



Secretary: Meetings confirm commitment to PREA compliance

The PREA Office conducted four statewide meetings in September among key personnel and the Secretary's office. The purpose was to address:

- ▶ Detection, deterrence and zero-tolerance and prevention of undue familiarity.
- ▶ Where we are now as an agency in response to PREA.
- ▶ Legal considerations related to compliance.

In 2007, the department began PREA training of employees, vendors and agents, in addition to educating offender populations across the agency. Two years later, we are expanding our campaign of awareness to aid in maintaining professional boundaries.

How do we prevent undue familiarity and PREA violations?

First, pay close attention to the warning signs for you and your fellow co-workers. Undue familiarity precedes a PREA violation. In conducting post incident reviews of substantiated cases, warning signs of undue familiarity existed before a PREA incident ever occurred, and they were not acted on to prevent the PREA incident.

Staff must not allow the development of personal, unduly familiar, emotional or sexual relationships with offenders. Here are some indicators that an overly familiar relationship may be developing:

- ▶ Isolation from fellow staff.
- ▶ Spending an excessive time with one particular inmate/offender.

See **PREA**, next page



Officials urge employees to get flu shots to help prevent contracting the illness and to help prevent its spread. The state has made flu shots widely available. News reports show that the H1N1 flu vaccine is in short supply.

DOC helping flu fight

Numerous Department of Correction employees have been working to help prepare for this flu season and the H1N1 pandemic that has been discussed extensively.

DOC has been putting into place mitigation measures from the agency's Pandemic Influenza Response Plan. The measures are designed to reduce as much as possible employee exposure to influenza in their workplaces. The measures were developed from the best science available through the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

DOC will continue to work closely with the North Carolina Division of Public Health, North Carolina Emergency Management and local health and emergency response partners to monitor this pandemic and its impact on the state, citizens and operations. DOC also will continue to develop and implement further effective strategies for infection control and pandemic response to help protect and preserve employee and public safety.

To keep employees informed of pandemic facts and agency initiatives to help protect them, a link called "Flu News You Can Use" has been open on DOC's intranet:

<http://internal.doc.state.nc.us/flu/>

The link provides information on events and actions in the state and agency. It also provides information, document, and posters that can be shared with all DOC employees to assist in minimizing the effects of seasonal and

See **FLU FIGHT**, next page

Gwen Norville leading OSDT

RALEIGH | Gwen Norville has been named the N.C. Department of Correction's training director, responsible for employee training and education programs.



Gwen Norville

She leads the Office of Staff Development & Training (OSDT), which develops criminal justice-related instruction, including basic and career development training for certified and non-certified staff.

Norville was previously assistant training director. She began her career with the Department of Correction in 1987, and has served in numerous capacities, including program assistant at Carteret Correctional Center; program supervisor at Tillery CC; training instructor at OSDT; and regional operations manager and executive officer, both for the Division of Prisons.

She has been a certified instructor since 1991, and has earned numerous specialty instructor certifications during her career. Norville is also a graduate of the department's Correctional Leadership Development Program.

Norville holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Mount Olive College and is a member of the North Carolina Correctional Association and a member of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Board at Wake Technical Community College.

Her personal interests

See **NORVILLE**, next page

PREA, from page 1

- ▶ Sharing food with an inmate/offender.
- ▶ Noticeable behavioral changes in inmate/offender or staff.

Remember that any sexual contact between an inmate and staff member is considered a sexual assault. NC General Statute 14-27.7a states that if a person having custody of a victim (inmate or probationer) of any age or a person who is an agent or employee of any person, or institution, whether such institution is private, charitable, or governmental; having custody of a victim (inmate) of any age engages in vaginal intercourse or a sexual act with such victim, the defendant is guilty of a Class E Felony." Therefore, THERE IS NO CONSENT BETWEEN STAFF AND OFFENDER.

Second, report immediately any suspicions of undue familiarity or PREA violation. Don't wait to talk about your suspicions after a PREA investigation has been initiated.

