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## Board Bulletin

# Governor's Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Awards

*By Oliver J. Bell, Chairman*

Each spring, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice has the honor of hosting the Governor's Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Awards Ceremony. Created in 1995, these service awards honor individuals that unselfishly give of themselves to assist in the rehabilitation of offenders and to provide the offenders with hope and opportunities for a better life.

Currently, the TDCJ has more than 19,000 approved volunteers serving in various roles, assisting within the agency and the community. During FY 2013, these individuals gave more than 459,000 hours of valuable service, making a difference in the future of our state. These volunteers work with Chaplaincy, provide education, aid offenders during reentry, assist victims and work in departmental offices providing endless support. This article highlights a few of those individuals recognized during the 19th Annual Governor's Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Awards Ceremony, held on April 17, 2014.

The recipient of the Carol S. Vance Volunteer of the Year for 2014 was Maxine Young. Ms. Young provides leadership in the 12 Step meetings at Mountain View, Henley



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and Plane State Jail. Maxine has focused on increasing offender peer educator knowledge of HIV/AIDS and chronic illness, as well as the importance of personal health, that directly affect the general population. The offender peer-led programs where she has shared her expertise include Wall Talk, Women to Women, Parenting, Best for Baby and Somebody Cares programs. Maxine also coordinated and maintained Get Started Girl funded by the Office of Women's Health to assist women releasing from prison as well as Project Start funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where she provided case management, linkage to care, secure housing, medications and transportation. Services have expanded throughout the TDCJ and contracted facilities. Maxine's selfless journey of generosity extends beyond the walls of the TDCJ to ex-offenders and men and women who are homeless, hungry and those with chronic illnesses. She performs services for the Houston adult parole offices providing "Welcome Home Groups"

which includes family reunification, reconciliation, food, clothes, transportation and the sharing of resources available to the releasees.

This year, the TDCJ Employee Volunteer Award was given to Clint Morris. Mr. Morris is employed at the Wynne Unit. As a TDCJ Chaplaincy employee for the past five years, Clint Morris has served the agency's Jewish and Native American programs. His professionalism, enthusiasm and passion for what he does shows in every project he is tasked with. As a volunteer, Mr. Morris co-facilitates Toastmasters at the Wynne Unit every Tuesday evening. Toastmasters International focuses on teaching offenders how to write and present speeches to an audience. When asked why he devotes his volunteer time to this program he stated, "I believe as a criminal justice professional, it is my responsibility to play a part in restorative justice. Toastmasters' allows me to be a servant leader." In 2001, Clint Morris and his wife Michelle developed a ministry called Character House Outreach. At the time, Mr. Morris lived in Ohio and worked for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. Mr. and Mrs. Morris have presented compassion,

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love and communications by sharing their faith through Christ-like Biblical principles and teaching offenders how the principles can be applied to everyday life. Character House Outreach also serves the community by volunteering at the Hospitality House located in Huntsville, Texas; preparing meals; organizing craft activities for the offenders' families and sharing their faith and love. Mr. Morris continues to challenge himself. He has written and published a book called "The Character Path" which focuses on the development of one's Biblical character.

Senior Warden Joe Grimes was also recognized at this year's ceremony. He is a leader with strong core values and a strong desire to promote positive change in offender behavior through proven evidenced-based programs. Joe consistently portrays the leadership and vision of the TDCJ mission toward offender rehabilitation. He incorporated medium custody (G4) offenders in Kairos religious services. Medium custody offenders often display negative attitudes toward rehabilitation. They generally lack interpersonal skills, and are often challenged when dealing with anger management issues. Warden Grimes recruited volunteers in this area with an Anger Management Certification and was able to help those individual offenders who displayed a willingness to change. Because of his support for success Warden Grimes has been selected to receive the Criminal Justice Administrator award.

The names of all 21 award recipients honored at this year's event are noted in the table provided. Information on each of this year's recipients is available on the TDCJ website.

The service of these individuals and organizations as well as the tens of thousands of other volunteers working within the TDCJ

is invaluable. They play an important role across the state. In recognition of their service, I ask that each of you join me in extending our appreciation to the volunteers that are working among us. They are making a valuable contribution to the betterment of our community and our state. ●

Recipient	Award
Barry Brown	Chaplaincy Department
Claude Sumrall	Correctional Institutions Division
AIDS Foundation Houston	Health Services Division
Thomas M. Webb	Nancy Hees Award - Parole Division
James McClurkin	Private Facility Contract Monitoring/Oversight Division
Christ Church United Methodist	Religious Service
John Yaws	Religious Service
Edward S.	Substance Abuse Treatment Program
Teresa "Teri" Darby	Pathfinder Award - Victim Services Division
Literacy Highland Lakes	Judy Burd Award - Windham School District
Michael "Tac" Buchanan	Restorative Justice
Carla Hooten	Susan Cranford Award - Female Offender Program
"Possum Talks"	Most Innovative Program
Terry County Christian Association	Community Service
"My Dad Reads to Me Program"	Best Family Program
Ronald Zifer	Leonard Davis Award For Most Hours Served
Jeremy Itz	Extensive Travel
Clint Morris	TDCJ Employee Volunteer
Lloyd Michael Warren	WSD Employee Volunteer
Joe Grimes	Criminal Justice Administrator
Maxine Young	Carol S. Vance Volunteer of the Year