What’s Inside...

Legislative Affairs Team Keeps on Top of All the Lawmaking Action pg. 2
ALE Awarded Accreditation By CALEA, A First In The Nation pg. 5
State Capitol Police Receives Proclamation of Thanks pg. 5
Chatham YDC’s String Ensemble Performs Work of American Composer pg. 6
New Choppers Lift the Patrol’s Capacity to Aid Other Agencies pg. 8
The Future is Now pg. 10

Firearms Instructor Training Program Graduates Class pg. 17
Prison Chaplains Keep the Faith pg. 18
BCO Classes pg. 22
LESS Hosts National Working Group pg. 22
Promotions, Retirements and Passings pg. 23
There’s a hum of activity as the North Carolina General Assembly continues its 2019 session on the opposite end of Halifax Mall from the Archdale Building housing DPS Administration. At the Legislative Building (and Legislative Office Building next door), the session that started in January is in full swing. Decisions are being made that will affect the laws governing public safety, and funding to support the department’s many divisions and initiatives.

Fortunately for us, DPS has a top notch team to keep up with legislative developments and provide daily and weekly summaries of what will or could impact our department.

This dynamite trio just so happens to all have the same last name. You can call them “Team Davis.”

Legislative Affairs Director Susanna Davis leads the team, also composed of fellow legislative liaisons Alicia Davis and Justin Davis. No, they’re not related, and they hadn’t even met each other prior to their current positions, but their dedication and effective working relationship with each other have made for a lasting bond and sense of kinship.

At the end of each week during the legislative session, DPS employee email accounts receive a nicely-packaged “Legislative Update” to give them an insider’s summary on what’s happening at the General Assembly as it relates to public safety. That insight is delivered thanks to the work of Susanna Davis and her team, who are busy attending committee meetings, tracking legislation and keeping DPS leadership informed. The team also compiles daily updates on all bills with DPS impacts.

Pictured from left to right: Alicia Davis, Susanna Davis, Chief Deputy Secretary Casandra Hoekstra and Justin Davis.
to show where they are in committee or within legislative processes.

Chief Deputy Secretary over Administration Casandra Hoekstra is appreciative of the services that the team provides: “Legislative Affairs plays a pivotal role to keep leadership apprised of developments, and connects us with legislators to maintain an open dialogue on law changes.”

Working separately but in conjunction with Team Davis are legislative liaisons Thomas Bowlin, representing the N.C. National Guard, and Rhian Merwald, representing the SBI.

Susanna Davis moves quickly, popping into legislative offices, nabbing a quick conversation with a legislator as the opportunity arises, and monitoring activity on the General Assembly’s website. She certainly gets her steps in each day. She even prefers stairs to the elevator as she zips along.

The pace is quick and it demands adaptability: “I can’t predict what next month will bring, let alone tomorrow,” Susanna Davis says.

Although interactions between agencies, legislative offices and the public (or as they are known in legislative-speak, constituents) occur year-round, the legislative session is definitely the busy season for the team.

The General Assembly works on a two-year cycle after being elected in the fall of even-numbered years. It holds the main “long session” in odd-numbered years starting in January, and then continues the next year with a “short session.”

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**The Road to a State Budget**

One of the General Assembly’s main responsibilities is to pass a state budget for each two-year cycle. Outside of all the other activity — new laws, law changes, local bills, constitutional amendments — the budget-writing is a constant. Passing the budget usually is the last big objective of the legislative session that signals its conclusion. But what is the life cycle of a budget? It starts pretty much as soon as the last cycle ends.

In the tradition of “Schoolhouse Rock!” (remember the singing cartoon bill sitting on the steps of the Capitol?) here’s an outline of the budget process.

1. **Governor’s proposed budget**: The governor’s office receives input from individual departments before proposing how the state’s funds should be divided. At the start of the long session, the governor’s office presents its priorities to lawmakers. With the assistance of the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM), the governor recommends a balanced budget taking into considering projected revenues (how much in tax dollars should be coming in) to compare to the spending. This year, Governor Cooper’s proposed budget was presented in early March. See also this summary document highlighting the portions relating to public safety.

2. **House version of budget**: Individual committees, such as the Justice and Public Safety Appropriations committee, work out many details. The budget bill eventually goes through the full Appropriations committee, and then, a vote by the full State House of Representatives. This year, the House passed its budget (House Bill 966, 2019 Appropriations Act) at the end of April.

3. **Senate version of budget**: Follows a similar path as in the House to come up with a State Senate budget bill. On 5/31/2019, the Senate passed its budget (technically, a proposed senate committee substitute of House Bill 966).

4. **Concurrence**: For the parts of the House and Senate budget bills that differ from each other, a conference committee comprised of selected lawmakers from both chambers is appointed to resolve differences.

5. **Ratification**: Once agreement is made between the versions, the General Assembly ratifies its budget, sending it to the governor.

6. **Governor’s opportunity to sign or veto**: If the governor signs the budget, it becomes law. If the governor vetoes, the budget goes back to the General Assembly to potentially override the veto, or pass a different version. If the governor does not act within 10 days, the General Assembly’s ratified budget bill becomes law without his signature.

7. **Certification**: OSBM certifies the ratified budget. The new operating budget is issued to each agency.
starting in the spring of the following even-numbered year. Regular sessions end when the General Assembly decides it has
concluded its business for the year, usually in the summer or fall. A “special” session can also be called by the governor or the
General Assembly. In recent years, it has become the norm instead of the exception to have a few of those special sessions.
One of 2018’s special sessions was called by Governor Cooper to coordinate funding for the Hurricane Florence recovery.

The big event this long session, as with every odd-numbered year, is setting the state budget for the two-year cycle. The
budget is always adjusted during the short session in even-numbered years, but the long session is when the two-year
budget is built from the ground up. The traditional goalpost is to have a budget completed by the end of the fiscal year,
which falls on June 30. If that does not happen, the existing budget remains in place until the new one is finalized.

Much of the work of legislation is done by committees (or subcommittees) of lawmakers assigned to specific subjects.
Team Davis interacts very closely with certain committees such as those handling appropriations for Justice and Public
Safety. But legislation affecting DPS could occur within any bill and by any committee: DPS-related law changes could come
up in a judiciary committee. Or something impacting the State Highway Patrol could arise in a transportation committee.

