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Keynotes

CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISORS ORGANIZATION



2022

MEDAL OF VALOR CEREMONY

*CCSO Members Honored for Going
Above and Beyond the Call of Duty*

See Page 6



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TAKING OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MEMBERS SERIOUSLY



ART GONZALES
CCSO State President

As we begin the final quarter of the year, I want to express my gratitude to our members and chapter presidents for supporting the dues increase that recently took effect. Thank you so much for entrusting us with the resources to offer the best services we possibly can. We know how hard you work to earn that money, and I assure you that we are committed to working just as hard to advocate on your behalf and provide you with top-notch member benefits that will make our organization second to none.

With the increase in revenue comes a heightened duty to take good care of those funds and spend them wisely. We just completed an audit of CCSO's finances, and the process brought to light a number of ways in which we can be more fiscally

responsible with our use of the membership dues. You will see changes in the coming months as we work to establish policies and put safeguards in place to ensure greater transparency and accountability, including having the Board be more involved in spending decisions. All this will help to protect your contributions and the organization as a whole as we move forward and continue to grow and evolve.

**With the increase
in revenue comes
a heightened duty
to take good care
of those funds and
spend them wisely.**

In other news, the walk time case is nearing its conclusion. I think our members will be happy to know that a settlement agreement has been reached and, after many years, this litigation is finally coming to an end. We anticipate it will be resolved within the next 12 to 15 months and our membership will get what they are entitled to. Thank you to all the members and chapter presidents who were heavily involved in providing

information to support the case, which was instrumental in bringing this lawsuit to a resolution at long last.

CCSO is busy fighting for equal treatment for our members when it comes to pay and benefits. One issue we're working on is the fact that the rank and file receive 1% more in longevity pay than supervisors do, which adds up to a huge difference over the years in terms of retirement. We will be discussing adjustments with CalHR so that supervisors can be entitled to the same benefit that is being given to the individuals they supervise.

Another issue concerns health care. In areas of California that CalPERS has identified as "rural" because no HMO plan is available there for members to enroll in, the state offers a subsidy to offset the higher health-care expenses of PPO members. While rank-and-file corrections officers receive this subsidy, it is not currently available to supervisors. CCSO is initiating discussions with CalHR to pursue the objective of getting an equal subsidy for our members in those areas.

Issues like these demonstrate why it's so important to invest in the future of CCSO, so that we can be fully equipped to take on the many battles that will continue to come our way. Building a strong,

efficient organization is key to ensuring our members are treated fairly and professionally, and that your contributions are rightfully esteemed and compensated. From the amazing accomplishments that were recognized in this year's Medal of Valor ceremony (see page 6) to the quiet acts of everyday heroism performed by so many of you in the course of your duties, CCSO values each of our members and is dedicated to providing you with the representation and benefits you deserve.

Thank you again for your trust in me and in our Board of Directors, chapter presidents and staff. 🗝️

IT'S OPEN ENROLLMENT TIME!

You have until November 30, 2022, to enroll or make changes to your benefits. Don't miss out on the free accident insurance CCSO provides to our members, and learn about the additional coverage options available to you.

See page 27 for more details.

FAMILY FIRST

Join today and bank with a place that provides benefits to law enforcement and their families.

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MEDAL *of* VALOR

CEREMONY

SACRAMENTO • CALIFORNIA

2022



**Mary Towe | CCSO Chief Financial Officer/
Chief Operating Officer**

CCSO was proud to host the 37th annual Medal of Valor ceremony at Creekside Christian Church of Elk Grove on September 23. After having the awards presented via video for the last two years due to the pandemic, it was a pleasure to once again be able to gather in person to celebrate the heroic efforts of the men and women of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

The ceremony began with the presentation of colors by the Richard A. McGee Correctional Training Center Honor Guard and a performance of the national anthem by CCSO member Naomi Davis, a Correctional Counselor III with the Division of Rehabilitative Programs. Following an invocation by Chaplain Greg Mellor from California State Prison, Sacramento, CDCR Secretary Kathleen Allison spoke about the significance of the event and the amazing achievements of the honorees. She also



The Richard A. McGee Correctional Training Center Honor Guard



Folsom State Prison Correctional Sergeant Jacob Fillmore, who passed away due to cancer and was presented with the Bronze Star posthumously, was represented at the ceremony by a hat and gloves on his empty chair.



CCSO members in the spotlight: Division of Rehabilitative Programs Correctional Counselor III Naomi Davis sang the national anthem as Lieutenant Sam Robinson, master of ceremonies, looked on.

took a moment to pay tribute to the Medal of Valor's longtime master of ceremonies, CCSO Vice President Lieutenant Sam Robinson, as he prepares to retire (see page 14). Then came the awards presentation, in which 43 people — including the nine CCSO members

highlighted here — were recognized for their bravery in responding to crises and life-threatening situations, as well as exemplary work benefiting the Department and the community.

CCSO Administrative Services Supervisor Nicole Rollins-Player, Senior Regional Representative Art Gonzales Sr., Regional Representative Mike Romero, Labor Manager Gil Valenzuela and I were on hand to represent the organization, present information to non-members, offer branded merchandise to members and provide goodies for the children in attendance. As always, it was a moving experience to hear the inspiring stories of the honorees' successes and to celebrate their dedication and professionalism. CCSO has sponsored the Medal of Valor ceremony for 18 years and counting because we believe in the importance of acknowledging the exemplary work that our members and their colleagues do

every day in serving the people of California.

