



**UPAN Newsletter** Volume 11 Number 12 | **DECEMBER 2024**  
*“Empowerment and Growth Through Knowledge and Unity”*

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**Family Orientation Dec 5 – Holiday Project for Kids – Earned Time Credit Follow-up– New Mail System – PrisonEd Classes – UPEP Courses – SOLID Report – NewPath Ed. – BOPP “Smart Scheduling” – *Dell-Emerald Topics* Yoga in Dell – UDC Organizational Details – UDC Director Redd & Team at UPAN November Meeting**

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**Next Meeting:** Monday, January 13, 2025 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Speakers: Molly Prince & UPAN Directors on Advocating  
Join all meetings at <https://bit.ly/UPAN-Meet> No Meeting in December.

**Following Meetings:** Monday, February 10, 2025 6:30 – 8:30 pm. **Guest Speakers:** UPEP Director Andy Eisen & Education Director Darcy Gomez.

**Monday March 10, 2025 6:30- 8:30 pm. Guest Speaker:** Oasis Perez Utah’s 211 Directory.

*Meetings Available on UPAN Facebook Live and on UPAN’s Facebook page afterwards. Visit UPAN Facebook page for newsletters. Visit website (page 10) to subscribe to the UPAN Newsletter, or Utah Prisoner Advocate Facebook Page for link to current monthly meeting. Free to the public. Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/UPAN-Meet>*

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**Disclaimer: Formulate your own opinions about the information presented.  
 This information is presented for the reader’s enlightenment and evaluation.**

“Millions in this country observe the holidays without their loved ones at home. Millions in this country have an empty place at the table because their loved one is incarcerated. It does not matter why they are incarcerated in our prisons and jails. What does matter is they are human beings. We can be thankful for the lessons they bring us as families and as a society. Hard lessons. Important lessons. Think deeply. Sending love this holiday season.” Molly Prince

***“This Christmas, we pray that happiness be at your door. May it knock early, stay late, and leave the gifts of peace, love, joy, and good health behind.” From the UPAN Directors***

**Loved One in Prison? Confused About How Things Work? Family Orientation Thur. Dec. 5, 2024**

The **quarterly Family Orientation** is scheduled for **6 – 8 p.m. on Thursday December 5, 2024** at the Fred House Academy, 14727 Minuteman Drive, in Draper, the building south of the UDC Administration building. Officials will explain the processes in various areas of the prison including mail, property, accounting, visiting, phone use, and case managers. Recommended for all families and friends involved in the prison system! For more info: [corrections@utah.gov](mailto:corrections@utah.gov)

## Update on the UPAN All Hearts Come Home for the Holidays 2024

By Karen Thompson, Director of Special Projects

**Coming from the Workshop!** The project has grown. Last year our volunteers were able to help a few families and this year we opened it up to the incarcerated parents to submit applications for their children 0-18. We have 350 applications, and requests for every community in Utah and in 12 other states where children of Utah's incarcerated live. We are in this together.

The distribution is about 1/3 girls and 2/3 boys with the largest age group 12-18yr. We are working hard to get the word out and invite as many people as we can to participate as donors & sponsor a child. Our goals were:

- 1- Involve the absent parent in the holidays.
- 2- Help the custodial parent with the cost of the holidays.
- 3- Ensure that as many kids as possible receive at least one gift.
- 4- To build a tighter, more inclusive and supportive UPAN community

We have learned so much. Next year this workshop will be open again and we will be checking our List once and then twice and then again. We will improve the process with the lessons learned.

Thank you to our volunteers who have worked tirelessly on their own time to get this off the ground and into the Amazon trucks. Shane has devoted all of his free time for several weeks to help with the links on UPAN website. Thank you to the people who care and have purchased gifts for our children. Thank you to our LOs for submitting the applications. The only way this works is when we all work together and share the opportunity with everyone we can. Warm Wishes to You All

Now please continue to share the links, they are found in two locations:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1BKgHJ24f5> is my All Hearts Come Home For The Holidays Public Group  
<https://bit.ly/2024-UPAN-Holiday-Program> UPAN Website

***"Santa Claus is anyone who loves another and seeks to make them happy; who gives himself by thought or word or deed in every gift that he bestows." Edwin Osgood Grover***

*The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek ways to make life better for others.*

## New 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Mail System To Start In January 2025 by Molly Prince, LCSW

We were informed by Lt. Jared Diehl of USCF in late the November that on or around January 6, 2025 Utah's two prisons move to the use of Pigeonly, a 3rd party mailing system that UDC will be contracting with. At least 30 days prior to the roll out, UDC will post the address that all correspondence for USCF and CUCF will be sent to, as Pigeonly is located in Las Vegas Nevada. This will be on the tablets for inmates and on the UDC public website.

**Regular Mail.** The process will include Pigeonly opening the letters, scanning and printing them out on approved paper, cards, or photo paper and sending them to each prison electronically as well as physical copies to be

delivered to our incarcerated loved ones. Families can send in greeting cards, which will be printed on card stock. Children can send in pages colored with crayon or ink marker from to their parent inside and they will be printed out as well. Originals will be destroyed.