Remember that undue familiarity and PREA violations are a security issue. By ignoring the signs, you are placing yourself and others at risk because of the inappropriate relationship.

Third, seek help early if you feel that you may be at risk for developing an inappropriate relationship with an offender. Speak to your supervisor before you violate any policies or laws. If you are under stress in your personal life and need a professional to talk to, contact the Employee Assistance Program 877-327-7658.

We need you to prevent undue familiarity. For an extensive list of warning signs, the "daily dozen" checklist, prevention strategies or for more information, please contact the PREA office:

prea@doc.state.nc.us

'Quick copy' elevated to apprenticeship

Skills that inmates learn in Correction Enterprises' "Quick Copy" plant at N.C. Correctional Institution for Women have been made eligible for apprenticeship certification.

Realizing that the plant provided an ideal training setting for inmates to learn the skills needed for the rapidly growing industry of quick turn-around copying and digital printing, leaders set in motion a process that recently led to the official apprentice program designation.

Initial discussions and planning were led by **George Lipscomb** and **Robert Leon** from Correction Enterprises and, from N.C. CIW, **Annie Harvey**, warden, and **Helen McNeill**, assistant superintendent of programs. In 2008, the first class met to begin studying and learning skills for an apprenticeship in duplicating and digital printing.

Several other entities and individuals were also involved in the realization of the program. **Gloria Upperman**, director of the Division of Prisons Education Services, along with the now retired Arthur Clark, provided technical assistance and budget support for instruction and materials.

Dr. **Valerie Villines**, N.C. CIW Program Services supervisor, and her staff devised a schedule that allowed for temporary classroom space for the first class.



Helping make the Quik Copy service an apprenticeship program were, from left, fronto row, **John Beatty**, Division of Prisons (DOP) Program Services; **Victoria Knott**, N.C. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program; **Lonette Mims**, Wake Technical Community College (WTCC) Correctional Education Service; **Anthony Caison**, WTCC dean of public training; **Helen McNeill**, N.C. Correctional Institution for Women (N.C. CIW) assistant superintendent for programs; and **George Lipscomb**, Correction Enterprises (CE) business officer. Back row, **Doug Pardue**, DOP Program Services; **Gloria Upperman**, DOP Education Services director; **Anthony Taylor**, WTCC instructor; Dr. **Valerie Villines**, N.C. CIW educational programs principal; and **Marcus Wall**, N.C. CIW programs director. Not available for the photo were **Annie Harvey**, N.C. CIW warden; **Mary-Helen Bullard**, Quick Copy plant manager; and **Robert Leon**, CE industry.

The N.C. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Division conducted a job task analysis at the Quick Copy Plant to establish competency requirements for the various jobs and tasks performed in the industry. From the identified competencies, **Lonette Mims**, director for Continuing Education at Wake Technical Community College, worked with NCCE staff to develop a course curriculum that could be accepted by the College Board of Directors and the State Community College System.

Fifteen inmate apprentices, who have completed their related instruction, are working under the supervision of **Mary Helen Bullard**, plant manger, to complete their Journey level certification from the Department of Labor.

Flu fight, from page 1

H1N1 flu in the workplace.

"It is important for each and every one of us to follow these mitigation measures, and others that may be developed, to help prevent transmission of flu in our workplace," said Secretary **Alvin Keller**. "One of the most important things we can do for protection from seasonal influenza is to take the vaccine."

The Safety, Occupational and Environmental Health Office at 919-716-3590 can help answer employee questions.

Norville, from page 1

include going to the beach, gardening and enjoying Atlantic Coast Conference sports events.

Correction News

is a newsletter for and about employees in the N.C. Department of Correction. If you have suggestions or comments, please contact **George Dudley**, editor, at 919.716.3713, or at dgh02@doc.state.nc.us.

Sampson Correctional Institution

Correction News / September & October 2009

Sampson Correctional Institution, near Clinton on U.S. 421 North, is a medium/minimum security prison for adult males.