Congratulations to the following CCSO members for going above and beyond!

Continued on page 8

CORRECTIONAL SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR



Marvin Caruthers
*Correctional Lieutenant,
Chuckawalla Valley State Prison*

This award is given to a person who serves as a positive role model and fosters an environment that supports a balance between professional development, professional job performance and personal wellness. The recipient conducts themselves professionally through fair, honest and ethical behavior.

Lieutenant Caruthers joined CDCR in November 2008 and is currently the Personnel Assignments Lieutenant at Chuckawalla Valley State Prison (CVSP), a position he has held since April 2020. This challenging assignment was given to him just as the COVID-19 public health emergency was gaining ground. Lieutenant Caruthers was able to navigate all of the challenges created by the pandemic and worked to ensure CVSP continued to flourish.

Lieutenant Caruthers lives the definition of collaboration and hand-in-hand work with other staff. He has accommodated all the staff he interacts with, and goes out of his way to assist others. He is always concerned with the “big picture” for CVSP as a whole — he works hard to ensure the institution is successful.

DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



Denita Razo
*Acting Captain, Northern California
Youth Correctional Center*

This award is given to a person who provides opportunities for growth and change by identifying and responding to the unique needs of our youth. The award recipient helps do this through effective treatment, education and interventions in order to encourage positive lifestyles, reduce recidivism, strengthen families and protect our communities.

Lieutenant/Acting Captain Razo has gone above and beyond in her role at Northern California Youth Correctional Center (NCYCC) since August 2021. She has guided the complex through annual audits such as the 1800 Security Audit. She was also a vital part in combining two separate youth correctional facilities (O.H. Close YCF and N.A. Chaderjian YCF) into one functioning facility. She coordinated training and helped facilitate scheduling for Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) staff to work safely at both of the facilities.

Acting Captain Razo has also been a key member of the executive team in DJJ's transition to closure. She was vital in organizing the peace officer staff transitional picks to adult institutions. She is very proficient in policy and training and always makes herself available for staff who need help. She is a lead in the Peer Support Program and very active in providing peer support to our staff during these transitional times. Staff excel under her supervision and continue to respond well under her leadership.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL



Dr. Carl "Fab" Fabrizio Jr.
*Chief Psychologist, Substance
Abuse Treatment Facility*

This medal is awarded for an employee's work conduct with the Department for a period of months or years, or involvement in a specific assignment of unusual benefit to the Department.

Dr. Fabrizio, better known as "Dr. Fab" by his patients and colleagues at the Substance Abuse Treatment Facility and State Prison, Corcoran (SATF), has rendered distinguished service to CDCR for 21 years.

Dr. Fab began his career in 2001 as a Clinical Psychologist with the California Youth Authority, now known as the Division of Juvenile Justice, at Heman G. Stark Youth Correctional Facility in Chino. He dedicated eight years to treating 17- to 25-year-old seriously mentally ill — sometimes violent — people in both the Intensive Treatment Program and Intensive Behavioral Treatment Program. He was also a member of the combined custody/mental health training team that conducted in-service training on a host of custody and mental health-related topics to all staff.

When H.G. Stark closed in February 2010, Dr. Fab transferred to the Southern Youth Correctional Reception Center and Clinic in Norwalk. He continued providing individual and group therapy and psychological assessment to the most serious mentally ill and violent youthful offenders in the state for an additional two years. When the Southern Clinic also closed in 2012, he transferred to a Clinical Psychologist position at the Region IV Division of Adult Parole Operations, Parole Outpatient Clinic in Orange County. There, Dr. Fab provided individual and group psychotherapy to seriously mentally ill parolees and registered sex offenders.

When the passing of Assembly Bill 109 eliminated his position, Dr. Fab transferred to the Joint Department of State Hospitals/CDCR Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) program. This innovative, highly demanding hybrid inpatient treatment was taught by outside consultants and took three years to complete. Dr. Fab simultaneously provided DBT to incarcerated patients and state hospital patients. His leadership helped establish the first fully staffed comprehensive DBT treatment program in California in 2014.

At SATF, Dr. Fab has supervised the Short-Term Restricted Housing, Clinical Correctional Case Management and Enhanced Outpatient programs with diligence, flexibility and professionalism. For the past two years, he has served SATF as Chief Psychologist during the institution's most trying and incredibly demanding transition in and through the COVID-19 pandemic. He has demonstrated exceptional leadership, nimble responsiveness and visible stamina while meeting his daily operational goals and overarching vision to provide world-class mental health treatment.

Continued on page 10

BRONZE STAR

The Bronze Star is awarded for saving a life without placing oneself in peril. The employee shall have used proper training and tactics in a professional manner to save, or clearly contribute to saving, the life of another person.



Rodney Speight
*Correctional Lieutenant,
California State Prison, Solano*

While driving in South Lake Tahoe on May 9, 2021, Lieutenant Speight observed a vehicle veer out of its lane and into oncoming traffic, crashing through the guardrail and rolling over multiple times, ejecting the driver.

