

## **WHO ARE MDOC'S FIVE TOP PERFORMERS OF 2002?**

THE NOMINEES FOR THE 2002 "EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD" ARE:

### **MSP'S NOMINEE – CORR. OFFICER IV ESTER WARE**

Of the one thousand three hundred and seventeen full time Correctional Officers at MSP, what characteristic distinguishes Officer Ware as extra/extra ordinary? It's her contagious enthusiasm for doing her job well! It's difficult to remain neutral or indifferent in the presence of a positive thinker like Officer Ware.

She began her tenure with the Mississippi Department Of Corrections November 2, 1987. Officer Ware is currently assigned to Central Security where she serves as Control Room Operator in addition to other responsibilities. Other functions that Officer Ware performs are Radio Operator, Count Officer, Search and Escort, PBX Officer, Gate Officer, and NCIC operator. Officer Ware serves in all of these posts as needed in an exceptional manner with no complaints or gripes. She is available and willing to be of assistance even when she is not officially at work. It's not uncommon to have to call Officer Ware at home for input and advice. When new employees are transferred to the Control Room, it is Officer Ware who takes the time out of her responsibilities to train these employees.

Officer Ware shows leadership in her daily activities and is a self-starter who does not sit back and wait to be given assignments/directions. She works well with others within her department as well as those who are outside of her office. Officer Ware is a good communicator. She constantly has to communicate with the public on the switchboard. She gives 100% of herself in anything she does. She is well liked and depended upon by many. Her attendance is excellent.

Officer Ware is happily married to Officer Willie Ware and they are the proud parents of five children and four grandchildren. They reside in Greenwood and attend the Jones Chapel Church. Officer Ware is a Youth Advisor, Choir Director, and very active in Bible study. Her community involvement includes carpooling/transporting teenagers to different activities and regularly checking on her elderly neighbors. Officer Ware's hobbies are reading decorating, shopping and "talking".

We, as a committee, feel strongly that all MSP employees agree and support Officer Ware's nomination.

## CMCF's Nominee – Forrest “Smitty” Jordan, ACA Accreditation Manager

It is known that a few people succeed because they are destined to, but most people succeed because of their sheer determination. This describes Smitty Jordan's perseverance to a tee!

Smitty Jordan has been employed with the Department of Corrections since November 1997. Smitty was instrumental in attaining ACA Accreditation for CMCF III. From that time on, he worked diligently with all areas at CMCF in preparing for the October ACA audit. Smitty's vast knowledge of the ACA process and the efficiency in his work made the ACA “growing pains” much easier for all the staff involved. His positive attitude and enthusiasm for the ACA process were contagious. He is always willing to flex his schedule to accommodate the staff when they needed assistance with accreditation issues. He always finds the time to provide in-service training on the accreditation process. When he speaks to the staff, he simplifies the ACA process so that everyone understands and they do not feel intimidated. He not only trained the CMCF staff, Community Corrections depends on Smitty for the ACA training as well. Smitty has assisted several County/Regional Jails in preparing for their audits. SMCI has also utilized Smitty's expertise over the past several years. He not only shares his knowledge; he has provided MSP, SMCI and the County/Regionals with copies of forms he has created to make the process easier. With the assistance of Smitty's dedication, diligence and fortitude the entire Central Mississippi Correctional Facility achieved ACA accreditation with flying colors. This team player is a great asset, not only to CMCF, but the entire Department of Corrections.

## SMCI's Nominee – Sister Kathleen Spurlin, Chaplain II, Director of Chaplaincy Programs.

How is she described? A dedicated disciple with a noble motivation. A parable to explain.... from the writings of Max Lucado in He Still Moves Stones.

“It isn't hope that leads Mary and Mary Magdalene up the mountain to the tomb. It is duty. Naked devotion. They expect nothing in return. What could Jesus give? What could a dead man offer? The two women are not climbing the mountain to receive; they are going to the tomb to give. Period. There is no motivation more noble ... service prompted by duty. **THIS** is the **CALL** of discipleship.

Sister began her relationship with the agency as a volunteer at MSP where she subsequently became one of the first Chaplains with the agency in 1979. With the opening of SMCI in 1989, she single-handedly took on the responsibilities of opening and operating a chaplaincy program there for an inmate population of 500, then 750 and ultimately 2,214. With the last expansion at SMCI she was able to secure two additional chaplain positions to assist her in serving the inmate population.

Without exception, the role of all DOC employees is to provide and promote public safety through efficient and effective offender custody care and control of offenders. This role is obvious of the security staff, and to a lesser extent the support staff. Very little thought is given to how Sister Kathleen fulfills this role. Not only does Sister provide spiritual guidance for the inmates, she also serves as one, if not the only, staff person the offenders can vent their frustration with staff, the agency and their situation. On an occasion several years ago, when several of the security staff went to the Superintendent commenting that Sister takes up for the offenders in issues between offenders and staff, the Superintendent addressed this issue this way. Every convict in here needs someone to believe that there is some good in them, someone to think they are worthwhile, someone to listen to their problems and offer them hope, someone to believe they can turn their lives around and become productive members of society, someone to convey that their life has meaning and can be fulfilling, knowing they will spend a significant portion of their life in here and, for some, that they will never be released. That someone is Sister Kathleen. He closed his remarks by stating “If I were a convict in prison, I could think of no better Chaplain to have than Sister Kathleen”.