**Publications** such as newspapers and magazines will still be mailed to the prison's mailing address from the publisher.

**Legal mail** will still be mailed by attorneys to the prison and will not be scanned. Attorneys will be assigned a QR code to use when mailing in legal mail directly to the prison so it is not opened.

## Currently Recognized Programs for Mandatory Earned Time Credit (ETC) with the BOPP

This summary is a follow up to the article on Earned Time Credit in November UPAN Newsletter.

**ETC Mandatory Time Cut Approved Programs.** The following programs are approved for the Mandatory Time Cut as mandated by Utah Code:

- **Residential Substance Use Treatment (RSUT):** Achieve in USCF, Elevate in Dell USCF, Hope CUCF, Beaver SUT
- **Substance Use Treatment Program (SUTP):** FOCUS, R-Hope, Dare to Soar, Washington County Jail; Wasatch County Jail, USCF, CUCF
- **Sex Offense Treatment Program (SOTP):** Offered in USCF, Elm in CUCF, Kane County Jail, Sanpete County Jail, and San Juan County Jail

- **GED/High School Diploma** Offered in both prisons and various county jails on the IPP Program
- **Technical Education Programs:** Davis Area Technical College; Snow College; Uintah Basin Tech
- **Associates Degree:** Salt Lake Community College in USCF; Snow College in CUCF
- **Bachelors Degree:** Univ of Utah at USCF in Dell

Please note that the BOPP can still give discretionary time cuts for other programs, see UPAN November 2024 Newsletter.

## **PrisonEd Foundation – Bookstrap U**

By Susan Sundstrom, UPAN Director of Educational Opportunities

PrisonEd Foundation is a non-profit foundation which offers correspondence education for any inmate housed in Utah's prisons or jails. They call themselves 'Bookstrap U' and provide a variety of non-credit courses through the mail at no charge. Courses are designed for personal development, job prep, college prep, and life prep. Their books are oriented toward self-study and group learning. Students are encouraged, when possible, to work with an associate or small group to receive and give encouragement and assistance. The objective is to lift oneself and teammates through interactions.

At the end of each course, students are asked to send PrisonEd a summary of what they learned and how it benefited them. PrisonEd will provide a response and send additional reading materials.

The first required course is 'Freedom Behind Bars', a book that tells the stories of 16 high-profile prisoners, focusing on the values that sustained them during their prison stays. There are multiple other book titles and courses, including math, write your own story, vocabulary, personal relations, and many more. If an inmate has an interest in the program, they are asked to send a letter with a description of why they are interested in the program. PrisonEd will send the first book and assignment.

The contact information is: PrisonEd Foundation P.O. Box 382 Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

They report working with over 1600 prisoners, responding to over 7,500 letters and issuing more than 2,200 course certificates. They can provide prisoners who become involved in the program with some hope during their prison journey.

## **Utah Prison Education Program (UPEP)**

Susan Sundstrom, UPAN Director of Educational Opportunities

The University of Utah Prison Education Program (UPEP) was started in 2016-2017 by the University of Utah Honors College, sponsored by a course titled "Education, Incarceration and Justice". The course was designed to examine affiliated college-in-prison programs throughout the country, prison-partnerships, and best practices. As a result of the research that was done, the UPEP program was launched in the spring of 2017. The Research Collaborative at the University of Utah works with programs across the country to transform higher education in prisons.

UPEP has recently launched their continuing education program for prison inmates to enroll students into the Bachelor degree program of University Studies, an interdisciplinary degree in Humanities at the University of Utah. There are 15 students from the women's side of the prison enrolled for the Fall semester. UPEP currently has one class being offered for the Fall semester in Business Writing, two will be offered in the Spring semester in Philosophy of Religion and Language Myths, and two will be offered in the Summer semester of 2025 in the History of Utah and Frameworks for Technical and Professional Communication. After these initial offerings, UPEP intends to offer three classes per semester.

The initial process for being accepted into the bachelor degree program was with UPEP holding two informational meetings in the DELL housing unit and

asking anyone who was interested in the bachelor degree program to provide a written application, take an entrance exam, and interview with the UPEP leadership. They selected the 15 students now enrolled in the program. From there the students had to apply to the University of Utah through the admissions office. The UPEP staff helped students to track down their transcripts and they were able to submit their applications online by using the Davis Tech computer lab in the prison.

UPEP has offered non-credit courses and enrichment experiences since the program started in 2017. The enrichment opportunities vary during the year. For example, in the last year, they had guest speakers from the Clark Planetarium and held an eclipse viewing at the prison. They also had a screening for some Sundance Film Festival films and welcomed the filmmakers to attend and discuss their projects. UPEP also has an active book club that creates a space for inmates to review and discuss books provided by UPEP.

Unfortunately, UPEP informs us that they are currently not accepting new students into their credit or non-credit courses or other programs but will advertise widely when they can accept new students.