He quickly put on his hazard lights and made a U-turn, pulling off onto the shoulder. He observed an adult female had been ejected from the vehicle and was lying face-down in the dirt. He noticed she was breathing but had a compound fracture of her left ankle and a large bruise on the left side of her forehead and eye.

He and another passerby placed her in a position so she could better breathe. Others stopped to lend assistance, noticed an infant in the vehicle and pulled her out. Emergency medical services arrived on the scene and airlifted both driver and infant to the nearest trauma center.

Lieutenant Speight gave a report to CHP officers. His quick, decisive actions brought a dangerous situation under control.

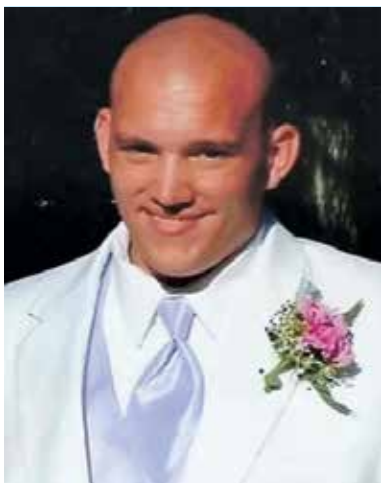


Andres Banuelos
*Correctional Captain,
California Institution for Men*

Captain Banuelos was exiting the institution on October 22, 2021, when he noticed a car pulled over on the wrong side of the curb. He saw a woman exit the vehicle and start walking on the road against traffic. When he approached the woman and asked if he could help her, she put her arms around him, hugged him and said, "I'm ready to go, God is good and I'm ready." She was holding a teddy bear and a note with money around it.

She then darted into the street against traffic with an 18-wheeler bearing down on her. Captain Banuelos grabbed her and carried her to the sidewalk. He then called the Watch Commander and requested a Code 1 response with 9-1-1 assistance.

Chino police arrived and took her into custody for further observation. Captain Banuelos' actions saved her life that day.



Jacob Fillmore
Correctional Sergeant,
Folsom State Prison



Heriberto Mora
Correctional Lieutenant,
Ironwood State Prison



John Bradley
Correctional Sergeant,
Ironwood State Prison

On May 24, 2021, at Folsom State Prison, Correctional Officer Don Breakey was attempting to contact one of the prison's perimeter tower officers via telephone but was unable to get an answer. Becoming concerned, he requested Officers Kevin Ginni and Daniel Dela Cruz, who were signing in for their shift, to go to the tower and check on the officer. Since Officer Breakey was busy operating his gate, he called another tower officer, Vance Wheatley, and told him to keep trying to contact the tower officer via telephone while Officers Ginni and Dela Cruz were headed to the tower. Officer Wheatley was unable to contact the tower officer on the phone, so he called the Folsom Prison Fire Department.

Officers Dela Cruz and Ginni arrived and climbed the tower ladder. Through the glass window of the tower hatch door, they could see the officer was lying on the floor, unconscious. Officers Ginni and Dela Cruz were unable to gain entry to the tower as the hatch door was locked. Outside Patrol Correctional Sergeant Jake Fillmore retrieved the emergency entry Tower Key from Tower #1 Officer Serg Kapanzhi and reported immediately to the tower of the officer having the medical emergency.

Sergeant Fillmore and Officers Ginni and Dela Cruz rendered first aid as soon as they gained entry to the tower and until the Folsom Prison Fire Department arrived. Because of all of their heroic actions that day, the officer was able to return to work two days later.

Sergeant Fillmore, who was crucial in getting the officer help, has since passed away after a courageous fight with cancer and received this award posthumously. Thank you for your service, Sergeant Fillmore.

On February 4, 2021, Lieutenant Heriberto Mora and his wife, Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, were well into their 90-minute commute to work at Ironwood State Prison when they saw a large plume of dirt billowing in the air just off the westbound lanes opposite of them.

Two children and two adults were involved in a rollover accident along Interstate 10, east of Dillon Road in Coachella. The crash involved an F-250 pickup and trailer hauling two off-road vehicles. As trained emergency first responders, the Moras quickly pulled their vehicle over to the shoulder and ran across the interstate to the crash site. They did not see exactly what had happened, but as they arrived on scene they both knew the accident was serious. They both began providing aid to the occupants of the mangled pickup truck that had come to rest along the side of Interstate 10 in a ditch.

A girl of about 2 to 3 years old was outside the truck. Not knowing if she had been ejected or taken out, Lieutenant Mora attended to and calmed the child. The adult male driver had a laceration to his head and was bleeding profusely. Registered Nurse Mora took Lieutenant Mora's sweater and treated the driver's wound.

Registered Nurse Mora then attended to a woman who was ejected into the brush adjacent to the vehicle, keeping her stationary, as they were not sure if she had internal or neck injuries. Ironwood State Prison Sergeant John Bradley also stopped to help the victims and assisted Lieutenant Mora in searching the vehicle for other passengers when they noticed an infant still in a car seat.

Sergeant Bradley reached through the vehicle's broken rear passenger window and was able to undo the harness of the car seat and remove the baby from the vehicle. The baby was responsive and did not appear to be injured. Sergeant Bradley held and monitored the baby until additional emergency personnel arrived and took over the scene.

Continued on page 12

SILVER STAR

The Silver Star is awarded for acts of bravery under extraordinary or unusual circumstances. The employee shall display courage in the face of potential peril while saving or attempting to save the life of another person or distinguish themselves by performing in stressful situations with exceptional tactics or judgment.




