRS staff members have become the selected speakers for several professors at AU when it comes to addressing correctional policy.
- **Affordable Housing (12/11):** PRRS staff met with a representative from a development company that has specialized in affordable housing for the past 35 years to discuss ways to assist program participants find suitable housing arrangements post-release.
- **Volunteers of America (12/9):** The Division Chief visited a pre-release facility in Baltimore that serves federal residents and that is managed by the Volunteers of America. The purpose of the visit was to exchange ideas about practices and policies.
- **University of Maryland's University College (11/23):** Pre-Trial's Ben Stevenson brought a class of twelve students to PRRS and they received a program overview by Unit Manager James Shannon.
- **Allegheny County Delegation (11/20):** PRRS hosted a large delegation of representatives from the courts, corrections, human services, and housing from this Pennsylvania County. They are participating in the NIC's Transition to Jail's project, and have begun a strategic plan to improve reentry services in their area. The tour was organized by Unit Manager Patricia Braun who was assisted by Case Managers Nichole Davis and Dan Keener and Work Release Coordinator Hillel Raskas.

Population Served

	October	November	December
Local ADP	145	139	134
Federal ADP	26	28	27
State ADP	5	6	9
Total APD	176	173	169
PRC ADP	158	156	156
Home Confinement	18	17	13

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Escapes/Court Hearings: No escapes to report. Two escapes occurred in CY'09 and both individuals were swiftly apprehended and successfully prosecuted.

- Furlough Hearing (11/18): PRRS opposed, with the support from the State Attorney's Office, a furlough granted by court order to one of its residents to participate in a Dance Competition in Ohio for several days. The Division Chief testified that PRRS opposes all out-of-state furloughs, and that this order was neither in the best interest of the program or the resident. Nonetheless, the furlough was granted and the resident did participate in the competition. He returned without incident (also without dance medals).