Bills can be introduced in either chamber of the legislature, the House of Representatives or the Senate, but have to pass
in both chambers. If the versions of the passed bill differ between the chambers, the differences must be resolved through
“concurrence.” Then the ratified bill is presented to the governor, who has 30 days to approve or veto the bill. If the governor
does not act during that timeframe, the bill becomes law without his signature.

In the world of North Carolina lawmaking, the word “crossover” is a big deal. That’s the deadline for a bill to have passed in
one of the chambers and “crossed over” to the other chamber to stay alive for the current session (and there are some
exceptions, such as budgetary legislation). This year, that crossover deadline fell on May 9.

As you can imagine, particularly if you follow the news, developments can be unpredictable during a legislative session.
Progress toward lawmaking is full of stops, starts, surprise additions to bills, you name it. The members of Team Davis have
developed a good working strategy to divide and be in all the places they need to be to attend committee meetings, votes,
etc. They huddle each Monday to map out the week’s strategy.

“If you like the ‘whack-a-mole’ game, the job is a bit like that,” Justin Davis says.

“It’s been a wonderful experience. Our team has a potpourri of different skills,” says Alicia Davis, who has a background
both as an attorney and serving in legislative and lobbying roles.

Susanna Davis, who has worked in legislative positions within these buildings for years, is comfortable taking it all in
stride: “Our work is full of challenges and excitement. It’s so rewarding to be able to support the interests of the state’s
public safety workforce. I’ve spent a good portion of my career in this Legislative Building and have been lucky enough to
love what I do.”
**ALE Awarded Accreditation By CALEA, A First In The Nation**

On May 4, the North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) joined the elite gold standard of public safety after being awarded national accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies Inc. (CALEA). Accepting the award were Bryan House, acting branch head of ALE, Angela Hayes, supervisor for Professional Standards, and MaryBryan Wolak, accreditation team member, who attended the CALEA conference in Huntsville, Alabama.

CALEA-accredited agencies go through a meticulous months-long process of self-assessment and site-assessment, during which assessors inspect the agency’s policies and procedures, management, operations and support services. An agency must meet approximately 180 CALEA standards and go before a 21-member committee to achieve accredited status.

North Carolina ALE is the only CALEA-accredited alcohol law enforcement agency in the nation. “This accreditation demonstrates ALE’s commitment to being one of the top alcohol law enforcement agencies in the nation,” House said. “We strive to serve the citizens of North Carolina with the utmost professionalism, accountability and transparency.”

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**State Capitol Police Receives Proclamation of Thanks**

On May 6, the N.C. State Board of Elections thanked the State Capitol Police (SCP) for their assistance during a high-profile public evidentiary hearing held in February that attracted national attention. Board Chair Robert Cordle presented SCP Deputy Chief Terry Green with a framed proclamation thanking the SCP and its officers for their assistance during the course of the four day hearing.
Chatham YDC’s Youth String Ensemble Performs Work of American Composer

By Matt Jenkins, Communications Officer
Competition for teenage eardrums today includes contemporary performers such as Lady Gaga, Cardi B, Kendrick Lamar, or Lil’ Wayne. So, to entice a group of teenagers to spend a weekend day tuning in to (and practicing) the likes of Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Copeland or Vivaldi is a success in every way. This is exactly what Charles Dingle and his team at Chatham Youth Development Center hoped for when they launched a youth string ensemble program little more than a year ago: expose kids to classical music and provide them an opportunity to learn and participate in a social group. What Chatham YDC staff may not have expected was that this experience would also lead these youth to create original compositions, suitable for sharing publicly.

Under the guidance of University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC-G) Ph.D. candidate Bethany Uhler, the coed mix of students spend time on Saturdays learning and rehearsing together. To showcase their talents, they have played several performances both at Chatham YDC and outside public venues like the UNC-G Music Conservatory stage. “The youth who participate must demonstrate they’re ready for the responsibility and commitment – and there is now a waiting list to join the group,” Dingle said.

Last year, I introduced readers to a young lady who gravitated to playing a violin very quickly and easily. Watching her perform nearly a year later, I saw that she has continued to grow her playing ability and is an obvious leader among the members. The music is becoming more advanced for the experienced members while still incorporating easier parts for newcomers. This team combines their varying skill sets to perform an array of pieces.

As the group made its way through its spring recital program recently—comprised of traditional North Carolina mountain tunes, and adaptations of works by Russian, German and other European composers—Uhler paused as she turned to the audience to introduce the closing number. “Our final arrangement this afternoon is by an American composer,” she explained. “The tune is entitled, ‘Mother’s Love,’ and it was written by (one of) our very own.”

This is another young lady who has grown from the experience of performing with this group. Quiet and reserved in earlier shows, she wore a smile of confidence and enjoyment as she drew a bow across the strings.

She told me as part of their development in the ensemble, students were assigned to write a song, and the group selected hers as the closing piece. “I wrote the song to make peace, to show that I have let everything go,” she said. “Everyone loved the way it turned out.” Happy that so many people have gained something from her song, she said she plans to have it played when she graduates in the near future, allowing her father and other family members to hear what she has created.

“Spending time with Ms. Uhler and the others is something I look forward to every week,” she said. “Whatever I carry with me, the music is a stress reliever and it helps to take my mind off other distractions which occur through the week. I can come in here and it puts a smile on my face.”

Providing pathways to new experiences such as these helps young people find themselves and what they can offer to our communities as adults. These young people have now opened a door into a world of music that they did not know existed before their involvement with the string ensemble.

Listen to the song, ‘Mother’s Love’ here.
New Choppers Lift the Patrol’s Capacity to Aid Other Agencies

By Claire Rice, Editor
When the State Highway Patrol unveiled two Bell 407 helicopters on April 23, they weren’t the only agency that benefitted from the upgrade.

Unbeknownst to many, the Patrol’s aviation fleet aids any and all public safety agencies throughout the state - free of charge. In fact, more than 80% of the missions conducted by the fleet are for local agencies that need help finding missing persons.