Matt Jones

Correctional Captain, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility

Captain Jones and his wife, Lieutenant Andrea Jones, were enjoying the drive home from a family vacation on February 14, 2021. As they approached the intersection of Utica and Dairy avenues near Corcoran, they saw five people standing on the bank of a canal.

A car had run off the road and was in the canal nose-first. A woman was in the car yelling for help. Captain Jones pulled over and his wife called 9-1-1. He asked the woman if she was all right. She said her young daughter was in the back of the vehicle in a car seat. As the car started sinking further into the water, Captain Jones opened the rear door, removed the child from her car seat and handed her to one of the bystanders. He then instructed the driver to exit the car by climbing over the middle console. He and two other men linked their arms together so that he could safely pull the woman through the rear door of the car and onto the bank of the canal.

The woman and her daughter suffered only minor injuries from the accident. Captain Jones intervened quickly and showed courage, extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind to save a mother and her child. 





THIRD ANNUAL CCSF GOLF TOURNAMENT



Rudy Marquez | CCSF Deputy Director

Our third annual charity golf tournament was a rousing success. Held on Friday, September 2, at the Lincoln Hills Golf Club, the event drew more than 100 players and raised nearly \$14,000 for the California Correctional Supervisors Foundation (CCSF), which funds college scholarships for families of CCSO members, supports the families of fallen officers, makes charitable contributions to local community organizations and facilitates wellness programs at institutions throughout the state.

There were numerous games throughout the course, including a golf ball launcher, activities hosted by Dixon Golf and a “beat the pro” competition where participants could test their skills against a female professional golfer. Drinks were provided on the course, and a delicious dinner was served following the tournament. Attendees also had the chance to win great prizes in the raffle and silent auction, and received a swag bag full of goodies to take home.

The team of Matthew Lemelin, Kevin Porter, Gary Felix and John Doe took home top honors in the tournament. Second place went to Brad Brown, Dan Russell and Randy Russell, and rounding out the leaderboard at third were Jeff Lee, Mike Fortune, Jesus Cerda and Jeff Manriquez. Congratulations to all!

Thank you to the volunteers, attendees and donors who came out to support such a worthy cause and made it a fun and memorable day for everyone. We especially appreciate each of our generous sponsors for helping to make this event possible:

- Alhambra Water
- Goyette & Associates
- J&J Roofing
- Justin Yoder Insurance
- Matthew Lemelin
- David Scarborough

If you missed this year’s tournament, be sure to join us next year at our new location, Oakdale Country Club, one of the finest private courses in the Central Valley. Watch for the date announcement coming soon! 🔑

Lt. Sam Robinson

THE MAYOR OF SAN QUENTIN



"IT'S ALL GOOD!"

LIEUTENANT SAM ROBINSON RETIRES AFTER 26 YEARS OF SERVICE

Congratulations to CCSO Vice President Lieutenant Sam Robinson, who is retiring after 26 years of service to CDCR.

Robinson became known to many as the “Mayor of San Quentin” for representing the state’s oldest prison as its Public Information Officer for the past 15 years, ensuring that information coming out of the institution was accurate and up to date, providing media access to events and rehabilitative programs, and offering informative and entertaining tours of the premises to a wide variety of guests, including international visitors, legislators, law enforcement groups and students. He even embodied it on the silver screen, playing “San Quentin Guard” in the 2021 film *Venom: Let There Be Carnage*.

“When breaking news happens — like a medical emergency, staff assault or other issue — Lt.

Robinson is there to provide information, coordinate with headquarters communications staff, and make sure all questions are answered,” a 2019 *Inside CDCR* profile said. “But what makes Lt. Robinson stand out the most is his demeanor. No matter the situation, Lt. Robinson remains professional, kind, and good-humored. On a walk through the yard, he’s greeted numerous times by staff, volunteers, and incarcerated people alike — and he treats them all with the same respect and personable nature. As Lt. Robinson always says, ‘It’s all good.’”

Robinson has also brought his talent, warmth and generosity to leadership roles within CCSO in his 22 years of membership, serving as Chapter 31 vice president from 2010 to 2014 and chapter president from 2015 to 2018. He was appointed to fill the vacant state secretary position in November 2018 and became vice president in July 2021.



As if all that weren't enough, Robinson put his public-speaking skills to good use as the longtime master of ceremonies for the Medal of Valor awards. At this year's event in September, which marked his final turn at the mic, CDCR Secretary Kathleen Allison gave a heartfelt homage to Robinson's professionalism, infectious smile and many contributions to the Department. "Sam is definitely a living example of correctional excellence, from his commitment to public safety to his empathy and sincere leadership to the daily positive interactions he has with both staff, population and visitors," she said. "We have been honored for many years to have Sam step up to emcee this event; I don't know how we will do without you. We will certainly miss your trademark voice, and Sam, it has been an honor for me to work with you. You are truly a role model and you have changed this agency forever after. Thank you so much, Sam Robinson." 🗝️



Robinson was thanked by CDCR Secretary Kathleen Allison at the 2022 Medal of Valor Awards ceremony.