Currently all of UPEP's offerings for credit or non-credit are funded with donations and taught by volunteers. In the future, PELL grants should be available to provide some funding.

## **A Perspective on the S.O.L.I.D Program From a Participant**

By Chandler Bartell

I am one of the few members of our SOLID community that has had the privilege of being involved behind the process of starting SOLID. Initially the motto was

"Finding True Purpose" and has now evolved to "Change By Culture." SOLID stands for Successful Offenders Learning Individual Development.

The time I've spent in SOLID has proven to me that reform and rehabilitation within these walls is more than possible. Each section within SOLID operates as a micro community, while the building as a whole is the true community. Many of the individuals here in SOLID are actively looking to improve themselves while providing others with the same ability.

Admittedly, the program has grown significantly from the start. The seminars led by different inmates tend to provide valuable insight from the inmate's perspective. I personally love to teach self-help topics and business related items. I've found that I always take something new away from the seminars I attend.

SOLID offers so many ways for growth to anyone who is involved. Not only from the seminars, but also the CBT style Core Classes we attend. Throughout all of SOLID, the information presented is for everyone and does not target any specific type of inmate or demographic.

I have found that my ability to communicate effectively has grown during my time in this community. I also can identify the instances that led to my incarceration.

I feel the SOLID community itself provides support to all individuals. It helps those without a support system have people to lean on in times of need. Overall, I happily recommend SOLID to anyone with an interest in bettering themselves.

## **Transforming Lives with Education: Join NewPath's Journey**

By Toby Lee, NewPath Foundation

Welcome to NewPath Foundation, where we believe education has the power to transform lives and uplift communities. Our mission is rooted in the conviction that everyone, regardless of their background, deserves access to learning and the chance to grow. At NewPath, education means embarking on a path of self-discovery and Empowerment.

**Our cornerstone initiative, the Transition Discovery Program**, offers a nurturing learning journey across five vital areas of personal development: Financial, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Physical. Each segment is thoughtfully designed to meet current needs, providing participants with practical skills, emotional resilience, and a profound sense of identity and purpose.

**In our Financial segment**, we delve into essential topics like housing and employment, focal points for achieving stability. Participants learn about credit management, navigating the job market, and finding reasonable housing, all vital steps toward independent living.

**Our Emotional area** emphasizes mental health awareness, teaching coping strategies and emotional intelligence. Here, participants gain the tools to manage stress and anxiety, fostering resilience and peace.

**The Spiritual segment** encourages introspection through themes of acceptance. Participants explore their beliefs and values, learning to embrace themselves and others with compassion, paving the way for meaningful change.

**Accessibility for incarcerated individuals and families.** Our program holds particular significance for incarcerated individuals who can easily access this transformative learning experience via prison tablets. We also extend these resources to their families, providing materials in digital formats to foster a supportive educational environment.

**A journey of healing and renewal.** The Transition Discovery Program is a journey of healing and renewal,

empowering participants to reflect inwardly, leverage their strengths, and emerge with a redefined sense of purpose. Through these foundational skills, we support individuals in their journey toward personal growth and community contribution.

**Length and Structure of Program.** While the program was initially designed to be a full year program, it has been revised and streamlined. The initial part of the program, designed to be completed in 12 weeks with classroom and self-study, begins with an orientation and four key classes on Accountability, Choices, Habits, and Personal Vision.

Students then engage in online self-study, aligned with in-class lectures, covering topics such as Principles & Goals, the Power of Compounding, and more.

As students progress, they prepare for "The Declaration," a 12-week online self-study class that synthesizes their learning journey into a clear, personal narrative. This program emphasizes writing and reflection, offering students an enriching educational experience.

While initially piloted within certain correctional facilities in Utah, the program is now accessible through a simple sign-up and application process, ensuring consistency and inclusivity. Classes typically accommodate 15 to 20 students, with some larger groups, fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

**Locations offered.** In **USCF** the class is currently taught in Bear, Green, and Emerald Chapels, as well as a quasi-one in Women's R&O (recently packets have been provided to these R&O folks without a class structure to self-study). And there is a signup sheet for individuals wanting to attend future classes. The first round of students was selected by the prison and not through us. We have a goal to do an application process going forward.

In **CUCF**, it is currently being offered in Fir and the Henry's at CUCF. Fir is taught in a classroom up in the Fir facility. The Henry's course is taught in the overflow of the chapel down below.

We are also excited to announce the expansion of our classes to our Lehi office, welcoming friends and family to join alongside their loved ones.

**NewPath's work is sustained by donations.** Each contribution directly funds the program's development and delivery. We invite you to join our mission. Explore our offerings and consider making a donation to help continue transforming lives. How to Help:

- One-Time Donations: Support ongoing program efforts.
- Monthly Giving: Provide continuous aid through recurring donations.
- Sponsorship: Sponsor a person or specific aspect.

- Fundraising: Organize events or campaigns to raise awareness and funds.