To ensure the safety of North Carolinians, Col. Glenn McNeill coordinated with DPS Secretary Erik A. Hooks to secure funding to purchase the helicopters. “As the needs associated with providing public safety have advanced, upgrades to the equipment used to meet those needs must be continually assessed,” Col. McNeill said. “These aircraft possess extremely sophisticated technology that can be used to save lives, protect communities and deter criminal behavior.”

Operating since 1972, the 12-member team has previously used a fleet of older, legacy OH-58 helicopters to fly missions. While the legacy models are still operational, the new aircraft provide a wide range of state-of-the-art upgrades. They have the capacity to lift 2,000 pounds more than older models, have 40% faster response times and a greater power margin. The parts that keep the 407 helicopters flying are more widely available and at a comparable cost, adding to the benefits. The new helicopters also provide the option to carry a third crewmember, as needed, to maintain full control of the thermal imaging camera. That brings the total capacity of the chopper to five on board.

The benefits of the helicopters will also be more evident when used in the western part of the state. With previous models, the aviation fleet had to fly higher to avoid mountain peaks and had to use people on the ground to view specific areas of interest up close. The new Bells will be able to fly much lower providing the capability to even see something located at the base of a tree.

With most missions being conducted for both local jurisdictions across the state and other DPS agencies such as the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI), Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) and N.C. Emergency Management, it will reduce response time by having the new aircraft at both of the Patrol hangars - located in Salisbury and Raleigh.

“The biggest thing is the level of service the Highway Patrol is able to provide to other public safety responders with the new helicopters. It is important that smaller municipalities are not limited because of operating costs,” said Sgt. Mat Tribula, chief pilot and unit commander. “If there is a missing child or adult, there should be no hesitation when it comes to cost. Because of our fleet, no one has to worry about anyone sending them a bill. This is what we do.”
DPS is Leading the Charge into the 21st Century Workplace, with IT Products to Connect Us Across the State and Across Government

In 1949, not long after the birth of computer technology, the magazine Popular Mechanics described the “computer” of the future, noting it might weigh “only one and a half tons.” We’ve come a long way since then — our everyday reality would have been science fiction back in 1949. For a lot of jobs including many at DPS, a computer along with a monitor (or two, or three) and a desk phone are standard-issue and allow us to communicate by email or phone call to just about anywhere. Make it a laptop and cell phone, and now the desk is mobile.

For visionaries like DIT-DPS Chief Information Officer Glenn Mack, that’s just scratching the surface of what we can do to be connected.

Under Mack’s leadership, DPS has invested and set up new technologies that put advanced features, such as high-definition (HD) video calls, at our fingertips. This “unified collaboration” — to use IT-speak — is already being used very successfully in many DPS divisions. It’s cutting-edge stuff, and seen more and more in the private sector.
Many DPS employees may not be familiar with it, or may be daunted by it. If that's you, fear not, dear reader: This story is written by a non-technical person, for a non-technical person.

The good news is the technology is more user-friendly than ever — think about how tech advancements are phasing out gadgets with dozens of buttons in favor of sleek, user-friendly devices that might only have one button. Better yet, we've got teams of IT professionals who are eager to support you.

**Videoconferencing and More: Lights, Camera, Action**

As long as we've had television screens, science fiction writers and dreamers have predicted the equivalent of phone calls by video screen that show the face of the caller. There was “The Jetsons,” “Star Trek,” and my personal favorite, the 1989 movie “Back to the Future Part II,” where in the future year 2015 a shady video call by Michael J. Fox’s Marty McFly is intercepted by his boss and gets him fired … delivered by fax machine printout. (OK, so they didn’t get every detail exactly right.)

In 2019, video phone calls are most certainly commonplace. Thanks to video-calling applications like Skype we can use to make calls on computers and smartphones, many of us probably take it for granted at this point.

In the context of state government, and in particularly in public safety, we can use videoconferencing as a tool to work smarter, faster and use our resources most efficiently. How? Well, when two or more people in different areas of the state (or even across town) want to have a face-to-face meeting without having to travel to each other, they can do that now, using this technology.

In prisons, it can save the valuable time of correctional officers if they don’t have to transport offenders to see a doctor or appear for a hearing — not to mention the security concerns. Less time, resources and gas being used for travel means that more time and effort can be better directed at the work we need to do.

There are many examples. But before we get to that, let’s introduce the flavors of “unified collaborations” offered through DPS’ vendor, Cisco:

IT professional Jerrell Jordan tests video connections in Prisons’ newly-renovated conference room that can link up to other video call “endpoints” throughout the state.

Chief Information Officer Glenn Mack demonstrates the high-definition videoconference equipment that he has helped bring to state government. “Information technology professionals within DPS equip the department with a variety of tools and products to lead our offices into the workplace of the 21st century,” he said. “We’re more connected, more efficient in our operations, and have a higher level of readiness for the unexpected than ever before.”
• **WebEx** provides online video meetings via computer or device. That could be two employees having a face-to-face meeting by video call. Or it could be a training session where the trainer is presenting to an audience who can interact through features like being able to virtually “raise a hand” to ask a question. The great thing about WebEx is the program is so easily accessible. It’s web-based, which means that no special software or hardware is needed, outside of an internet-connected computer of some kind and an email address. That also means WebEx can be used to connect with people and agencies even outside of DPS.

• **WebEx Teams** is a related component that allows other communications and files to be shared, and activity logged, sorted by specific teams and projects. Think of it like a social media website, like Facebook, except it’s a “work version” of social media to track progress at your job as opposed to sharing cat videos.

• **Telepresence** is the high-end solution for video calls when quality really matters. It requires some advanced equipment. The higher quality video best emulates the experience of actually being in the same room as the other caller(s). Video calls are made between HD screens called “endpoints” that have been installed (and are continuing to be) throughout DPS. The endpoints are directly networked to each other so they aren’t fighting all of the other network traffic that connects computers and devices to servers and the internet. An endpoint can “call” any other DPS endpoint with a couple flicks of your finger on the touchscreen.

**Taking DPS By Storm**

‘Great. But where can that be used in public safety?’ you may ask. The answer: Plenty of places.

