

# APPA Awards

## Scotia Knouff Line Officer of the Year



### Valerie Kemp

Probation/Parole Officer  
6th Judicial District  
Department of Corrections  
Cedar Rapids, IA

One of the barriers offenders in Johnson County, Iowa faced in meeting conditions of probation was that the correction's office was located at the west end of Coralville (which is considered "on the other end of the world" for offenders living in the Broadway neighborhood in Johnson County). With no personal transportation and a limited and complex bus service, offenders frequently missed appointments. To overcome this barrier, Valerie lobbied for placing a Probation Officer at the Broadway Neighborhood Center which is located in the heart of a high risk neighborhood with a concentration of offenders. The neighborhood is considered high risk because of the population demographics (high poverty, high crime).

Valerie helped work through this resistance, and was able to not only calm those fears, but also convince residents that it would ultimately help strengthen the neighborhood. She threw her name into the hat to staff this neighborhood-based office because she believed in the idea. As a result, Valerie was outplaced at the Broadway Neighborhood Center in 2001. On a day to day basis, she meets with people in the neighborhood who are on probation or parole.

Valerie Kemp has been recognized many times in her career: in 1999 with the Kueny Award, a prestigious award given by the 6th Judicial District Department of Correctional Services; in 2001 with the Governor's Volunteer Award, for her involvement in the Johnson County Restorative Justice Task Force, particularly, the Broadway Site; and with the Human Rights Award, given by the Iowa City Human Rights Commission, Iowa City, Iowa, for extensive efforts on behalf of disadvantaged populations.

This award will be presented at the Opening Session on Sunday, July 28th at 6:00 p.m.

## Walter Dunbar Memorial Award



### Dee K. Bell

Program Coordinator  
Georgia Department of  
Juvenile Justice  
Dalton, GA

Dr. Dee Bell is a well-known name in community corrections. Starting with her work in the early years of the Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) initiative, she has traveled the country extensively to promote and teach evidence-based practices. She is recognized as a great facilitator and her people skills have created a national network of community corrections practitioners. She is a dedicated professional and a long-time activist at the national level.

Educated at Clemson University in South Carolina and Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. Bell received her BS degree from Clemson University in 1975 and followed with her MA and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology both from Emory University. Dr. Bell has provided training in both state and national venues for many years and has authored and co-authored a number of articles on justice system issues and juvenile justice curricula.

Dr. Bell has made significant contributions to the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA). Her involvement began in 1991 around the time that the Georgia Department of Corrections hosted the Annual Institute in Atlanta, Georgia for the first time. She has been an APPA member since 1993 and has chaired the Program Committee and served as a Track Coordinator on multiple occasions. Dr. Bell has served on the Board of Directors as chair of the Prevention Committee, the Community Justice Committee, and the Leadership Institute Committee. In 2001, Dr. Bell was honored with the APPA Member of the Year Award for her continuous dedication and volunteer spirit. She currently serves on the following committees: Community Justice/Prevention, Gender Issues, Juvenile Justice, Leadership Institute, Nominations, and Victim Issues.

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## APPA Member of the Year



### Paula Keating

APPA Affiliate Representative  
New England Council on  
Crime and Delinquency  
(NECCD)  
N. Andover, MA

For over two decades, Paula Keating has exemplified the true spirit of membership in the American Probation and Parole Association. As an active, individual supporter of APPA, Paula has worked on countless committees and has shared her extensive expertise in an effort to ensure the Association's growth.

Once Paula was named Executive Director of NECCD in 2002, she furthered her commitment by serving as the Council's Affiliate Representative on APPA's Board of Directors. In this capacity, she personally encouraged over 15 members of the NECCD to join forces with APPA in support of our mission. Paula also enthusiastically served as Treasurer for APPA's Executive Committee for two years, from 2003-2005.

In the midst of managing all of these commitments, Paula still makes time to share her experience and wealth of knowledge with others. In doing so she has motivated many through the years toward individual membership in APPA and has served as an impressive example to follow. Paula embodies the definition of APPA Membership and, moreover, Member of the Year.

This award will be presented at the Plenary Session on Monday, July 29th at 8:30 a.m.

## University of Cincinnati Award



### Jennifer Skeem

Associate Professor  
Department of Psychology  
& Social Behavior  
Univ. of California, Irvine  
Irvine, CA

A number of themes can be found throughout Dr. Skeem's research that focus on questions relevant to the field of probation and parole. The first area of significance is risk assessment. Dr. Skeem has authored or coauthored numerous articles on the topic of risk assessment, and violence risk assessment, specifically. One of the more recent articles published highlights her understanding of key issues surrounding risk assessment in the field and the challenges of selecting an assessment instrument and using the information to guide decisions. Dr. Skeem acknowledges that one of the debates that exists is whether risk should be assessed separately from needs, which is presented as a debate about risk prediction or risk reduction. Her perspective, along with her co-author, John Monahan, highlights her recognition that the answer needs to be tied to the goal of the assessment and how people will actually use the information.

Finally, throughout all of Dr. Skeem's research is attention to evidence-based practices (EBP). Dr. Skeem recognizes that the goal of EBP is to apply the best research to inform practice that improves outcomes. Her research has focused on helping the field of community corrections (probation and parole) identify what those practices are. This perspective can be seen through her most recent keynote address at the 2013 Winter Training Institute of the American Probation and Parole Association held in Phoenix, AZ. The title of the presentation was "Evidence Based Practice for Probationers/Parolees with Mental Illness." This presentation highlighted many of the contributions that Dr. Skeem has made to the field.

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## APPA President's Award

### Maricopa County Adult Probation Department Adult Education Program

Phoenix, AZ

The Adult Education Program (AEP) of the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department operates out of three adult education centers co-located in regional probation offices. Each center has a computer lab and classroom space, is staffed with state-certified adult education instructors, and provides educational services that are responsive to the needs of adult learners. Students of the AEP are probationers and other adults from the community. In FY 2012, the program served 1,964 students.

As part of the Adult Probation Department, AEP teachers are trained in evidence-based correctional practices and are committed to working in concert with other probation staff to accomplish positive probationer outcomes and reduced recidivism. The Adult Education Program:

- Targets criminogenic needs of education/employment
- Provides a structured, prosocial activity
- Provides positive and supportive role models
- Advances students' educational levels, employability, and employment status
- Contributes to the Adult Probation Department's goal of reducing crime

Co-locating the program within probation offices made it more accessible to probationers and allowed for greater communication between teachers and probation officers. This engendered a collaborative environment whereby teachers are another set of eyes monitoring offenders in the community and alerting probation officers to potential issues as well as informing them of progress toward educational goals. The Adult Education Program has surpassed the state performance goals in all of the State and Federal Department of Education Core Goals for the last 10 years. Based on the program's FY 2012 performance, the Arizona Department of Education ranked the program as the #1 adult education program in the state.

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### San Francisco Adult Probation Department Evidence Based Practices Initiative

San Francisco, CA

A great deal of research now provides guidance to community corrections agencies on the policies, activities, training, and skills required to achieve public safety outcomes. The difficulty for agencies is not in understanding what is required but how to implement the changes. The San Francisco Adult Probation Department (SFAPD) has created a model that can be replicated by other agencies as demonstrated by the changes in services and programs over the past three years.

Applying EBP in community corrections is a major objective of SFAPD in furtherance of SFAPD's goals. Whether the goal is to improve the victim experience, reduce recidivism, or become a more efficient operation, evidence is to be applied. This is a challenging objective especially since eighty-three percent of post-release community supervision (PRCS) clients and 77 percent of those on Mandatory Supervision have been assessed as high risk for recidivating, per the actuarial based risk assessment. Those on PRCS have an average of eight prior felony convictions, and 85 individuals (23 percent of those on PRCS) have over 11 prior felony convictions.

The SFAPD's evidence-based supervision model emphasizes supervising clients where they live in the community, checking on compliance with probation conditions, cooperating closely with community groups and services providers, and implementing investigative and case management practices that address client needs related to criminal behavior.

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# APPA Awards

## ... Recognizing Accomplishments

APPA provides one of the few national awards programs where your peers acclaim your achievements in the community corrections profession. Recognize your peers and effective programming by submitting a nomination for these awards. For more information on APPA awards, call (859) 244-8196.

### APPA COMMUNITY AWARENESS THROUGH MEDIA AWARD

#### **MATForce Yavapai County Substance Abuse Coalition**

*Prescott Valley, AZ*

MATForce is Yavapai County's (Arizona) substance abuse coalition, and Community Counts supports a variety of collaborative projects, such as the Yavapai Reentry Project, the Community Garden in Prescott Valley, Motivational Interviewing training (conducted by trained/certified probation officers and paid for by MATForce/Community Counts), and the annual Recovery Celebration.

Although MATForce has existed in Yavapai County for several years, the momentum has begun to generate national interest due to its success. MATForce has built a strong, trusted and enduring relationship with community stakeholders who join with them in working to reduce substance abuse and crime and to make our communities safer. They sponsor training for Community Coaching and Motivational Interviewing, providing materials, announcements and flyers for professionals, agencies and anyone in the community who is interested in learning to be a positive force in the community.

All of the work performed by MATForce has been accomplished with and through use of media outlets. MATForce maintains a website with information regarding their programs, educational opportunities and drug disposal events. A print and online newsletter is published monthly. Local newspapers in the Verde Valley and Prescott areas also publish frequent articles about programs and successes. Local radio in both areas of the County have been utilized to announce Dump the Drugs events, Lunch and Learn programs as well as personalized interviews with various MATForce workers. MATForce also has several videos on YouTube. Local Cable One programs have featured interviews with MATForce Board Members detailing their programs and statistics provided by Arizona Criminal Justice which indicate the need for a continuing effort to combat the problems involved with Doctor Shopping, etc. Pamphlets and posters are provided for doctor's offices, hospital emergency rooms and pharmacies to increase awareness of the dangers of drug abuse.

*This award will be presented at the Opening Session on Sunday, January 12 at 6:00 pm.*

### EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION

#### **Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON)**

*New York City Probation Dept.*

*New York City, NY*

Commissioner Vincent N. Schiraldi, who assumed leadership of the NYC Department of Probation in 2010, and his staff began looking at where their clients lived and identified a handful of neighborhoods that were home to large numbers of probation clients. In most cases, these neighborhoods were far from the Court-based offices where clients were required to report. This wasn't just inconvenient for them; it also made it much harder for probation officers to develop relationships with the community-based organizations that were best equipped to provide their clients with the services they need and to leverage those relationships for the betterment of public safety and client outcomes.

One of Commissioner Schiraldi's first priorities was making DOP's depressing and counterproductive waiting rooms more welcoming and useful. In this effort, the agency was guided not only by research showing that improving waiting rooms can have a significant positive impact on the attitudes and receptiveness of those who are waiting, but also by a Waiting Room Improvement Team (WRIT) comprised of external partners and DOP staff members throughout the chain of command. They examined the current state of the waiting rooms; looked at examples of other, more effective public spaces; and, together, envisioned a different kind of setting for their work with clients and the community.

DOP has also adopted an evidence and strengths-based approach to supervision that recognizes and builds on the clients' strengths rather than focusing on the clients' shortcomings and mistakes. To complement a strengths-based approach, DOP has also undertaken training in motivational interviewing. These reforms are being implemented agency-wide, but they are especially well-suited to the work being done in the NeONs.

NeON-specific outcomes are hard to come by since many of the NeONs are in their first year of operations and two are yet-to-open. But during this time period, the program had a 45% reduction in the probation violation rate. According to state data, DOP's violation rate is 3% annually compared to an 11% violation rate in the rest of the state. Likewise, the successful completion rate is 79% compared to 65% statewide, even though NeON comprises a much larger proportion of people on probation for felonies. Additionally, the early discharge rate has grown from 3% to 17%.

*This award will be presented at the Opening Session on Sunday, January 12 at 6:00 pm.*



## **SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY AWARD**

### **Kirsten Lewis**

*Senior Adult Probation Officer -  
Staff Development Division  
Maricopa County Adult Probation  
Phoenix, AZ*

Kirsten R. Lewis, M.Ed., is a probation officer with the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department, (AZ). With a background in research and over 23 years experience in community corrections, Kirsten spearheaded a ground-breaking research study examining secondary traumatic stress in probation officers as a result of working with criminal offenders. Her research was recently published in the American Journal of Criminal Justice. In addition, the lead article in APPA's Winter 2013 Perspectives on the topic of secondary trauma was authored by Kirsten. Through her research, articles, and popular trainings, Kirsten has provided the community corrections field with new information and greater awareness regarding the personal impact of working with criminal offenders. She shares this information with intelligence, sensitivity, and an insight that is immediately recognized by fellow practitioners. Kirsten has provided useful strategies to preserve the well-being and effectiveness of community corrections officers, and in her own compelling way, she urges the profession to take action.

Kirsten conducts a variety of trainings on the topic of stress management and employee wellness with criminal justice agencies around the country and has presented her work at conferences throughout the United States and abroad. She has presented at least 20 trainings for community corrections personnel at county, state, and federal agencies (outside the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department). In addition, Kirsten has presented numerous workshops at conferences, including six (6) workshops at APPA conferences and nine (9) workshops at county, state, or regional conferences for judicial staff or community corrections personnel.

*This award will be presented at the Plenary Session on Monday, January 13 at 8:30 am.*



## **JOE KEGANS AWARD FOR VICTIM SERVICES IN PROBATION AND PAROLE**

### **Linda Sorenson**

*Victim Advocate  
Sixth Judicial District Department of  
Correctional Services  
Cedar Rapids, IA*

Linda Sorenson was 39 years old and employed at the cosmetic counter at Armstrong's department store in Cedar Rapids when her life was forever changed. In May 1989, she sent the oldest of her four children, 17 year old Leah Wara, on to her high school prom. The girl, who Linda calls her "little angel", and "special gift", never came home. Her decomposing body was found by police two days later (on her birthday), stuffed under a pile of blankets in a stifling closet in the apartment of a 19 year old stranger she'd apparently met at a party that fatal night. She'd been raped and strangled to death. As a result of that experience, Linda dedicated her life's work to ensuring that what had happened to her would never happen to another person, not if she could help it. Linda was a founding member of the Survivors of Homicide Program as she found no resource to help her through her horrific experience. The 6th Judicial District was honored when she made the decision to take the position as Victim Advocate; she was the first Advocate in any community based corrections agency in Iowa.

Operating since 1999, Linda is the staff liaison to two Victim Advisory Committees which were developed to represent the best of the Restorative Justice philosophy – making victims as whole as possible by involving them in the process of how corrections does business. In 2009, these committees won the Iowa Corrections Association's Victim Assistance Award for outstanding services to victims. Linda was a strong voice in the development of the following goals which defined the work of these committees:

1. Organize the voice of victims and create ways for them to be involved in the criminal justice system.
2. To educate victims about how the criminal justice system works.
3. To educate the criminal justice system and community about victims' needs.
4. To advocate and implement victim sensitive practices within the criminal justice system and community.
5. Recognize positive involvement of the victims and the criminal justice system.

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