Support from members of the community helps us provide education and reentry support to incarcerated individuals, assisting them in rebuilding their lives and making positive societal contributions. Visit our website or contact us for more details on how to get involved or donate. Please join us in making a meaningful difference. Your generosity can change lives.

NewPath Foundation 3300 N. Triumph Blvd. Lehi, Utah 84043 (385) 452-3820 [info@newpathfoundation.com](mailto:info@newpathfoundation.com)

## **Utah Board of Pardons & Parole: "Smart Scheduling" for Utah's Prison System**

By Molly Prince, LCSW

*The following article summarizes key information regarding Smart Scheduling of Parole Hearings presented during the October 2024 UPAN meeting by Jennifer Yim, the Administrative Director of the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole, and Brett Varoz, Chief Hearing Officer. Their presentation provided detailed insights into the new Smart Scheduling system and how it impacts the parole process for incarcerated individuals in Utah.*

The Utah Board of Pardons and Parole has implemented a new system, known as "Smart Scheduling." The goal is to streamline the process of parole hearings and decisions. This initiative was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and seeks to organize an individual's prison stay more effectively for both the inmates and the authorities involved, ensuring that the process is as productive as possible for both the Utah Department of Corrections and the Board of Pardons. It also is hoped to reduce the stress of the unknown on incarcerated individuals and their families.

**What is Smart Scheduling?** Smart Scheduling is a process that sets an inmate's parole hearing date closer to when they might be realistically considered for release, based on their sentencing structure, rather than having an early hearing with little chance of parole.

Prior to April 2024, parole hearing dates were based on the seriousness of the inmate's offense, with tentative dates set by specific timeframes for each type of felony. For instance, a third-degree felony might have had an original hearing set for around three months after incarceration. However, this system often resulted in hearings taking place before the incarcerated person had completed any meaningful rehabilitation programs.

Under Smart Scheduling, the goal is to set hearing dates closer to the inmate's sentencing guidelines and ensure they are participating in necessary programming before their original hearing. This way, they're more likely to meet parole requirements when their hearing occurs.

**Setting Expectations Early On.** A benefit of Smart Scheduling is that it sets clear expectations for both the inmate and the prison system early in their prison stay. Within six months of entering the prison system, each prisoner is given a tentative original hearing date and a set of expectations regarding treatment programs or other activities they must complete. This should be incorporated into the Case Action Plan of that person by the case manager thus creating a more realistic timeline

for when parole might be granted and helps reduce the chances of early hearings that are unlikely to result in release, resulting in multiple re-hearings.

**Why was Smart Scheduling Introduced?** The original system often led to frustration for incarcerated individuals, their families, and the parole board. Inmates would have early parole hearings, only to be told that they needed to complete more programs or spend more time in prison before release could be considered. This created false hope and delayed parole outcomes. Smart Scheduling aims to avoid unnecessary delays by aligning parole hearings with realistic release expectations based on treatment and other programming, and rehabilitation progress.

**Program Planning and Transparency.** Smart Scheduling also helps the Utah Department of Corrections better plan for the rehabilitation and treatment needs of inmates. Since parole hearings are scheduled later in the inmate's prison term, UDC can forecast the number of individuals needing specific types of educational or treatment, such as high school diploma, substance abuse, or sex offense treatment programs. This forward planning allows the prison to manage resources more efficiently, and provides an opportunity for UDC to make sure that inmates are able to enter required programming in a timely manner. This will hopefully ensure that people are prepared for parole consideration when their hearing date arrives.

**Realistic Hearing Dates.** One of the concerns raised with Smart Scheduling is that it seems as if original parole hearings are being pushed further out into the future. While this may be true in some cases, the purpose is to make sure that when an inmate's hearing occurs, they are close to or at the guideline timeframe and have completed the necessary programs or met behavioral expectations. This approach reduces the chance of multiple parole re-hearings and reduces the



emotional toll of having hearings without a realistic chance of release.

For individuals with shorter sentences, such as those with third-degree felonies, the difference in scheduling may be minimal. However, for those with longer sentences or more serious offenses, the system ensures their original hearing is held when it is more likely that parole could be granted.

*Dell-Emerald Topics* **Yoga Forward Moves Forward in Dell at USCF** By Molly Prince, LCSW

*Information in this article was gathered from October posts on the Denise Druce and Yoga Forward Facebook Pages, and a September 4, 2024 KUTV article by Mark Koelbel and Kaigan Bigler.*

On Saturday, August 24, 2024 several UPAN Directors, other advocates, volunteers and citizens, including a volunteer teacher of Yoga Forward participating in the UDC Citizens Academy were on a tour at USCF. We went to the Dell / Emerald facility. We walked into the women's gym and interrupted a special day of Yoga that Denise Druce and a cohort of women in the Yoga Teach Training program the women were conducting. Despite the setting being a prison gymnasium, the energy I felt when we entered was calming and soothing. Personally, I was a little embarrassed to be interrupting their sacred practice, but they were warm and graciously answered questions we put forth.