**Correctional Healthcare**

Prisons across the state have been outfitted with those endpoints to link up on a HD video call network, thanks in particular to the support of IT professionals Jerrell Jordan and Ed Lawson. They and others on the tech services team in the Randall Building work hard to ensure traffic is flowing smoothly on the video call lines.

No area of DPS has been more revolutionized by this technology than healthcare services in North Carolina prisons. There are two big reasons, according to Terri Catlett, deputy director of Prisons, Health Services. Number one, the technology became available at the right time. Number two, offering the potential to remotely see patients helps in recruiting doctors to fill positions.

Take psychiatry: Many appointments between psychiatrists and offenders are conducted by video call. There’s even a name for this: Telepsychiatry. It’s a big thing, not just within prisons or within North Carolina, but for the entire field. When North Carolina’s prisons healthcare transitioned to electronic medical records in recent years, that truly paved the way for videoconferencing. Now, the doctor can see both the patient and the necessary records all electronically.

“It is greatly expanded our opportunity to hire staff in the sense that not every psychiatrist is comfortable or wants to go behind the fence for obvious safety reasons,” said Dr. Bryan Harrelson, a psychiatrist with DPS. “This allows the system to recruit doctors who can provide care from an administrative building.”

It has also allowed the department to take advantage of contract services. Dr. Joseph Williams is assistant professor with the UNC School of Medicine, and director of Telepsychiatry and Correctional Psychiatry. Dr. Williams has worked both within prisons and remotely, and both as a DPS employee and as a contractor during his career. While sitting at his desk adorned with one of those HD endpoint screens, he agreed that the
ability to work remotely “has more benefits than drawbacks” in his experience.

Telepsychiatry has really taken off, but other areas of medicine are working to integrate the technology where they can, too. Meanwhile, nursing operations are using it as well: Online trainings are commonly held via WebEx, and recordings of the training are saved into the state’s learning management system (LMS) so they can be accessed again for future uses.

Nursing Director Anita Myers also described how beneficial it is to use WebEx to conduct regional meetings, noting how it’s not a productive use of time to make someone drive four hours for a one-hour meeting. Having easy-to-use video call capabilities makes all that travel unnecessary in most cases.

**Law Enforcement, Emergency Responses**

In the conference room of the State Capitol Police headquarters, an old-fashioned whiteboard sits on the floor in the corner, neglected. On the front wall where it once hung is a 70-inch “whiteboard” of a more high-tech variety. It’s known as a Cisco “Teams” board because it is equipped to use WebEx Teams. It can be “drawn” on using a finger or stylus. It can also display documents, show videos or make video calls, or project what’s on a linked device such as a laptop, tablet or phone.

The board is smart enough to detect when someone with a linked device walks into the room, “greeting” them with a welcome message on-screen. (“I’ll admit this has shades of the talking computer HAL from the movie “2001: A Space Odyssey.”)

On the conference room’s back wall, a large, faded wall map of downtown Raleigh previously served as the place where supervisors would draw out plans, using dry-erase markers on the laminated surface. Now, with the Teams board, officers can display a digital map and zoom in and switch between street labels and satellite imagery, just like many of us do every day using GPS features on our smartphone. Meeting participants can draw on the big screen up front, or while sitting in the audience using a linked device. Drawings can overlay maps, documents or security footage.

“The images have been really helpful to be able to know where to post people,” said Chief Chip Hawley of the State Capitol Police.

Chief Hawley and a fellow SCP officer shared a little banter as the chief’s face was broadcast on the big screen from his smartphone. They were having fun, but this board can be put to work in serious situations. It can allow law enforcement to work effectively in providing a coordinated response to emergencies or other events such as large political protests in Raleigh. SCP can link up “Teams” with partners inside DPS, like
Emergency Management, or outside, such as Raleigh Police or other local forces.

Officer Edward Farmer described how when multiple agencies are involved in a coordinated response to an event, doing it the old way, there may be multiple briefings as the plan is relayed out. But that “game of telephone” can lead to messages between briefings not being exactly in line with each other. By using this technology and involving other agencies through WebEx Teams, information can be shared and relayed out immediately, improving continuity and consistency.

Geof Toner, an engineering manager and one of the architects of this technology being used at DPS, put it best: “Say it once and say it for many.”

**Hearings**

At the Yonkers Road building, the N.C. Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission conducts hearings every Wednesday. “Revocation hearings” are held when a recently released offender is arrested, and some come up on appeal to the commission. Each Wednesday, up to 30 of these hearings are scheduled for the day, involving offenders from across the state, along with their assigned parole officer and attorney.

It used to be that these hearings had to be held in person, requiring travel and security to get all of these people in the same room at Central Prison for what’s usually a 10-minute hearing to consider each case. Now, it’s all done via videoconference, a three-way video call between the (1) commission’s room, (2) the parole officer and (3) the offender (and attorney).

Commissioner Graham Atkinson has recognized the value of this technology using the high-end Telepresence videoconferencing: “We have fewer problems, and that speeds along the hearing, which in turn increases the number of hearings we can complete in a day. It benefits not only our commission, but the others involved as well [parole officer, correctional staff, etc.] We try to be conscious of everyone’s time. The more efficient the technology is, the more efficient our work is.”

It’s an effective model we’re sure to see more often, and other areas of state government joining in. DPS also supports videoconferencing of the N.C. Industrial Commission to hear offender tort claims. With all of these forms of “unified collaboration,” DPS has set the standard for other departments.
**Who You Gonna Call?**

The foundation that has allowed DPS to offer all of these high tech solutions has been a reliable network using VoIP (which stands for “voice over internet protocol” — I’ll spare you from an explanation of what exactly that is, so let’s just say it’s the newer, better technology). The IT folks call it “enterprise architecture,” which means it’s all being built customized for our department’s needs and scale. Along with good connections for our computers, we also rely upon our phone systems.

Part of the current transition happening in DPS buildings and prisons is to transition from POTS (“plain old telephone systems” that use analog lines) to VoIP. More than 100 DPS “sites” have been outfitted with VoIP. Kim Setzer and her telephony team are refitting the state’s prisons as the older systems need replaced.