Beating Breast Cancer

Sabrina Harris | CCSO State Secretary/Personnel Assignment Sergeant, CHCF

One morning in August 2018, I woke up on a Sunday and just happened to notice a small, knot-like lump on my right breast. At first, I really didn't think much about it, since I'd had a mammogram within six months and all was clear. After a few days, something in my head just kept nagging at me about it, and I decided to make an appointment to have it checked. About two weeks later, after a short checkup with my doctor, I was scheduled for another mammogram and ultrasound to have it checked out. I went after work on a Wednesday, not really thinking much about it. I assumed I was just overreacting and everything was going to be fine. Well, it wasn't fine. The radiology doctor said I had a tumor and that he needed to take a biopsy immediately. I remember thinking, "This is not happening," and that again I was just overreacting. The biopsy was taken and I was told they would call me, probably Monday.

That Friday, I was volunteering at a work fundraiser for the Special Olympics. We had put on a golf tournament and the time was 1442. I remember seeing my phone ring and the number was from my doctor's office. My life changed drastically after that phone call. I was told I had breast cancer. The nurse did not have many answers, but by the end of the conversation, I was scheduled for 10 different appointments, with the first starting on Monday at 9 a.m.

After the longest weekend of my life, I had my appointment and learned that I had an entire team of doctors assigned to me already, and that I had Stage 2 cancer, Grade III fast-growing and fast-multiplying tumor, measuring just under 2 centimeters, double hormone positive and HER2 negative. I quickly found out that you almost become a medical professional, looking up all of the things that come along with this diagnosis and how every



Sabrina Harris celebrates four years cancer-free.



person's outcome is different depending on so many factors. With the help of my family, friends and doctors, I decided on a single skin-saving mastectomy on the right side, with a full reconstruction to follow after my recovery and treatment.

On October 8, 2018, I underwent my first of three surgeries, in which they removed six lymph nodes on my right side and completely removed my right breast. I received very positive news the day after surgery, that all six lymph nodes and my skin margins had come back clear and that my cancer had not spread. I remember thinking at that moment, as sore as I was and as much as my life had been turned upside down, that I was going to beat this thing called cancer.

Two weeks later, at my first oncology appointment, I was also blessed with great news that my ONCO score had come back low enough to immediately start a series of medications that I would have to be on for the next seven to 10 years due to the type of cancer tumor I had. Through trial and error with medications, none of which made me feel great most of the time, I avoided IV chemotherapy and did not have to do radiation due to my skin margins also coming back clear. They had removed all the cancer cells and tumor in surgery, and I could start moving toward healing and hope for reconstruction.

In April 2019, I had my second surgery, as I call it, to try and put me back together. I then had one last surgery in October 2019 to fix some issues, and was finally able to heal with no other surgeries needed. I can't tell you



how many highs and how many lows I went through and at times still do. I will be on medication for another three to six years, I have to have an injection every four weeks, I see my oncologist every six months, I have to do blood work every four months and I constantly worry that cancer is going to come back. I have learned not to dwell on it, as I love living and I love looking forward to life and my future. I was so fortunate that my journey turned out so well and that I was given so much love and support from my family and friends, especially my CDCR family, that I never, ever went through any of it alone.

Tomorrow is never promised. I encourage all women to be your own advocate, get your mammograms and do your self-exams, because it saved my life!

Live Laugh Love

#sabbystrong 🔑



Sergeant
Sabrina Harris

Colleagues Pay Tribute to the Retiring “Mother Hen” of DVI

Congratulations to CCSO Secretary Sergeant Sabrina Harris, who is retiring in December after 26 years of service to CDCR. Currently a Personnel Assignment Sergeant at California Health Care Facility, Stockton, she became a CCSO member on April 12, 2002, and has been active in the organization ever since, serving as a board member, treasurer, vice president and then president of the DVI Chapter, then being elected as the sergeant State Board member in January 2021 and appointed as state secretary in July 2021. The following are personal testimonies from some of those who have been fortunate enough to know and work with Harris over the years.

From Eric Spangler:

“Sabrina has been an amazing person, friend and co-worker to me for over 17 years. Sabrina has the biggest heart, and truly cares about every person she meets. Even after receiving the devastating news [of her breast cancer diagnosis], she continued to put others before herself. She continued to be supportive to others during their difficult times, all while fighting her battle for her life. She’s an amazing, strong woman, great friend, awesome co-worker and one of the most unselfish people I’ve ever met. I am thankful for her, her successful cancer battle and great friendship. And for the record,



after telling her she couldn’t pass the lieutenant exam, because she only knew holiday requests, swap forms and job changes, my comments backfired, because she not only passed the written exam, but she also beat my rank. It was awful having to look her in the eyes every day, knowing she outranked me on the test that year, and trust me, she does not let me forget that ... to this day.”