An October 7th Facebook Post announced the accomplishments of six dedicated women in Dell who became 500-hour certified yogis at the USCF via Yoga Forward's Yoga Teach Training course. These committed women have devoted themselves to furthering their personal growth and wellness, mentally and physically. They are also spreading that to the community around them. These amazing women are on a journey that will ultimately put them in a position to lead their own trainings through Yoga Forward.

Then on October 26, 2024, Yoga Forward, headed by Denise Druce began a new 200-hour yoga teacher training program for 20 more women in Dell. Denise writes, "The ripple effect continues. Another big day in the Yoga Forward mission. We believe in second chances, and meeting people where they are." This time, the training incorporates another layer. The Yoga Forward Program at USCF will simultaneously be furthering the training of six incarcerated women who have completed 500 hours of training through Yoga Forward in order for them to become trainers for Yoga forward within the prison.

**Final thoughts.** Smart Scheduling is a significant shift in how parole hearings are managed by the Utah BOPP. By setting hearing dates closer to when inmates are realistically ready for parole, and aligning these dates with their rehabilitation progress, the system seeks to reduce unnecessary delays, foster a more efficient use of correctional resources, and create more transparency and predictability for the incarcerated and their families.

Denise writes that she is working herself out of a job and says "I am so excited to see these women become leaders in their Prison community and in the community at large when they are released." Yoga Forward is taking Yoga where it isn't, and UPAN continues to be thrilled to learn about the women who participate in the program and use it to help change their lives, within, and without.

A KUTV article published September 4, 2024, interviewed Denise Druce about why she chose to have Yoga Forward take this beautiful program into a prison. She explained that her father was incarcerated when she was a child and she wanted to take something to the incarcerated to help them. She is quoted as saying, "If they can have the ability to just quiet their minds, and lower their anxiety, they sleep better at night, the whole facility operates with a more peaceful climate." The classes have worked and Druce has literally moved yoga forward to dozens of inmates in both the women's and men's facilities.

The article described a formerly incarcerated woman, Brittany, who is now a yoga instructor herself in the community. "It gave me a whole new outlook on my life, it calmed my mind. It helped me get back to the person I was inside again and work through the things I struggled with," Brittany said.

In September, in an effort to help Druce keep moving yoga forward, Mountain America Credit Union teamed up with KUTV to help Yoga Forward. She was presented with \$500 on behalf of MACU and KUTV to help her continue her work with incarcerated yoga students. For more information on Yoga Forward as an organization, or to donate, please go to <https://yogaforward.org/prison-project/>

***"A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle." James Keller***

**Understanding UDC – Organizational Chain of Command**

By Molly Prince, LCSW and Shane Severson, UPAN Director of Communications

*The following information was presented in the beginning week of the Citizen's Academy by Assistant Deputy Director of the Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) Spencer Turley to help us understand the organizational structure of UDC.*

**UPAN Notation:** UDC operates two major prison facilities—Utah State Correctional Facility (USCF) and Central Utah Correctional Facility (CUCF)—and

oversees 20 contracts with county jail facilities through the Inmate Placement Program (IPP). The organizational structure ensures that each level of UDC has clear

leadership and accountability, facilitating the department's operations and policy compliance across Utah's correctional facilities.

**Understanding UDC:** UDC operates under a structured hierarchy designed to promote effective management and accountability. This structure follows a traditional chain of command model with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and insignia denoting each rank. The organization encompasses various divisions, including prison operations, probation and parole, administrative services, and programming, among others. Below is an overview of the chain of command within UDC based on information from the Citizens Academy.

**Executive Director.** The Executive Director is the highest-ranking official in UDC, overseeing all operations, policy decisions, and strategic planning within the UDC, which covers USCF, CUCF, Inmate Placement Program, state run Community Correctional Centers within the state and Adult Probation & Parole. This position is responsible for ensuring that the department's objectives align with state regulations and public safety goals. The uniform insignia is Five stars, typically worn on the collar or shoulder epaulettes, symbolizing the top leadership position. Brian Redd has been in this position since May 2023.

**Executive Deputy Directors** assist the Executive Director in managing various divisions such as Prison Operations, Adult Probation and Parole (AP&P), and Administrative Services. They act as high-level administrators to ensure smooth operations across the department ranging from operating prisons, Community Correctional Centers (CCCs) and IPP concerns, as well as programming, support services, finance, and recruitment. Uniform insignia is Four stars worn on the collar or shoulder epaulettes. The Executive Deputy Directors are Rebecca Brown, LCSW and Jared Garcia since last fall.

**Assistant Deputy Directors** support each of the two Deputy Directors in their duties. These positions are filled by Spencer Turley and Maria Shirey.

**Division Chiefs and Directors** oversee specific divisions within UDC, such as the Division of Prison Operations, AP&P, Re-entry & Rehabilitation, Medical, Inmate Placement Program, to name a few. They are responsible for the strategic management and leadership of their respective divisions. Uniform insignia is three stars on the collar or shoulder epaulettes.