Lafayette Hall is the superintendent. The assistant superintendents are **Jeff Marks** for Custody and Operations and **Donna Williamson** for Programs. **Catherine Courtney** is the administrative officer I.

Sampson CI houses 462 inmates. It has a 188 staff members, including custody, medical, programs and administrative personnel. Maintenance is provided by Eastern Regional Maintenance.

The inmates work in the largest of seven Correction Enterprises laundries. Eighteen Enterprise employees supervise 188 inmates who work at the laundry on two shifts. This enterprise operation processes approximately 13 million pounds of inmate and hospital laundry annually.

Inmates may also be assigned to work on Department of Transportation road squads, litter crew or as food service, maintenance or janitorial help at the prison.

Minimum custody inmates work for the N.C. Justice Academy, Department of Transportation (DOT), National Guard, and the Agriculture Research Station.

Sampson Community College works with the prison to provide classes to help inmates prepare for their GED, and vocational classes in horticulture, and air conditioning and refrigeration. Additional classes are offered through Fayetteville State University as part of the facility's post secondary education program for youthful offenders.

Sampson CI was one of 51 county prisons for which the state assumed responsibility in 1931, and was one of 61 field unit prisons renovated or built during the late 1930s to house inmates who worked building roads.

Minimum custody inmates are housed in the older dormitory of the original prison compound and medium custody inmates are housed in a more secure compound, which was part of the DOC 1990 prison expansion with towers and roving patrols manned by armed correctional officers.



Left, **Catherine Courtney**, administrative officer I; **Lafayette Hall**, superintendent III; and **Jeffery Marks**, assistant superintendent, custody and operations I. Above, **Donna Williamson**, assistant superintendent, programs.



Right, Correctional Officer **Wayne Thorton**, canteen supervisor.



Above, Sgt. **Steven Stanley** and Correctional Officer **Marvin Grantham**. Right, **Charles Miller** and **George Warren**, correctional officers. Below, Capt. **Robert Van Gorder** and Correctional Officer **Garrett Coley**.



Above, **Teresa Holland**, **Fred Warren** and **Curtis Loman**, correctional officers. Left, **Clement Burney**, lieutenant; and Correctional Officer **Velris Parran**, operations officer.



Left, **James Farrow** and **James Williams**, correctional officers. Center, Correctional Officer **Derrick Watson**. Right, **Billy Jackson**, **Kenneth Russell**, **Rommie Barts** and **Billy Phipps**, all correctional officers.



Above, **George Sessoms** and **Jeremy Lee**, DOC Southeastern Region Maintenance mechanic IV's. Left, **Jimmy Daughter**, Eastern Region Maintenance.

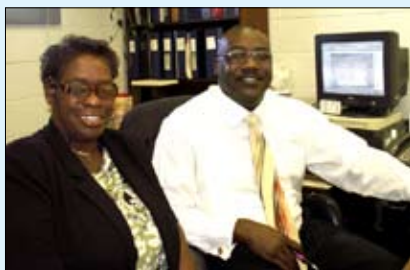
Above, Correctional Officers **James McKoy** and **James Autry**, clotheshouse officers.

Lisa Savage and **Anthony Harris**, correctional officers.



Above, **Katherine Tadlock**, food service manager II; **Salena Bertee** and **James Slattery**, food service officers; and **Michael Jones**, food service manager I.

Above, **Alisa Murchison**, case manager; and **Charlene Strickland**, licensed practical nurse. Below, **Pamela Miller**, nurse supervisor; **Albert Tatum**, correctional officer for medical; **Angie Anders**, RN; and **Vickie Strickland**, medical records assistant III.



Above, **Floria Thurman** and **Tyrone Owens**, program supervisors. Right, **Donald Morgan** and **Michelle George**, case managers.



Spotlight

Spotlight



Above, **Zeb Heath**, district hearing officer; and **Kim Raynor**, processing assistant III. Right, **Wade Pittman**, case manager, and **Julia Cashwell**, transfer coordinator.