From Bianca Ramos:

“Sabrina, after climbing the mountain, you finally can enjoy the view. Congratulations on your retirement! Crazy to think we have known and worked together my entire career! *Congratulations!*”

From Anthony Palomino:

"I would not be the person I am today if it wasn't for Sabrina Harris. I started my career at Deuel Vocational Institute in 2008. From day one, Sabrina took me under her wing and made me feel a part of the Gladiator family. Whatever I went through in life, she was always the first one offering help, guidance and her honest opinion. What I respect the most about Sabrina is she tells me what I need to hear, and not just what I want to hear — even if that means some of Sabrina's tough love. Speaking of tough, there is no one in this world tougher than Sabrina. The way she battled through breast cancer, still putting others first, staying so positive and optimistic, is something we all could learn from. There was zero doubt in my mind she was going to beat cancer and come back stronger than ever. And that is exactly what Sabrina has done. Seeing her retire is going to be so bittersweet. I always said she was the glue holding the institution together. But knowing that now Sabrina can finally focus on herself, and not put everyone else's needs in front of her own, is a beautiful thing. I find peace in knowing she is going to be living her best life, traveling, enjoying her family, her pet cats (that she loves more than me) and her exquisite wines. In closing, I can finally admit that 'Momma' knows best 99.9% of the time, she is always right. Cheers to an amazing retirement. You did it, and there will never be another Sabrina Harris!"

From Steve Cardona:

"Sabrina, I would like to thank you for always being there for me at DVI. It's selfish to say that you were there for me! You were there for everyone, even at your busiest moments throughout your day (which was every day). I remember when I was comfortable/idled in a good position working as an officer. You basically called me and chewed my ass out in good way, encouraging me to promote to a CCI! That's exactly what I needed! Forever grateful for you 100%. You are the true definition of a good human being!"

From Breann Cantu:

"I met Sabrina 14 years ago when I began my career with CDCR at DVI. Little did I know not only would she teach me some of the ropes related to our profession, but she would also become one of my dearest friends and biggest cheerleaders. She has been there every step of my career and life to cheer me on and encourage me to be the best that I can be. She has been a shoulder to cry on, ears to listen and open arms to always embrace you. I know that I speak for everyone by saying, thank you for all you have done, for always truly caring and for being an all-around amazing person!"

From Michelle Johnson:

"When I first met Sabrina almost 17 years ago, I never could have imagined how far our friendship would



blossom. I had about two years in the department working in West Hall on second watch when I received a call from a lieutenant offering me a visiting job. At that time I felt I needed more experience on the line working the housing units, so I kindly turned the job down. Then, about 10 minutes later, Sabrina was on the phone for me. Sabrina proceeded to inform me that I only had two years in the department with nothing coming and when a lieutenant calls to offer a job to me, I take it. She continued to tell me that there were qualities that he saw in me and that he was giving me an opportunity that I would not be turning down. I was absolutely stunned and at a loss for words. Sabrina then instructed me to call the lieutenant back and tell him I would love to work for him and that I was accepting his job offer. I did as I was told, but I must admit this left a sour taste in my mouth. I mean, who did she think she was? Well, let me tell you who Sabrina is. Sabrina is one of my dearest friends. She is someone I can always count on. Sabrina is the person that has your best interest at heart. She is a rare soul and is a friend that turned into family. In life, you will realize there is a role for everyone you meet. Some will test you, some will use you and some will teach you. But the ones who are truly

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

important are the ones who bring out the best in you. They are the rare and amazing people who remind you why it's worth it. That's Sabrina."


From Allison Ortega-Schafer:

"I want Sabrina to know her personal impact on me as a female as well as friend in CDCR. We met a little over 14 years ago when I transferred to DVI from DJJ. At first, I really did not know how to read you. You had this command presence about yourself that I had not seen from any other female in a supervisory role. It took just a little while for us to warm up to each other, but once we did, we never looked back. Throughout my career, you encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone and promote into and within the counselor series. You have always believed in me and cheered me on, and I thank you for that! You have been one who has listened to my work concerns and issues when at times it felt that no one else did. Thank you for always letting me vent! In my books you are the multitask master of all time. We have grown from 2008 sergeant and officer to 2022 friends who have become family. I could not see my journey without you in it. You are such an important part of my career and life. I love you and wish you all the health and happiness with retirement."

From Ignacio (Nacho) Salazar:

"My career and my life has had many ups and many downs. I can tell you this, Sabrina was and continues to be a huge motivator. She would pull me in her office and chew me a new one when I needed it. She was brutally honest to me about my life and always put me back on track. She has this way of just reaching into you like no other. Needless to say, 20 years later she is considered family. My children know her as 'Aunt Sabrina.' We party together, vacation together, cry together and most importantly laugh together. Sabrina has touched countless lives throughout her career and to say she will be missed is an understatement. Congratulations on a job well done, Sis; enjoy your retirement."

From Ami Thornton:

"I first learned about Sabrina when I got my transfer from CCWF to DVI. I'm not going to lie, I was kind of scared to meet her, but after I did our work relationship blossomed into a friendship I hold very close to my heart. Even though I've only known her for a short period of my career/life, I've looked up to her. She has been a wonderful boss, teacher and friend. Whenever I've needed help with anything she's been there to guide me in the right direction. I'm going to miss her, but am happy to see her take this next step in life. Enjoy your retirement!" 

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O

ctober is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and so this Wellness Spotlight focuses on the importance of **critical illness* insurance**.

Being sick is no fun. And if it's a major illness, it can have a major impact on life as you know it — emotionally, physically and financially. Critical illness insurance can help make handling it all a lot easier. And while your health insurance will help cover medical expenses, it's not going to help with those other household bills. Unfortunately, those don't stop just because you're ill. Critical illness insurance can help.