The team helps ensure calls route the way they need to. It’s becoming more high tech and digital: Things like call transfers, that used to have to be done using big clunky phone hardware, can now be accomplished “drag and drop,” on a computer screen.

Another cool feature available: “Single-number reach,” which allows a call coming in to a desk phone to also ring the employee’s cellphone.

One other Cisco product that DPS employees may notice on the computer, related to phones, is Jabber. This little program allows voicemail messages to be accessed and organized on your computer. But it has some other neat features as well: You can “instant message” other DPS employees logged into it — complete with emojis. It can also be used to transfer files between computers, even those too large to be sent by email.

**We Have a Situation**

Examples of the new technology in use are popping up all over DPS, from SBI to Emergency Management to Prisons. Prisons’ Randall Building has a renovated conference room sporting an impressive multi-screen setup. And in a lower floor of the Dobbs Building among IT offices, you can find a conference room that rivals the White House Situation Room, at least how it was depicted in the television show “The West Wing.” Dramatic lighting, screens, microphones … it even has a “smart” camera that can detect who in the room is talking and zoom in on them.

The new tools are a lot of fun to use, but they’re not just bells and whistles.
They’re serving a critical purpose to keep us connected when it matters. During the lead-up and response to Hurricane Florence, lawmakers received daily briefings from Emergency Management and other DPS partners using the technology. On Election Day in 2018, the State Board of Elections set up its own “situation room” using DPS’ equipment in the Dobbs Building.

The technology can help us do our job better and more efficiently. Our dedicated IT teams are standing by to help every division and section assess where it can put the tools to work. Most DPS employees already have everything they need to get started with WebEx.

We may not be flying our cars to work yet, but at the job we can say the future has arrived.
OSDT Firearms Instructor Training Program Graduates Its First Class of 2019

The Office of Staff Development and Training (OSDT) congratulates the recent graduates of the Firearms Instructor Training Program held at the North Carolina Justice Academy – East, from April 21 to May 3.

The program provides specialized certifications to instruct personnel within the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice on the use of firearms. The Instructors gain an understanding of the use of force as it pertains to the use of firearms, as well as range safety, legal considerations, handling medical emergencies on the range and conducting courses.

During the 80-hour course, instructors complete proficiency evaluations, demonstrating the ability to conduct range exercises safely and passing a written examination. Participants also compete in several team and individual competitions throughout the two-week period.

In the most recent program there were two honor graduates, Tara Gulyas and David Johnston, who both scored a 95 or better on the exam. Participants winning in the team and individual competitions include Rudy Desten, Robbie Wellman, Jonathan Lanehart, Tara Gulyas, Harold Mashburn and Benjamin Miller. Please join us in congratulating all the instructors!

Pictured front row (from left to right): Robbie Wellman (Community Corrections), Christopher James (Prisons), Amy Watkins (Prisons), Ronnie Locklear (Prisons), Benjamin Miller (Prisons), Jonathan Lanehart (Prisons), Tara Gulyas (Community Corrections); back row (from left to right): David Johnston (Prisons), Rudy Desten (Prisons), Harold Mashburn (Community Corrections), Marshal Griffin (OSDT), Janel Tilghman (Community Corrections), Larry Kanniard (Community Corrections) and Casey Wolfe (Prisons).
Felishia McPherson was 25 years old, hostile, bitter, suicidal and serving a 35-year prison sentence for second degree murder.

In her second year in the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women, she denounced her Southern Baptist upbringing. She renounced God.

Then she met prison chaplains Betty Brown and Marilyn Gasswint.

“They worked for my behalf holistically,” McPherson said. “They cried with me. They laughed with me. I was a soul they were trying not to lose. I can honestly say they served that prison term with me. They saved my life.”

Prison chaplains have a tougher job than most people could imagine.

After four days of intensive training recently at Covenant Christian Church in Cary, eight new chaplains in the state prison system came to more fully comprehend the difficulty and complexity of their mission.

“There’s nothing typical about what we do,” Betty Brown, now Chaplaincy Services Director, told the new recruits. “The public will never know what you’ve done, the lives you’ve saved.”

This isn’t a normal ministry. This is a non-denominational, interfaith, pluralistic prison ministry, tending to the pastoral needs of almost 36,000 offenders who practice the 15 faiths recognized by the state.

“Your facilities are not your church,” lectured Brown at the recent training. “We cannot follow our own agenda in an interfaith prison setting. You must tend to the needs of everyone. It’s not always the offenders, it’s the staff too. This is a calling. The mission statement is, in part, to provide compassionate pastoral care to offenders regardless of their religious beliefs or affiliations, or none at all.”
In other words, tolerance of other faiths is an absolute must. Do not view offenders as a captive congregation to be converted to your personal faith. If you can’t be inclusive, or if other faiths offend you, this job is not for you.

Prison chaplain tip: This is a government job with government requirements. Policy must be respected. Laws must be followed. Forms must be filed. Approvals must be sought.

“Document, document, document,” urged Susan Addams, regional chaplain and new chaplain training coordinator. “The religious policies are your bread and butter. Do not let your compassion override policy. You and I are agents of the state government. Be aware of the legal consequences of your decisions and actions.”

The state has 55 ordained chaplains scattered throughout its prison facilities. Some are on the state payroll. Some are paid by community churches. Some are carefully selected volunteers. They report to supervisors like any other state employee.

Prison chaplains tend to the spiritual needs of the prison population. They conduct and coordinate religious services. They listen with empathy to woes of deaths, divorces, separations, of health problems, of struggling to cope and to survive in a prison. Chaplains strive to be a beacon of hope.

All the chaplains in the prison system are ordained and almost all have clinical training. Through hands-on practice, supervision and academic study, they have learned how to communicate effectively with offenders and their families, to build rapport and trust, and to carefully observe.

“Your beliefs don’t make you a better person,” said Brown. “Your behavior does. We are charged to lean into the darkness and get through it with them.”

Prison chaplains order religious items. They obtain reading material. They discuss educational and training programs aimed at easing the transition back into society on release. They make referrals for mental health counseling. Prison chaplains maintain a library of diverse religious publications at each facility. They recruit community religious leaders to help with religious services for all interfaith groups. They identify trusted offenders who meet the requirements to be faith helpers.