A few terms that come to mind in describing Sister are:

- Dedication and commitment – through her works it is apparent even to the novice observer she is committed to serving the inmate population by encouraging them to make a change in their lives.

- Tenacious – the concept of giving up is not in Sister’s being. Neither situation nor person can create a sense of hopelessness in Sister. She gets discouraged at times as we all do, but she never gives up on situations or people.
- Tireless – to work less than fifty or sixty hours per week is unusual for Sister.

Without doubt, employees emulating the values, dedication and fortitude Sister has demonstrated is what makes the Department of Corrections a successful agency.

## Community Corrections' Nominee – Lee McTeer, Community Corrections Assistant Director, Region I

Lee McTeer's professional disposition and personal perspective regarding his role and responsibilities with the Mississippi Department of Corrections can best be described as the "Right-Angle". He has demonstrated repeatedly that the "right angle" to approach a difficult problem is quite simple. It's the TRY ANGLE! He has shown through his hard work and willingness to learn new things that the "I will try my best" attitude performs wonders!

After completing his tour-of-duty in the armed forces, he returned to school at Delta State University and completed his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice in August 1991. On February 14, 1994, began his illustrious career as a Corr-Field Officer in the Greenville Probation/Parole Office.

Most recently Lee received three nominations for the Employee of the Month for December 2002. Lee represents MDOC at its best and is a fine example of our **core values** in action. He is a **competent** employee who personifies **integrity**. He treats and deals **fairly** with his staff and offenders and is thereby **respected** by all. He is **dependable** in every aspect of his employment and believes in keeping the communication lines open. Staff can always depend on him to be strong, consistent, fair and appreciate his openness.

Lee is a supervisor that leads by example. Due to the illness of the community Corrections Director in Region I, Lee stepped in and performed the leadership responsibilities of preparing for the November 11 –14, 2002 ACA Audits for the Washington and Leflore County Community Work Centers.

Lee even spent his own money and brought his personal tools to assist with the clean up and shining of kitchen pots and pans. This was quite an amazing accomplishment for a Field Services Supervisor who was unfamiliar with Community Work Centers. His dedication to the agency, willingness to take on unfamiliar territory, is a testament established by his CCD and his professionalism as an employee. His untiring efforts along with the hard work of the CWC Directors and staff resulted in recommended ACA Accreditation scores of 99.46% for Washington County Community Work Center and 100% for the Leflore County Community Work Center.

Lee's Supervisor, Community Corrections Director John Brinson, had these comments to make about him:

"Lee is very knowledgeable and is always willing to tackle and complete tasks; taking them from the beginning to closure. He is extremely loyal; a great guy and every supervisor's dream of an employee."

The following comments were made by his fellow Community Corrections Assistant Directors:

“Lee is hardworking and conscientious.”

“Lee is one of the most professional people I’ve met. He’s very knowledgeable and can deal with any type of problem. He’s a good listener and all around good person.”

Lee is undeniably the best representative of the work ethic and character exhibited by our excellent employees.

## Central Office's Nominee – Josephine Rogers

Our excellence never consists entirely in what we do alone or are, but rather in what we **do with** or, more importantly **are**, to others”

Josephine is an Accounting/Auditing Technician in the Accounts Payable Office in Central Office. She has been an employee of MDOC for seven years.

Josephine is a joy to be around every day and can always be counted on to be positive and uplifting. She never has a bad attitude, regardless of what is asked of her, and is willing to help anyone – usually going out of her way to do so.

She will do anything necessary to make sure that employees' travel reimbursements are not held up due to incorrect paperwork or lack of information. Regardless of how many times she has to walk an employee through the process, she never complains or makes them feel as though they are bothering her. Again, always a great attitude.

The Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) processes payments for MDOC. Many times Josephine will walk paperwork from the MDOC Central Office to the DFA in the Woolfolk Building in order to avoid delays in processing. If she thinks it is in the best interest of our employees or vendors, Josephine doesn't hesitate to ask for special consideration from DFA, something that she does not have to do, to ensure payments are processed quickly. Sometimes she makes multiple trips to the Woolfolk Building with no complaints just to be sure payments are received in a timely manner.

Josephine is meticulous in her work and she can be counted on to pick up the slack in the absence of a co-worker without even being asked to do so. She is dependable, honest, and very trustworthy – the type of employee every supervisor looks for.

In nominating Josephine for Employee of the Month in February 2002, the nominator wrote “Ms. Rogers' dedication to the agency and its employees is above and beyond what can be expected on a day-to-day basis and her interpersonal skills make her a real asset to the agency.”