Enroll in \$10,000 of critical illness insurance coverage for yourself, \$10,000 for your spouse and \$5,000 for your child(ren). The lump-sum payment critical illness insurance provides when a covered illness is diagnosed can be used for anything you choose, including:

- Deductibles and co-pays
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You never know when someone in your family might be facing a serious illness. Critical illness insurance helps protect you and your family from the financial impact an

unexpected illness can bring with it. This can be the security you need so you can rest easy and be focused on recovering — not how you're going to pay for it.

Critical illness insurance helps protect you and your family from the financial impact an unexpected illness can bring with it.

Case Illustration: Room to Breathe¹

Liz is a single mom of two preteen girls. There are dance lessons and music lessons and soccer practices. In other words, Liz is running full-speed all the time to keep up with her girls' schedules — not to mention her work.

And then there was her annual mammogram — the one



that she barely had time for. The one that caught her breast cancer early and saved her life. But after that mammogram, there was surgery and chemotherapy treatments. This wasn't something she'd planned. How would she manage it all? Her parents could help with the girls, but what about the bills? Then Liz remembered it was going to work out because she had critical illness insurance.

With her benefit, she was able to pay down her health insurance deductible to keep things moving in the right direction financially for herself and her girls. They had the money they needed to pay for recital costumes, car payments and someone to take care of the lawn while Liz took care of herself.

Planning Ahead Couldn't Be Easier


Having critical illness insurance can be a smart financial decision. Elect coverage for yourself and your family during this enrollment period *with no evidence of insurability (EOI) required*.

NOTES

*Critical illness is referred to as "specified disease" in New York.

¹ This benefit example is fictitious and for illustrative purposes.

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- www.thehartford.com/learn/criticalillness
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THIS POLICY PROVIDES LIMITED BENEFITS FOR SPECIFIED DISEASES ONLY. This limited benefit plan (1) does not constitute major medical coverage, and (2) does not satisfy the individual mandate of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) because the coverage does not meet the requirements of minimum essential coverage. In New York: This policy provides limited benefits health insurance only. It does NOT provide basic hospital, basic medical or major medical insurance as defined by the New York State Department of Financial Services.

Critical Illness Form Series includes GBD-2600, GBD-2700, or state equivalent. Policy Number: 681583.

600550 02/21

CDC(R) AT 30



Mike Maldonado |
Correctional Lt.,
Calipatria State Prison

As I look back at my career over the last 30 years, I have seen many, many things. The easiest part of the job has always been the inmates. That is a sad but true statement of fact when the better part of your career involves extreme violence from convicted felons on a daily basis and your knowledge, experience and intelligence get you from one day to the next.

As I look back, I can now see that the Department started its demise and negative trajectory for staff and supervisors when we added the “R” to our name. This is around the time when things like “standardized staffing” came about and we still could not get them to comply with their own policies, including but not limited to illegal redirections and illegal salary savings. We also have a seniority assignment process that gives supervisors a fraction of what the rank and file receive. It’s all about control: the CDC(R) keeping it all and not giving us any.

Don’t get me wrong, I am not referring to the inmate side of things or the fact that inmates would be receiving many new opportunities for rehabilitation as part of the new and improved CDC(R). This article is solely in regard to CDCR executive management, which ultimately decides the fate of supervisors within the CDC(R). When it has been a “feast or famine” situation, the rank and file have always gotten the feast and we as supervisors are always the ones getting the famine.

As I have indicated, I have seen a great many things in my 30 years in the CDC(R). Many would agree that back in the day, the CDC was a “good ol’ boys’ club” of predominately Caucasian executive management, regional administrators, wardens and captains. It seems strange to write this, being in the category of a protected race; however, it was much



different then. You always knew where your place was and when it was your turn. There was actual respect for knowledge and experience gained through doing actual time on the line. Doing 30 actually meant something and was a badge of honor. It is virtually meaningless now or receives a “Wow, you actually made it 30 years?” Not so long ago, a lot of staff were doing “20 and out” to get their lifetime benefits. Now, new staff are relegated to indentured servitude by having to do 30 years of state service for what I will get and others before 2013 will receive.

I am reminded of a colleague and friend who would always tell me when offered overtime, “Someone’s got to take it. The state has been very good to me.” I contemplated his statement and agreed that the state has also been very good to me. However, it has also been very, very bad to me — in ways that should have never happened to me and were against policy, rule, guideline, law and ethics as a whole.

I was subject to numerous illicit investigations that should have never occurred because I spoke my mind and attempted to have management do what they were legally mandated or required under policy/rule to be in compliance with. I was then subjected to a phrase I coined

called “legitimized retaliation.” This is when management takes action against you or puts you under investigation when you have done nothing wrong, as a form of punishment and retaliation for doing something they didn’t like. This happened to me many, many times while I was CCSO vice president and/or president. I suffered through numerous illegitimate investigations and being blackballed from numerous promotional opportunities for over 15 years. I suffered through many OIA investigations that ultimately resulted in a “Wrongful Termination” that I won with the backing of CCSO. I received all my leave, service credit and back pay with interest, for a “Wrongful Termination” that should not have happened.

Why, you ask? Because there is no *accountability* for management. There is minimal accountability (if any) for those who we supervise, and even less for those above us than we have as supervisors. How can this be, when a warden can’t even make decisions on their own with inmates without

**There is no accountability
for management, as
they are playing with
house money.**

going through the associate director? I guess they get to make decisions when it applies to supervisors or someone that they don’t like the message from.