Chaplains need to know how those of the 15 recognized faiths worship, their belief systems and what items they view as sacred. And prison chaplains must know what religious items are prohibited for safety and security reasons.

Wiccans, for example, worship with an Athame. It’s a ceremonial knife. A real one is not permitted in prison, for obvious
reasons. Instead, Wiccan worshipers may use a photo or cardboard likeness of an Athame in their services.

Other things a prison chaplain must know: The difference between a Rastafarian prayer crown and a Jewish Yarmulke skull cap. A Hindu religious medallion is quite different from an Asatru religious medallion. A Holy Koran used by those who practice the Moorish Science Temple of America faith is spelled differently than the Holy Qur’an used in Islam. Buddhist prayer beads are not the same as a Catholic rosary.

Mistakes can cause offense. Offense can cause problems. Problems can cause legal issues.

Prison chaplains must keep their eyes and ears open as well as their hearts.

Bad things can happen in prisons. Contraband and rule violations must be reported. Wardens must be alerted to escape plans, harassment (sexual or otherwise), threats to self-harm and harm others.

More prison chaplain tips: Be on the lookout for offenders passing contraband to each other during ceremonies. Donated bibles can have a shank hidden in the spine or liquified drugs on the pages. A gifted hymnal may conceal a cell phone.

“If you are easily manipulated, you are doomed in my opinion,” Addams said. “Always follow policy. Respect all religions. But always protect your safety and security and that of the staff.”

Newly trained chaplains Kenneth Jarmon and Cindy Coble embrace the challenge.

“There is a lot to learn but doing this is meaningful,” said Jarmon, who was a correctional officer for five years before obtaining master’s and doctorate in divinity, and is now a chaplain at Central Prison. “I feel chosen. I’m blessed and I’m ready.”

Coble, who is assigned to Lanesboro Correctional Institution, also has experience as a correctional officer.

“This has been an interesting transition,” she said. “I got the call to prison chaplaincy in the gatehouse of Women’s Prison...
[in Raleigh]. I chased this dream for 19 years. I love this.”

The new chaplains believe they have the attitude, education and training they need to succeed. They believe they can make a difference in the lives and spiritual well-being of the offenders and the families they will serve. And they believe that will benefit everyone.

“There is no throwaway person,” said Josh LeRoy, who is stationed at Randolph Correctional Center near Asheboro. “Most of these individuals will get out of prison at some point. If the environment we create is therapeutic, they’ll come out more whole than they went in.”

Felishia McPherson is living proof.

Her life was transformed by the two chaplains - Brown and Gasswint - who joined her on her spiritual journey in Women’s Prison while she was serving time for second degree murder. They leaned into her darkness and helped her to a better place.

McPherson was released on parole in 2006. She became a certified peer support specialist. She obtained a master’s degree in mental health counseling. She converted back to the Southern Baptist faith of her youth.

She is now employed helping others as a licensed professional counselor. She works with faith groups and organizations to mentor offenders prior to their release and to assist them post-release to reduce recidivism. She also serves on the executive board of the North Carolina organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

“I’m happy now,” McPherson said. “I’m a woman of God. I give back a lot of the seeds they planted in me. I pay it forward as much as I can. I help others to change their lives for the better. It’s all because of the prison chaplaincy services.”
Congratulations BCO Classes #21 and #22!

Thirteen participants graduated the Basic Correctional Officer Class #21 held at the Samarcand Training Academy on May 3. Pictured are (front from left to right): Michelle Haynes, Toni Bruce, Heather Ellington, Richonda Avery, Sarea Phillips, Ashley Allen; (back from left to right): Rakima Chapman, Justin Hegyes, Matthew Douglas, James Wade, Kathrine Arnold, Christy Harrington and Cecilia Jones.

Nineteen participants graduated the Basic Correctional Officer Class #22 held at the Samarcand Training Academy on May 24. Pictured are (front): Kietta Gooch; (second row from left to right): Sheila Lubell, Mon'esha Alston, Kellie Jenkins, Justina Sheppard, Tabitha Moody; (third row from left to right): Mark Zettl, Keilah White, Cory Scott, Kristen Smith, Jasmine Wooden, Sybil Jones; (back row from left to right): Christopher Mitchell, Mateius Brown, Charles Dobbins, Leonardo Leiva, Ja'quan Williams, James Van Hoet and James Currier.

LESS Hosts National Working Group

On May 8, DPS’ Law Enforcement Support Services (LESS) hosted a national working group of the Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Law Enforcement Support Office, involving federal representatives and state coordinators from across the country. The mission of the DPS LESS office is providing excess DoD equipment to state and local law enforcement agencies to use in law enforcement activities. This enables these law enforcement agencies to take advantage of surplus military equipment such as helicopters that can be put to use by state or local law enforcement - and saving taxpayer dollars in the process.

David Farmer with LESS shared information with the working group about how North Carolina has found success in training and equipping local forces. Farmer was appointed to the working group by his peers to the current two-year term. He represents North Carolina as well as six other states and Puerto Rico.

Joanne Rowland, director of Purchasing & Logistics for DPS, remarked, “were honored to host this year’s event. We are always grateful for the opportunity to put a spotlight on this important national program, as well as the North Carolina staff that play such an integral part in its success.”