**Division Deputy Directors or Chiefs** role is to assist Division Chiefs or Directors in managing specific areas as mentioned above. They help ensure that daily operations run smoothly and in line with department policies.

**Wardens** manage individual correctional facilities, overseeing day-to-day operations, safety, security, and administration. Each warden ensures their facility complies with state laws and UDC policies. There is a separate warden for USCF (Sharon Damico) and CUCF (Kristen Kiesel). The uniform insignia is two stars on the collar or shoulder epaulettes, denoting their authority over the facility.

**Deputy Wardens** assist wardens in managing specific areas of the facility, such as security or administration. They handle more specific tasks within the facility's operations, some being assigned to specific areas within the facility. Uniform insignia is a single star on the collar or shoulder epaulettes.

**Captains** oversee multiple units or sections within a correctional facility, often supervising lieutenants and ensuring compliance with policies and regulations. Uniform insignia is two bars, commonly referred to as 'railroad tracks,' worn on the collar or shoulder epaulettes.

**Lieutenants** role is to manage the day-to-day operations of specific units or shifts within a facility. They supervise sergeants and correctional officers, ensuring that operations align with safety protocols. Uniform insignia is a single bar on the collar or shoulder epaulettes.

**Sergeants** are the front-line supervisors who manage correctional officers during their shifts, ensuring that security is maintained and policies are followed. Uniform insignia is three chevrons pointing upwards, typically worn on the sleeves or collar.

**Correctional Officers** are responsible for the direct supervision of inmates in all areas, ensuring the safety and security of the facility. They work under the supervision of sergeants. Insignia: Generally, no specific rank insignia, though they may wear department badges, name tags, or patches indicating their roles.

**Civilian Support Staff** makes up non-security personnel, such as administrative staff, therapists, counselors, case managers, and medical staff, and many others who support the daily operations of UDC facilities. Their roles are essential to the functioning of the department, particularly in areas such as rehabilitation and reentry services. Civilian staff may wear specific types of clothing or department patches, badges, or name tags to indicate their specific roles.

**The department employs** about 1,700 certified officers and 700 civilian employees, supporting operations across the state's two correctional facilities and the Adult Probation and Parole system which includes the 5 Community Correctional Centers. (More about those in future newsletters).

**Why did the woman wear one boot and one shoe? She heard there was a 50-percent chance of snow.**

**What did one Christmas tree say to the other? You need to lighten up! 😊**

UPAN was pleased to host guest speakers from UDC Administration. Director Brian Redd, Assistant Deputy Executive Director Maria Shirey, Chief of Prison Operations Randall Honey, Dr. Marcus Wisner, of DHHS over Correctional Health Services, and Stakeholder Experience Coordinator, presented, answered questions and engaged the attendees at the November 11, 2024 UPAN zoom meeting.

**This article is a recap** of the meeting which covered a wide range of topics related to Utah's correctional system. This included updates on staffing, programming, and policies. Discussions touched on improving transparency, accountability, and rehabilitation efforts within Utah's prisons and county jails, as well as addressing challenges in substance abuse treatment, mental health care, and education programs. The participants included department officials, UPAN's directors and families, other advocates and volunteers for our incarcerated population, and 7 students in the Juab County Jail's college program with Dr. Samuel Arungwa. They explored ways to enhance communication, visitation opportunities, and other protocols to better serve incarcerated individuals and their families.

**A first for UPAN!** Dr. Sam arranged with the Juab County Jail administration for the incarcerated students in Juab County Jail in his Criminal Justice college course to attend via zoom. This marked the first time incarcerated persons would be able to witness the meeting.

**Meeting Format and Topics.** The format of the meeting was explained, which was for our guest speakers to address several main areas of focus based on questions submitted by family and incarcerated individuals.

**Maria Shirey moderated the presentation and discussion.** Director Brian Redd began with an emphasis on his administration's commitment to service, professionalism, accountability, respect, and knowledge. The speakers also discussed their efforts to increase transparency and accountability, including improvements to grievance tracking, more proactive storytelling about the department's activities, regular prison tours, and town hall meetings with both incarcerated individuals and families. They also mentioned the development of a body-worn camera program that they piloted earlier this year and are asking for funding to continue from Utah's legislature in the upcoming session.

**Inmate Placement Program Challenges Discussed.** Brian Redd gave an overview of the Inmate Placement Program (IPP) which houses state inmates on contracts within 20 county jails in Utah, each with different offerings for treatment and work opportunities. He noted that the program is complex and challenging, with capacity issues and constraints.

**Medical in IPP.** The first area of concern related to IPP was regarding challenges with receiving medical care and continuity of prescriptions when transferred to county jails. How people are screened and identified as appropriate to go to a county jail was discussed. Chief Honey explained that they consider the inmates' current programs and medical needs when considering transferring them to county jails. Dr. Wisner discussed the medical screening process for inmates going to county jails, emphasizing the importance of ensuring they are not a liability for the jail, and if they would be better served remaining in one of the prisons. He also mentioned the need for fine-tuning mental health classifications to avoid decompensation in county jails.