Top left, Manager **Mark Guyton**, Correction Enterprises Laundry; **Amanda Carpenter**, processing assistant IV; and **Mary Wilson**, Laundry supervisor. Top right, in the Correction Enterprises Laundry, **Ken Wheeler**, supervisor I; **Bryan King**, truck driver; and **Jeff Hawley** and **Carzell Henry**, both supervisor I's. Below left, Correctional Officer **Samuel Pope**, mail officer;

Sherry Blackburn and **Betsy Thornton**, accounting clerk IV's; and **Christy Jackson**, accounting clerk III.

Right, **Nancy Caison**, processing assistant II, and **Peggy Boykin**, office assistant II.



Hameed Shareff, classification coordinator.

Moving On

Employee Retirements

September | **Scott Allsbrook**, captain, Greene CI, 29y1m

Lehman Barefoot, correctional officer, Harnett CI, 24y1m

- Richard Charles**, sergeant, Wake CC, 30y4m
- Cordelia Clark**, superintendent III, DOP Administration, 31y1m
- Daniel Cregar**, dentist II, Randolph C, 15y7m
- Wallace Daughtry**, correctional officer, Odom CI, 23y9m
- Carolyn Dixon**, licensed practical nurse, Johnston CI, 18y11m
- Claude Emory**, correctional officer, Odom CI, 15y1m
- Martin Fulcher**, intensive case officer, DCC District 17B, 22y4m
- Spince Gilmore**, correctional officer, Sanford CI, 20y1m
- Barbara Heffner**, business & technology applications specialist, IT, 12y2m
- Tony Hunt**, chief probation/parole officer, DCC District 16B, 32y5m
- Ricky Jackson**, administrator I, Lanesboro CI, 30y2m
- James Lynch**, food service officer, Nash CI, 24y
- Charlene Manshack**, office assistant V, IT, 32y6m
- Clyde Morris**, assistant superintendent / programs I, Caswell CC, 22y1m
- Pamela Pennell**, licensed practical nurse, Alexander CI, 5y4m
- Carolyn Pierce Reyes**, professional nurse, Bertie CI, 11y4m
- Andrea Pierce**, correctional officer, Pender CI, 6y7m
- Michael Ping**, correctional officer, Foothills CI, 6y1m
- John Rexrode**, correctional sergeant, Warrenton CI, 11y
- Ashley Smith**, maintenance mechanic IV, Odom CI, 28y
- Gary Steele**, food service officer, Union CC, 15y10m
- Ted Thomas**, superintendent II, Rowan CC, 30y7m
- Nina Thompson**, health assistant II, Albemarle CI, 5y4m
- Dixie Tysinger**, pharmacy technician, DOP Pharmacy, 5y5m
- Gary Vance**, HVAC technician, Correction Enterprises, 20y4m
- James Walker**, supervisor V, Correction Enterprises, Caledonia, 24y1m
- Mary Washington**, processing assistant IV, NC CIW, 11y2m
- Jerry Winebarger**, correctional officer, Catawba CC, 21y4m



Bowling for Special Olympics gold

Special Olympics North Carolina conducted a Bowl for the Gold event in Raleigh in October in honor and in memory of former Insurance Commissioner Jim Long, raising funds for Special Olympics programs. Chaplain **Services' "Spirit Knockers,"** representing the Division of Prisons, won first place with a total score of 1,566. Chaplain **Betty Brown**, 2nd from right, led the team of **Carlton Joyner**, left, program director III; and **Raymond Hibbitt**, 4th from left, technology support. Placing third for the Division of Prisons was the "Dream Team" -- **Scott Peele**, 2nd from left, DOP security chief; **Lisa Schwarz**, right, intelligence section; **Susie Creech**, 3rd from left, accountant; and **Wayne Talbert**, 5th from left, assistant security chief. The money raised supports the 2009 Special Olympics North Carolina Bowling Tournaments and state-level competition events, set for Dec. 6. Nearly 700 Special Olympics athletes are expected to participate.