For more information on LESS, see the DPS website.
Quency Abdullah, correctional sergeant II, Warren CC
Christopher Agner, pilot 2, State Highway Patrol
Richard Athay, supervisor III, Reupholstery Plant
Diane Barber, deputy director, Governor’s Crime Commission
Naequan Barnes, youth counselor, Stonewall Jackson YDC-Clinical Services
Howard Benloss, correctional sergeant III, NCCI For Women
Coritza Bennett, correctional housing unit manager II, Morrison CC
Nikki Benston, juvenile court counselor, Eastern Region-District 8
Bernadine Black, correctional programs supervisor, Neuse CI
Noah Blackman, director II, Laundry Services
Andre Blackman, correctional officer II, Lanesboro CI
Nekiya Blackmond, correctional sergeant II, Franklin CC
Garry Bleeker, correctional assistant superintendent I, Prisons Administration
Sharon Blount, correctional programs director I, NCCI For Women
Cleunta Boddie, correctional food service supervisor II, Nash CI
Gregory Bonner, correctional sergeant I, Tyrrell Prison Work Farm
Carly Bourdon, trainee correctional officer III, NCCI For Women
Kaneisha Bowles, correctional officer III, Central Prison
Eric Brown, correctional sergeant I, Orange CC
Daniel Brown, correctional captain III, Alexander CI
Christopher Bryson, correctional sergeant II, Albemarle CI
William Bunting, correctional sergeant II, Craven CI
Kimberly Butler, correctional programs supervisor, Bertie CI
Dustin Byers, probation/parole field specialist, Judicial District 28
Timothy Cain, correctional captain I, Morrison CC
Philip Capucille, police officer supervisor II, State Capitol Police
Marie Chapman, juvenile court counselor supervisor, Piedmont Region-District 22
Teresa Chavis, correctional officer II, Lumberton CC
Reggielette Coley, correctional captain III, Maury CI
James Conley, correctional food service supervisor III, Marion CI
Joseph Cranford, correctional sergeant II, Albemarle CI
Tawanna Daniels, administrative assistant II, Bertie CI
Calvin Daniels, correctional captain III, Maury CI
Leonard Davis, administrative assistant I, Prisons Administration
Brian Davis, field service specialist, Western Region-District 30
Benjamin Dial, correctional sergeant III, Scotland CI
Sonia Dickens, correctional case manager, Sanford CC
Zachary Dombrowski, probation/parole officer trainee w/a, Judicial District 7
Erica Dooley, correctional lieutenant I, Swannanoa CC For Women
Leslea Dudley, correctional housing unit manager II, Maury CI
Ricky Eddins, correctional officer III, Southern CI
Tracey Edwards, correctional sergeant III, Eastern CI
Raija Ellis, correctional food service supervisor III, Maury CI
Tia Fields, correctional housing unit manager II, Maury CI
Cleaven Gibbs, hvac mechanic, Hyde CI
Laure Gleason, correctional sergeant III, Eastern CI
Shaun Gooler, correctional lieutenant II, Pender CI
Alannah Gooler, correctional officer II, Pender CI
Christopher Grady, correctional sergeant II, Eastern CI
Stephanie Greene, correctional sergeant II, Eastern CI
Rebecca Greene, nurse supervisor, Randolph CC
Gary Hamilton, correctional sergeant II, Harnett CI
Wilbur Hanley, correctional secretary III, Harnett CI
Alesha Hargrove, correctional officer III, Central Prison
Robert Hebert, assistant special agent in charge, SBI
Jill Hernly, judicial services specialist, Judicial District 12
Keith Herring, pilot 2, State Highway Patrol
Lloyd Hogan, electrician supervisor I, Facility Management
Travis Holder, juvenile court counselor, Central Region-District 11
Brian Hollowell, engineer, Chief Operating Office
Cedrick Holt, youth counselor supervisor, Stonewall Jackson YDC-Clinical Services
Wendy Housley, correctional captain III, Lanesboro CI
Kevin Hudson, correctional lieutenant II, Craggy CC
Donna Huggins, personnel assistant IV, Harnett CI
Sonya Hussey, administrative officer I, Mountain
Jeffery Ivey, correctional sergeant III, Tabor CI
Toni Jenkins, correctional food service officer I, Morrison CC
Everette Johnson, public safety supervisor, State Capitol Police
Cornelius Keech, correctional officer III, Eastern CI
Craig Kennedy, correctional food service officer II, Tabor CI
Adam Lambeth, correctional officer II, Cumberland CC
Michele Larson, public safety supervisor, State Capitol Police
John Lawrence, correctional sergeant III, Eastern CI
Shawnequa Lewis, medical records assistant IV, Prisons Administration
Charles Lewis, trainee probation/parole officer, Judicial District 16
Austin Locklear, trainee probation/parole officer, Judicial District 16
Anita Locust, correctional food service officer III, Maury CI
Selena Lozada, trainee probation/parole officer, Judicial District 18
Dalton Lynch, correctional sergeant II, Warren CC
Christopher Martin, correctional housing unit manager II, Maury CI
Mary Massey, accounting manager, Controller’s Office
Tracy Milholand, field service specialist, Western Region-District 23
Mechelle Miller, field service specialist, Western Region-District 24
Elliott Miller, correctional captain III, Eastern CI
Gwenette Mills, office assistant IV, Bertie CI
Cheryl Minick, supervisor I, Nash Optical Plant
James Monette, correctional sergeant II, Pamlico CI
Timothy Moody, plumber II, Columbus CC
Amy Moore, executive assistant I, ACJJ Administration
Michael Murphy, correctional sergeant II, Pender CI
Richard Murphy, radio engineer, State Highway Patrol
Michael Myers, youth services behavioral specialist, Dobbs YDC-Administration
Dawn Nairn, personnel assistant V, Columbus CC
Eric Newton, telecommunications shift supervisor, State Highway Patrol
Ty Niday, correctional sergeant I, Davidson CC
Charles Norris, correctional officer III, Tabor CI
James Oliver, correctional assistant superintendent V, Pasquotank CI
Chinyere Onwudiegwu, correctional behavioral specialist II, NCCI For Women
Kevin Oxendine, correctional sergeant II, Columbus CC
April Parker, correctional housing unit manager III, Alexander CI
Dawn Peoples Mundo, administrative assistant I, Tarheel Challenge
Joshua Piercy, field service specialist, Western Region-District 29
Miguel Pitts, area administrator, Central Region Administration
Timothy Pounds, youth counselor, Dobbs YDC-Administration
Michael Ramsey, clinical chaplain II, Alexander CI
Pauline Raynor, correctional officer III, Central Prison
Joey Raynor, administrative officer I, Purchasing & Logistics
Ashton Reams, correctional sergeant II, Warren CC
Rashida Reives, correctional programs supervisor, Davidson CC
Nastashia Remache, correctional sergeant II, Warren CC
Jason Reynolds, correctional sergeant III, Eastern CI
Hattiesha Rich, correctional officer II, Nash CI
Tehphna Richardson, probation/parole officer, Judicial District 12
Lisa Roberson, correctional housing unit manager II, Polk Youth CI
Shawn Robinson, correctional sergeant II, Albemarle CI
Daniel Robinson, Maintenance Mechanic IV, Morrison C
Margaret Samuels White, correctional officer III, Southern CI
Kimberly Sasser, trainee correctional officer III, Southern CI
Dekorera Sawyer, youth counselor, Stonewall Jackson YDC-Clinical Services
Michael Scarboro, correctional district manager, Central Region Operations
Marcus Scott, correctional sergeant III, Tabor CI
Kenneth Sessoms, maintenance mechanic IV, Sampson Laundry
Melinda Shue, personnel assistant IV, NCCI For Women
Phillip Smith, correctional training instructor, Staff Development & Training
David Snead, maintenance mechanic IV, Harnett CI
Brandon Snowden, correctional sergeant I, Swannanoa CC For Women
Sharon Stevens, judicial district manager I, Judicial District 2
Carol Street, social worker III, Dobbs YDC-Administration
Julia Swink, correctional housing unit manager II, Burke CRV
Tashika Thigpen Lilley, judicial services coordinator, Judicial District 3
Terry Thomas, accounting technician, Maury CI