Chief Honey assured the attendees that any issues with medication delivery would be addressed promptly when they are reported. The team addressed urgent care needs in county jails, encouraging inmates in those jails with urgent medical needs to reach out to their case managers who are supposed to go to each jail at least once a week. (However this may or not be the case in every county jail on IPP contract and if a case manager is not showing up, please let UPAN know specifics and we will report that.) If there are emergent needs not being met in the jails, families of inmates could reach out to the UPAN Med Team for assistance in getting through to Correctional Health Services administrators to make sure they are seen by medical staff in the jail. [medteam@utahprisoneradvocate.org](mailto:medteam@utahprisoneradvocate.org)

**Programming Interruptions when going to IPP.** Chief Honey acknowledged that moving inmates "really does disrupt the lives of offenders." He explained that during evaluation of someone to be placed on IPP, they try to not remove someone who is actively in a treatment program. But they will move someone who might be in a psychoeducational skills course or a course that is also offered in the county jail such as MRT, Inside Out Dad, and a few others.

Redd mentioned that they are looking to improve the processes of selecting who moves into IPP in 2025, including the use of housing optimization software.

**Lack of Contact Visits in IPP Jails.** Molly expressed her concern about the lack of contact visits in almost all county jails in Utah and the need for a solution, including those that have contracts with the state for the Inmate Placement Program. Some incarcerated individuals spend many, many years housed in jails that were designed for short term inmates, and not designed for in-person contact visits. The attendees from Juab County nodded their heads in agreement to this concern. Director Redd acknowledged the concerns that Molly Prince has submitted to UDC and published in the November UPAN Newsletter about the importance of human touch from family members for those in correctional facilities. Director Redd and Chief Honey



both voiced interest in looking into this concern. No promises were made.

**Improving Rehabilitation and Contact Visits.** The meeting then focused on the importance of in-person visits for rehabilitation and the challenges faced due to restrictions on physical touch. Redd emphasized the need to create a safer environment and reduce drug use within the prison system and the measures they have in place and are planning to achieve that goal. He also highlighted the need for better communication to prevent the smuggling of drugs into the visiting area.

Randall Honey confirmed that he is working on improving contact visits and will follow up on the issue of shoe removal for volunteers as well as visitors.

**Prison based MAT Program Challenges and Future Plans.** Dir. Redd and Dr. Wisner discussed the challenges and future plans for the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) substance abuse and mental health program. They acknowledged the current limitations, including a lack of funding and a labor-intensive system, but expressed optimism about securing more funding and working with the legislature to improve the program. They also mentioned the need for a robust policy and procedure framework, which is currently being developed with the help of the Substance Use and Mental Health Department within DHHS. Redd committed to providing talking points for legislators and the public to better understand the program's goals and progress.

**Staffing, Leadership, and Legislative Priorities.** Other areas of focus included staffing levels, changes in leadership, and legislative priorities. Dir. Redd reported that the department is expected to be fully staffed early next year, with over 100 new hires expected in the next three months. This will be quite an accomplishment, with UDC having been understaffed for years. Maria Shirey highlighted the opportunity for significant culture change with the influx of new staff. Chief Honey discussed the importance of core staffing and the reduction of overtime, which should prevent service closures such as closing of rec yards, or church, or other services.

Brian Redd reviewed UDC's strategic pillars, including staff investment, safety, collaboration, innovation, and health and rehabilitation. The department is developing the Re-entry division and has a Re-entry task force.

Redd also discussed the department's budget priorities, including the increased training and policy that has created a structural deficit over the past few years, and how funds were used that would have gone to wages if fully staffed.

He also discussed working on reviewing and working on classification, discipline, and how that may impact length-of-stay. He said that write-ups can be referenced in decision making for up to 36 months. Honey emphasized the importance of understanding the

reasons behind disciplinary actions and providing appropriate education and classes to prevent future incidents. The conversation ended with discussions on the executive director's override and the issue of individuals being in restricted housing for decades.

**Prison Programming on Tablets and Mental Health Services.** Molly expressed concerns about the availability of programming on tablets in both prisons, particularly in maximum security, and the need for more mental health staff. Redd's team agreed to investigate the issue and bring back information on tablet availability and programming.

In addition, it has come to UPAN's attention in the past several weeks that there has been a problem accessing completion certificates for various courses and programs from the tablets. Dir. Shirey provided an update on the tablets issue, explaining that the removal of ACCI Life Skills from the tablets was due to technical difficulties and contract issues with the company providing those courses. She also clarified that the certificates for those courses are not maintained by UDC and are owned by Orijin. The team agreed to track down missing courses and certificates if specific details are provided. UPAN's Director Amanda Bixman has worked for several weeks on this problem.