I cost the state a large amount of money because of their illicit actions, inclusive of interest that they had to pay. The warden had to know he would lose this case. I would have hoped he was smart enough to have known this. Or is it because he only has a high school education? How do you become a warden with only a high school education? How do you become an associate director in the CDC(R) with only a high school education? But the CDC(R) also has one of those. There is no accountability for management, as they are playing with house money. This proves it. They had to pay out hundreds of thousands of dollars to me, and that doesn’t count what they had to pay to cover behind me.

After it was determined by the State Personnel Board that I did absolutely *nothing* wrong and they ordered me back to work, the state still refused to bring me back, resulting in even more money, time, effort and legal fees. This happened while I was essentially on the clock and being

paid by the state because they refused to bring me back. Even when I eventually came back, more legal fees resulted because the state gave me an adverse and forced transfer to another prison that I did not work at.

The point of this is that management has never been held accountable, and we as supervisors are held to the highest standard — higher than management. This lack of accountability has us where we are today in the CDC(R), with no direction. We have very, very few standup wardens (Larry Small, RIP) to guide the way. I have also never known a time while working when the Department has not had focus and direction, until now. The CDC(R) does not value or respect experience or knowledge. Words are meaningless without action, and the Department has used a lot of hollow words, especially when it comes to supervisors. The Department once had knowledge, experience, value, integrity and respect, when it was recognized as a trailblazer in the field of corrections. Unfortunately, this also no longer exists. Ethics, integrity, respect and honor went out the window a long time ago.

These situations occur when there is more of a primary focus on diversity hires above knowledge and experience, and using the “favorite kid” method of promotion. I have said for many years that if the CDC(R) were a business,

Continued on page 26

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we would have gone out of business a long time ago. That remains true to this day. The CDC(R) does not seek out the “best and the brightest” as a private company would to stay successful. This includes all subsections across the CDC(R), including the Office of Labor Relations (OLR).

The CDC(R) has always been a monopoly when it comes to supervisors. We have always been inferior to everyone else, including those we supervise, and management never fails to take an opportunity to remind us of that — once again, in hollow words and not in action.

It has been unfortunate and disappointing that our governor seems to want to help everyone else in the state other than our supervisors. The rank and file have had arbitration for years, but it is better to keep us down with defunct and illegitimate processes that the CDC(R) controls, making decisions based on control of their monopoly. Doesn't the governor see that the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Employment Development Division (EDD) were abject failures? Didn't that teach him that you can't self-monitor or have oversight of your own self? This is exactly what happens when you deny these processes and illegitimately deny Excluded Employee Grievances by the OLR, as has been done for years because of an inept and illegitimate process that benefits only management.

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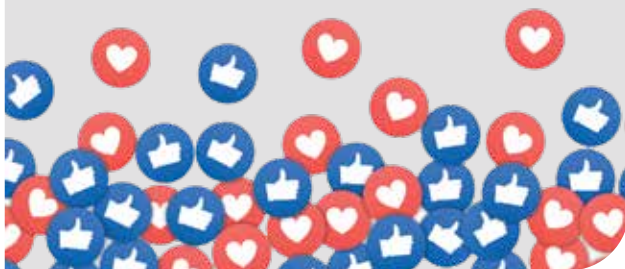
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I guess the governor and CDC(R) executive management will wonder why when they are paying out millions to us for the walk time case and the other pending cases being brought forward by CCSO and those yet to come. These cases are a direct result of their actions and proof that the CDC(R) has never treated supervisors the way they deserve to be treated or even as equitably as the rank and file. But then again, they are playing with house money.

The CDC(R) has never treated supervisors the way they deserve to be treated or even as equitably as the rank and file.

The governor or the CDC(R) will never allow supervisors to have collective bargaining rights. Why would they want to give up their monopoly with us? We will have to force them to give us collective bargaining rights. How long and how many more lawsuits will it take? I believe CCSO is the organization that can get it done.

Everything I have to say on these subjects could never be relegated to a single article. It's more like a thousand-page novel. I have been fortunate to have worked with many ethical and hardworking people of all classifications during my years. I admired them and we struggled and fought together on the line, both to survive the inmate population during times of extreme violence toward staff and to survive our treatment by management. Many I have the pleasure of calling friends or esteemed colleagues. Then there are the others who lack credibility, ethics, respect, integrity or honor, or are a “kid” (you know who you are). I also want to speak to those incredible partners and mentors who have since passed and at one time made this a great Department to work for — you will always be remembered.

While my situation may sound crazy, it is unfortunately not a singular story, as there are a lot of other similar ones. The one common denominator is that CCSO stood behind us and we made it to the end.

I guess you could say I have traveled full circle. It all began at Calipatria State Prison and will end at Calipatria State Prison. It has been a very, very long journey, but I made it. I believe in this organization and its direction so much that I will remain a retired member, and I encourage you to do the same.

I guess now I can say, “Wow, I actually made it 30 years!” 🔑



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Accident Form Series includes GBD-2000, GBD, 2300. Critical Illness Form Series includes GBD-2600, GBD-2700. Hospital Indemnity Form Series includes GBD-2800, GBD-2900, or state equivalent of these forms. Policy number: 681583.

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