David Thornton, correctional lieutenant II, Neuse CI
Faith Tillman, correctional sergeant I, Lanesboro CI
Jonathan Turnmire, correctional case manager, Davidson CC
Felicia Underwood, correctional food service officer III, Scotland CI
Roshonda Uzzell, correctional sergeant III, Eastern CI
Haley Veach, chief probation/parole officer, Judicial District 21
Kathy Waddell, departmental purchasing agent I, Purchasing & Logistics
Tyson Wade, correctional sergeant I, Orange CC
Lorie Ward, supv II, Correction Enterprise Ops
Juston Ward, correctional officer III, Tabor CI
James Whitehead, correctional career coach, Prisons Administration
Germel Wilkins, correctional programs supervisor, Central Prison
Jeannene Williams, correctional sergeant II, Pender CI
Kimberly Williams, correctional officer III, Alexander CI
Jeffery Williamson, correctional sergeant II, Sampson CC
Twana Willis, correctional officer III, Scotland CI
Derrick Wilson, correctional lieutenant II, Sampson CC
Shatik Wilson, correctional officer III, Central Prison
Christopher Winstead, manager II, License Tag Plant
Shonda Yarborough, correctional sergeant II, Franklin CI
Brett Bartholomew, parole case analyst II, Parole Commission, 27y/3m
Gerard Bianco, auto body shop supervisor, State Highway Patrol, 26y/0m
Stevens Biggerstaff, correctional officer I, Mountain Region Operations, 28y/11m
David Brown, correctional officer II, Craven CI, 10y/11m
Leigh Byers, juvenile court counselor supervisor, Piedmont Region-District 22, 29y/6m
Charles Coker, correctional field training officer III, Bertie CI, 5y/2m
Michael Collier, sergeant, State Highway Patrol, 25y/4m
Peggy Conner, correctional officer I, Lanesboro CI, 21y/7m
Dennis Farmer, information technology mgr - systems, Geospatial Technology Management, 30y/4m
Betty Gardner, nurse consultant, Prisons Administration, 28y/5m
Stephen Ginter, chief probation/parole officer, Judicial District 15, 29y/2m
Elizabeth Green, supervisor II, Columbus Sewing, 15y/3m
Donnie Harris, correctional sergeant II, Cragg CC, 29y/6m
Mack Hensley, lead correctional officer II, Cragg CC, 30y/7m
Victoria Howard, nurse consultant, Prisons Administration, 26y/1m
Stephen Hunter, probation/parole officer, Judicial District 18, 7y/2m
Thomas Huston, probation/parole officer, Judicial District 1, 20y/3m
William Ingram, recreation worker, Stonewall Jackson YDC-Clinical Services, 27y/3m
Trebor Jackson, juvenile court counselor, Eastern Region-District 8, 24y/6m
John Jackson, correctional officer II, Warren CC, 7y/9m
James Jackson, correctional officer II, Pender CI, 23y/0m
Margaret James, correctional officer II, Tillery CC, 22y/9m
Alice Jones, youth counselor supervisor, Stonewall Jackson YDC-Clinical Services, 39y/3m
Roger Kent, sergeant, State Highway Patrol, 24y/5m
David Kinlaw, first sergeant, State Highway Patrol, 27y/5m
Todd Koehler, first sergeant, State Highway Patrol, 26y/11m
Michael Marshburn, captain, State Highway Patrol, 24y/7m
Pamela Maye, juvenile court counselor, Eastern Region-District 3, 32y/0m
Robert McKay, parole case analyst II, Parole Commission, 31y/1m
William Merrill, correctional officer I, Cragg CC, 8y/9m
Johnny Moye, correctional officer II, Craven CI, 12y/5m
Todd Neal, correctional officer III, Pasquotank CI, 23y/1m
Elaine Parker, correction training specialist II, Lumbrandton CC, 24y/7m
Roger Patterson, correctional programs director III, Western Region Administration, 32y/1m
Steve Proffitt, correctional officer I, Cragg CC, 26y/10m
Jimmy Pruitt, lead correctional officer II, Caswell CC, 28y/10m
Freddie Pruitt, correctional officer III, Marion CI, 24y/5m
Terry Robinson, captain, State Highway Patrol, 27y/5m
Tyrone Ross, captain - mcsap, State Highway Patrol, 27y/5m

Stuart Schrodt, electronics tech II, Dan River Prison Work Farm, 21y/1m
William Shires, correctional officer II, Harnett CI, 26y/2m
Peggy Shutt, professional nurse, Morrison CC, 11y/6m
Daniel Souther, sergeant, State Highway Patrol, 28y/1m
Shirley Vann, correctional officer III, Pasquotank CI, 30y/6m
Steven Wales, nurse consultant, Prisons Administration, 32y/1m
Ronald Young, director II, Laundry Services, 19y/11m

Darlene Rolo, correctional field training officer III, Foothills CC, 11y/8m
John Tally, correctional field training officer II, Harnett CI, 14y/2m