Recent Employee Deaths

August

- Wanda Bolling**, case analyst, NC CIW, 18y1m
- Wanda Denton**, accounting technician, Nash CI, 6y3m

September

- Kevin Hairston**, correctional officer, Forsyth CI, 11y5m
- Gregory Hall**, sergeant, Western YI, 13y3m



Employee promotions in August

Name, new position, location

Leslie Bell, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 27B

Phillip Danford, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 10A

Erin Danford, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 10A

Trudeau Nichols, professional nurse,
Maury CI

Matthew Stanislaw, probation/parole
officer II, DCC District 5

Henry Watson, captain, Tillery CI

Employee promotions in September

Eric Abromaitis, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 28

Astor Adams, food service officer, Odom CI

Kevin Benfield, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 24

Leslie Brown, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 19B

Norman Carter, lead correctional officer,
Pender CI

Cathy Faison Henry, community service
district coordinator, DCC District 12

Michael Greene, lead correctional officer,
Albemarle CI

Terry Harrison, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 28

Bruce Kruckel, sergeant, Piedmont CI

Candace McKnight, sergeant, NC CIW

Milton McLamb, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 20B

Kimberly Moore, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 19D

Gwendolyn Norville, training director, OSDT

Dashaun Pollock, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 18B

Michael Robinson, lead correctional officer,
Carteret CC

Kimberly Robuck, administrative assistant II,
Combined Records

Gregory Rush, lead correctional officer,
Albemarle CI

Valerie Thorn, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 10A

Laya Trotman, probation/parole officer II,
DCC District 10A

Angela Winchester, probation/parole
officer II, DCC District 18



DOC's Certified Public Managers for 2009

Secretary **Alvin Keller**, 2nd from right, was on hand to congratulate the Department of Correction employees who recently graduated from the state's Certified Public Manager Program. From left, they are **Drew Stanley**, Nash Correctional Institution assistant superintendent for programs; **Gary Jones**, Johnston CI superintendent; **Jackie Parker**, Division of Prisons director of food services; **Oliver Washington**, Tillery CC superintendent; **Julia Brigman**, Hoke CI assistant superintendent for programs; and **Lewis Smith**, Albemarle CI superintendent. Also graduating but unable to attend the ceremony was **Debbie Hughes**, Swannanoa CCW superintendent.

Pender CI a state leader in Special Olympics fundraising

Pender Correctional Institution has been cited for excellent fundraising by Special Olympics North Carolina (SONC).

Among 110 law enforcement/corrections agencies participating in the 2009 campaign, Pender CI was the fourth highest fundraiser, according to Keith Fishburne, SONC president and chief executive officer.

Garnering a total of \$34,874, Pender CI was also the top fund-

raiser in the Department of Correction.

Three law enforcement agencies earned the top three spots.

Bob Lewis, Division of Prisons director, lauded Pender CI's achievement.

"The staff who worked so diligently and tirelessly on behalf of N.C. Special Olympics, particularly the Torch Run coordinator, Officer **Edwin Simpson**, are applauded," Lewis said.



2009 Moody Award Winner

Ronnie Strickland, right, a retired captain, was presented with the 2009 James R. Moody Award for distinguished service in combating security threat groups/gangs at the Multi-Agency Intelligence Group meeting in October. **Johnny Hawkins**, left, Division of Prison operations/intelligence manager, made the presentation. Prior to retirement in October, Strickland was the facility intelligence officer at Albemarle Correctional Institution. Strickland will continue his work combating gangs in North Carolina as an employee of the North Carolina Gang Investigator Association. The association's Web site is at www.ncgangcops.org.