However, as of Wednesday November 20, Valerie Worrall, who is over the tablets (aka Tablet Queen), told us that the problems with ACCI are resolved now and the certificates are recoverable. So, if you have taken the ACCI courses on the tablets, please check with your case manager to make sure you can receive your certificates and that they are recorded in your records. Ms. Worrall indicated if you have a problem obtaining certificates, you can write to her at USCF PO Box 165300, SLC, UT 84116.

**Care Teams in Mental Health.** Dr. Wisner discussed the implementation of care teams in the prisons, which include mental health professionals, clinical pharmacists, and other staff to provide more efficient and effective care. He also mentioned the use of peer specialists to de-escalate situations. Molly asked about the funding for these care teams, to which Dir. Redd responded that while there may not be additional funding this year, they are working to be more efficient with the resources they have.

**Where do the funds collected from inmate fines go?** Chief Honey explained that fines from inmate disciplinary hearings go into the Division of Prison Operations Administration Fund. This fund is used for special projects and education programming.

**Other discussions.** The UDC team discussed the importance of working to get grant funding for reentry programs to support those returning to society. He also discussed the options the department has for funding and the use of body-worn cameras.

**2021 Medical Legislative Audit and NCCHC\* Accreditation (see details below).** This portion of the

meeting focused on updates and progress on the 2021 medical audit. Dr. Wisner shared that they had successfully passed the NCCHC accreditation and were awaiting the certificate. He also mentioned that they were preparing for the initial audit for NCCHC next year. Additionally, he discussed the legislative audit, a follow up from the 2021 audit, which is scheduled to begin on November 25th.

**Pet Programs.** There have been questions submitted about the possibility of pet programs in the two prisons (dog or cat programs) including the potential benefits of pet programs for rehabilitation. Director Honey responded that the layout of USCF may not be conducive to a pet program. He mentioned the Dog Program that had been in operation in Timpanogos Women's Unit at USP before the move to USCF. He was not aware of what happened to those service animals once they left the prison. UPAN hopes to have an article about that program, and where the service dogs went, and how they benefitted veterans in an upcoming newsletter.

**2024 Coat Shortage.** A concern was raised about the provision of coats to inmates, which again this year is reported to be in short supply. The DPO Chief clarified that coats were provided to incarcerated individuals. In maximum security units they are not given coats to keep but are issued a coat when inmates go out to the yard, or are sent out on transport for any reason, including to Medical. We have been told the coats are washed at least once per week if not more. UPAN has long advocated for every inmate to have their own coat, even in Antelope and Hickory, due to sanitary and hygiene reasons. This issue was discussed more in the Stakeholders Meeting held on November 20, and suggestions were made about it.

It was learned elsewhere that UCI has a shortage of coats in certain sizes and sometimes an incarcerated person that wants one will have to settle for one a couple of sizes too big or too small. We are waiting to learn when UCI will have an adequate supply of coats to hand out to everyone in the general population.

**Emergency Calls and Education Plans.** During the process of this meeting, UPAN, Redd, Honey, Shirey, Molly, and Dr. Sam discussed the best ways to handle emergency calls. This can be any emergency, from if an inmate calls home in a dire medical situation and is not being seen, to when a family must get an important message about family emergencies such as a death in the family. Chief Honey suggested that the main prison number should be used for after-hours calls, and that the shift commander and charge nurse should work together to address any medical or mental health concerns.

All agreed on the importance of education. Dr. Sam proposed an amendment that UDC could possibly include in the IPP contract to include college education from pro bono professors, which Dir. Redd agreed to consider. The team also discussed the potential for expanding educational opportunities in county jails and the importance of in-person courses.

Molly invited the students from Juab County to join UPAN's next meeting in January. Dir. Redd and his team thanked everyone for their participation and feedback.

**\*National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC).** Accreditation is a mark of achievement that a correctional facility has met the NCCHC standards for health services. Accreditation is a voluntary process that measures the quality of health care in correctional facilities. Source: Google search, Ed.

### Holiday Greetings

Happy Holidays and a Good New Year,  
These wishes come with feelings sincere,  
Current conditions may be depressing,  
But with each day, you are progressing

Toward that life you see so clear,  
With family and friends you hold so dear,  
Raising the hope on which you depend,  
All the time knowing, you've got a friend...

A friend who's been built on lots of volunteer "sweatwork", the Utah Prisoner Advocate Network

### Couple of Smiles and Maybe a Laugh

What do they call snowmen in Hawaii? Water ~ What do you give your parents for Christmas? A list of everything you want ~ At the North Pole, how do Santa's elves move around? They ride icicles ~ Why did a pony miss singing Christmas carols? Because it was a little horse ~ What do reindeer decorate their antlers with? Hornaments – Why does Santa use a GPS? Because he doesn't want to be a lost Clause ~ What do cows say during the holidays? Moorry Christmoos.

***Why does Santa live at the North Pole? Because it's cool there, and Santa is cool – just like you're cool. Ed***

### **Utah Prisoner Advocate Network Contact Info**

#### **Our Contact Information:**

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***"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead***