

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

CORRECTION SUPERVISORS COUNCIL

CSEA, SEIU LOCAL 2001

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Issue Five

Each New Year Comes With Hope and Change.

CHANGE

- Julius Preston, President of the Correction Supervisors Council, has retired from state service.
- Scott Semple, DOC Commissioner, retired along with other top DOC officials.
- Rollin Cook, former Executive Director of the Utah prison system, became the new Commissioner of DOC.

HOPE

- Commissioner Cook will be as committed to advancing our health and wellness as Commissioner Semple.

- Our Union will continue its collaborative arrangement with UConn Health.
- We will implement the one day paid training on health and wellness.
- Our members, who need to lose weight, will eat better and adopt a Mediterranean Diet like the firefighters in Indianapolis.
- Our members, who suffer from mental health and substance abuse, will break through the shame, silence, stigma and solitude to get the help they need.
- Our members will get at least 49 hours of sleep per week, and
- Our members' life expectancy will improve to Connecticut's life expectancy of 81 years of age.

Preston Retirement



CSC President Julius Preston retired effective January 1, 2019. He continues to be a member of CSEA through his membership in our Retire Council. Julius wants to continue the fight to protect our pensions and retiree health insurance by becoming active in the most powerful state retiree organization in the country.

Julius made a commitment during his tenure as president to be open and transparent with the membership by not only having regularly scheduled union meetings both during the day

and night, but by visiting facilities and meeting with members on all shifts.

Julius's legacy will be that of establishing a culture of health and wellness among correction supervisors. His leadership has gotten the Union national exposure on the health and life expectancy of frontline correctional staff. Through our work, we found the life expectancy of a frontline Connecticut correctional worker to be 66 years. This was unacceptable to Julius.

Julius and the Union began its collaboration work with UConn Health which resulted in our all employee health survey in 2014. It led to the development of an intervention on sleep. This intervention was developed because the all employee survey showed that correction supervisors averaged less than six hours a sleep a night and when working a double shift less than 2.5 hours of sleep. The intervention also resulted in the development of a sleep app for your smart-phone. The sleep app was tested by 50 supervisors and it will be rolled out to all members at the first annual training day on health and wellness.

But more importantly, Julius knew that top-down interventions do not work nor are they sustainable. Only a participatory model with member engagement at the beginning of process can allow you to build a culture of health and wellness.

Julius was able to find a willing partner in former Commissioner Scott Semple. This helped the Union break through the bureaucratic log jams that often doom labor/management cooperation. Commissioner Semple agreed with Julius that the Union's health and wellness initiative would be led by the Union and DOC would not get in the way.

In 2017, Julius and the bargaining team cemented into our contract language that provides one day of paid training per year on health and wellness, \$10,000 per year to fund our activities, and the establishment of a committee dedicated exclusively to our members' health and well-being.

We thank Julius for all his services and wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Mediterranean Diet

The U.S. News along with Good Housekeeping have ranked the Mediterranean Diet as the best overall diet. So when the T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University decided to do a diet intervention at 22 out of 44 firehouses in Indianapolis, they chose the Mediterranean Diet. They chose the diet because firefighters, like frontline correctional workers, suffer high incidences of cardiovascular disease and death. The project is called, "Feeding America's Bravest: Survival Mediterranean Style in the Fire Services."

The leading cause of death of on-duty U.S. firefighters was sudden cardiac death with 51% followed by internal trauma/crushing with 24% of the reported deaths. The study reported that the physically stressful work can trigger heart attacks in vulnerable firefighters. In public safety, you have the elements of tobacco use, sedentary behavior, poor diet, noise, stress shift work and sleep deprivation with strenuous duties that can lead to acute cardiovascular events such as heart attacks. It has also been shown that obesity increases cancer risks.

The health benefits of a Mediterranean Diet are:

- Reduce Cardiovascular disease by 20 – 45%
- Reduce Depression by 20 – 30%
- Reduce cancer by 20 – 30%
- Decrease risk of:
 - Metabolic syndrome
 - Diabetes
 - Hypertension
 - Cognitive decline
- Improve sleep and sexual function
- Increase longevity (living longer)

A Mediterranean Diet is:

- High intake of extra virgin olive oil, fruits, vegetables, other plant proteins and fiber (nuts and legumes), unrefined whole grains, and fish;
- Moderate intake of dairy, eggs and lean meats;
- Moderate alcohol intake with meals (usually wine);
- Low red meat and sweets consumption

The overall project goals of the intervention with the Indianapolis firefighters was to develop behavioral change strategies to modify existing food culture based on the principles of the Mediterranean Diet and to measure the effectiveness of the Mediterranean Diet on changing eating behavior and modifying cardiovascular disease risks.

The change in diet for the firefighters occurred both at the firehouse and at home. The firefighters were given discount coupons to buy key Mediterranean Diet food at the major grocery store chain in the Indianapolis area. Group sessions were held to train firefighters and their spouses on the Mediterranean Diet, what to eat, and not to eat. They were also given written material on recipes, shopping lists and even Mediterranean Diet food for their children. Other resources included on-line learning, email and text messages, reminders about discount coupons, recipes, chef demonstrations and videos.

Currently, although our Union's intervention is on mental health issues, this should not stop you or your co-workers from adopting a Mediterranean Diet. Remember, such a diet may reduce the risk of depression by 15 to 30%. Bon appetite.

ANNUAL TRAINING

CSC along with our colleagues at UConn Health have set the goals for our first annual training which will be scheduled in the near future at the Training Academy. The five goals are:

1. To increase mental health literacy, which is knowledge or awareness of (a) what mental health/illnesses are, and (b) how to manage mental health issues that arise for ourselves or others.
2. To increase knowledge of psychosocial and physical exposures (both inside and outside of work) that can adversely affect mental health.
3. To reduce stigma, shame, silence and solitude regarding mental health issues by talking about it in emotionally safe environments with emotionally safe people.
4. To provide available, quality and vetted resources for getting help from mental health professionals or peer support networks before mental issues become acute or chronic, and to encourage to help-seeking behavior.
5. To offer the sleep intervention to all our members including access to the sleep app developed by our health and wellness committee. Stay tuned for dates for the training.

SLACK APP

The Correction Supervisors Council has implemented an application that can be used on your mobile devices including your personal computer to receive information and articles of interest to correctional supervisors and our union. Members may want to add information that would be of interest to other members. Nearly 70 members have signed up to use the SLACK app.

In addition to the SLACK app, our Council has a webpage on the CSEA website, www.csea-ct.com and we send out quarterly newsletters on our health and wellness activities. If you visit the CSEA website, we are under the tab for State Workers labeled "CSC."

If you want to join our app user group, please submit your PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS, not your State email address, Millie Brown at mbrown@csea760.com.

Once your personal email address has been entered into SLACK, you will receive an "INVITE" via email to participate in our online community.

We are committed to keeping you informed and engaged in the activities of our union.