New instructors for control, restraint and defense techniques

The Office of Staff Development and Training recently completed training a class of employees who learned to be instructors in Controls, Restraints and Defensive Techniques, a key mechanism for Department of Correction officers to protect themselves and other officers. The instructor school was conducted in late September and early October at the N.C. Justice Academy in Edneyville. Students shown are, back row, James Rowell, Piedmont Community College; Alex Cobb, Western Piedmont Community College; **Lacy Bowman**, Albemarle Correctional Institution; **Jason Banner**, Western Youth Institution; and **James Dycus**

and **Byron Carr**, both from Brown Creek CI. Second row, Corey Shot, Sandhills Community College; Ted Williams, Nash Community College; **Tony Smith**, Craggy CI; **Christopher Rich**, Division of Community Corrections, Asheville; **Tracy Millington**, Craggy CI; **Merle Hanna**, Marion CI; **Troy Powell**, DCC High Point; **Thomas Joyner**, Polk CI; **Travis Johnson**, Southern CI. Front row, **Richard Blake**, Brown Creek CI; **Margaret Morgan**, Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women; **Stacie Crabtree**, Wake CC; **Keith Rose**, Caldwell CC; **Randy Gambrell**, DCC Lenoir; **Tracey Freeman**, DCC Charlotte; and **Thomas Newcomer**, DCC Hillsborough.

Hyde Correctional uses food to boost campaign contributions

Hyde Correctional Institution staff members have found that good food is sure way to attract money for the benefit of the State Employees Combined Campaign.

On Sept. 30, a fish and shrimp fry was held, raising approximately \$1,100.

Other fundraisers for the 2009 campaign have been a hot dog sale in August, raising \$200. A sausage wrap sale in early September pulled in \$300.

The next event, in October, was a pie tossing, with employees making donations that allowed them to toss whipped cream pies at Superintendent **Robert Jones**, Assistant Superintendent for Programs **Hugh Patrick**, Administrative Officer **Maria Jones**, Capt. **Willie Gibbs**, Lt. **John Swain**, Maintenance Supervisor **Cliff Davenport** and Correctional Officer **B.P. Gibbs**.

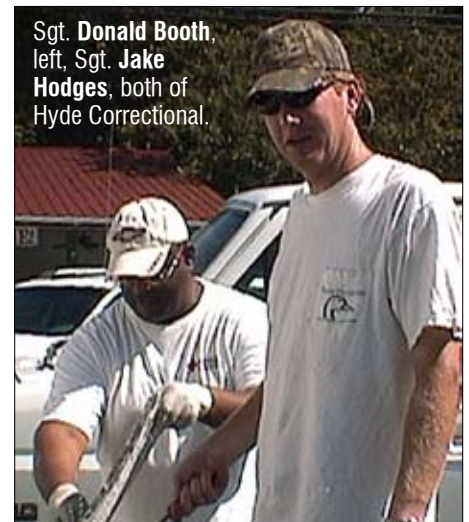
Also, a 50/50 drawing was held, and employees participated in a silent auction for the privilege of using the front parking places reserved for the Hyde CI's lead team.

The campaign committee also decided to donate undesignated funds to the American Cancer Society and Children's Hospital of East-

ern North Carolina.

Chairing the Hyde CI SECC committee has been **Rebecca Davis**, food service manager. Other committee member are Office Assistant **Belinda Berry**, Case Manager **Stephanie Leighty**, Correctional Officer **Heather Cooper**, Sgt. **Jake Hodges**, Assistant Superintendent Patrick and Processing Assistant **Janet Eburn**.

"No matter how large or small the total donations are, we thank all staff and community contributors," committee Davis said. "With the support Hyde Correctional Institution has been given we are all winners in this effort to help others less fortunate than us."



Sgt. **Donald Booth**, left, Sgt. **Jake Hodges**, both of Hyde Correctional.



Serving food, from left, **Janet Eburn**, processing assistant; **Rebecca Davis**, food service manager; and **Bea Miller**, processing assistant, at Hyde CI. Others in the photo are customers.

Disability should not disable social interaction

In recognition of National Disability Awareness Month (NDAM) the Office of the General Counsel, shares these recommendations from the "Ten Commandments of Etiquette for Communicating with People with Disabilities" to assist Department of Correction (DOC) employees in communicating with persons with disabilities.

- ▶ When talking with a person with a disability such as a hearing impairment, speak directly to that person rather than through a companion or sign language interpreter.
- ▶ When introduced to a person with a known or obvious disability, greet them in the customary manner. For example, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands, if that is customary. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb, can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.)
- ▶ When meeting a person who is visually impaired, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, it is helpful to identify the person to whom you are speaking, especially when asking a question of someone. Otherwise, the visually impaired person may not know if the question is being directed at them.
- ▶ Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others. Don't increase the volume or slow the speed of your speech, unless the other person has asked you to do so. (Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.)
- ▶ Leaning on or hanging on to a person's wheelchair is similar to leaning on hanging on to a person and is generally considered annoying. The chair is part of the personal body space of the person who uses it.
- ▶ Listen attentively when you are talking with a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers,



- a nod or shake of the head.
 - ▶ Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so.
 - ▶ Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you and guide your understanding.
 - ▶ When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair or crutches make eye contact and, if reasonably possible, place yourself at eye level with the person to facilitate the conversation.
 - ▶ To get the attention of a person who is hard of hearing, you may tap the person on the shoulder or politely wave your hand, if necessary. Look directly at the person and speak clearly. You may ask whether it would be helpful to them for you to slow your speech or speak up, and change your speech in accordance with their request, if any. Not hearing-impaired persons can read lips. For those who do lip read, place yourself so that you face the light source and keep hands, cigarettes and food away from your mouth when speaking.
 - ▶ Relax. Do not be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions such as "See you later" or "Did you hear about that?" That seems to relate to a person's disability. Do not be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure of what to do.
 - ▶ People with disabilities are individuals with families, jobs, hobbies, likes and dislikes, problems and joys. While the disability is an integral part of who they are, it alone does not define them. Don't make them into disability heroes or victims. Treat them as individuals.
- The Office of General Counsel Staff: **Lavee Hamer**, general counsel; **Deborah McSwain**, special assistant; **Patsy Morgan**, agency legal specialist; **Irene Bowen**, administrative assistant II; **Linda Barker**, ADA/Title VII compliance officer; **Margaret Watts**, ADA/Title VII compliance officer; **Charlotte Williams**, PREA administrator; **Gary Martin**, PREA program assistant VI; and **Stephanie Teachey**, administrative assistant I.

SecuritySense

Hackers Gearing Up for Holiday Season

According to the hacker community, you're more likely to be targeted at Christmas and New Year than at any other time. That's right: like Santa, most hackers are taking a breather now, gearing up for a busy winter season, according to a survey of hackers attending Defcon 17 in Las Vegas.

Malicious hackers make up less than one-fourth of the overall hacker community, according to 70% of the respondents. And the same percentage say government security and privacy regulations don't make hacking into corporate networks any tougher.

Another 15% say compliance initiatives have actually made hacking easier, while 15% say these programs have made it harder.

More than 81% of hackers say they're more active around the winter holidays. Nearly 56% say Christmas is the ideal time for corporate hacking, and 25% say New Year's Eve.

Weekday nights are when they do most of their hacking, according to 52% of the respondents. More than 30% do so during business hours, but only 15% on weekends.

A survey of actual hackers is intriguing, isn't it? Here are other results:

- ▶ More than 85% say they can hack into a corporate network via the firewall.
- ▶ 25% say they could accomplish that within minutes, while 14% say it would take a few hours.
- ▶ Another 16% say they won't bother hacking a firewall at all, even if they can get in that way.

In terms of seasonality, some 89% of those surveyed don't feel that vacations taken in the third quarter of the year by IT security pros have a major impact on attack success rates, as many of the hackers themselves take a step back at the end of the summer before ramping up anew ahead of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's.

SecuritySense, a service that provides to you easy-to-read articles that relate to current information security threats. Armed with this knowledge, you can begin to defend yourself against the growing number of threats from hackers and information thieves, who seek to compromise our computer systems.