



# PRESS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Four South Mississippi Correctional Institution Employees Receive Service Recognition Awards**

Jackson – The Mississippi Department of Corrections’ (MDOC) employee recognition awards were presented this week to four employees at the South Mississippi Correctional Institution (SMCI). The state prison is located near Leakesville in Greene County. Commissioner Robert L. Johnson, joined by Superintendent David Turner made the presentations to the recipients. “It is a personal pleasure for me to have the opportunity to present these awards to this dedicated group of employees,” said Commissioner Johnson. “Our agency is blessed with outstanding leadership. We are most fortunate not only to have these service award recipients within our ranks, but also the over 540 additional employees hear at SMCI who daily place their lives on the line to make society a safer place for all to live.”

The awards presentation conducted on Wednesday was part of a monthly employee recognition program instituted by the agency in July to recognize exemplary employees within MDOC’s ranks. The state prison system currently has over 3,600 people in its employ statewide. SMCI, which began operation as a 500-bed institution in April 1989, houses over 2100 offenders on a daily basis. It currently has a capacity to house 2214 prisoners.

#### **South Mississippi Correctional Institution employees receiving awards for November 2001 included:**

Burnise J. Evans	CO IV Armory Officer SMCI – III, Area - III Armory	Correctional Officer of the Month
Betty Creech	Investigator - I SMCI - II	Staff Employee of the Month
Sherman Walley	Correctional Supervisor SMCI - I, Area - II	Extra Effort Award
Walter Porter	Correctional Supervisor SMCI - I, Special Treatment Unit #7	Award of Excellence

(more)

The 2:00 p.m. special awards presentation ceremony was held in the in SMCI II's visitation area. Superintendent David Turner announced the names of the award recipients as Commissioner Robert L. Johnson presented each employee with lapel pins and certificates. The two Employees of the Month and the Award of Excellence recipients were also presented plaques.

"These awards presentations provide a special opportunity for all of us to pause and be thankful for our legion of dedicated employees," said Superintendent Turner adding, "life in corrections is stressful and is very demanding and it is incumbent upon us to salute them for their gallantry."

### **South Mississippi Correctional Institution Awards Recipients**

**Burnise J. Evans**, Correctional Officer IV, was nominated by Lt. Jerry Hinton, SMCI armorer, to receive the Correctional Officer of the Month service award. "Officer Evans possesses all of the qualities of a dedicated correctional employee," said Lt. Hinton. "He has continually shown pride in his job and has demonstrated a great deal of professionalism." Officer Evans joined SMCI's ranks in April 1996. He began his tour of duty as a transportation officer. He was assigned to the armory in 1999. In addition to serving as Armory Officer for the past three and one half years, Officer Evans has served on SMCI's Emergency Response Team and also for the past two years, when duty called, he has worked on the prison's Cell Extraction Team.

**Betty Creech**, Investigator I at SMCI - II was nominated by Dotson Hembree, Vocational Welding Instructor, to receive the Staff Employee of the Month service award. Mr. Hembree praised Ms. Creech for her active involvement in the prison system's Administrative Remedy Program (ARP) and for her dedication and her diligence in the program's effort. Mr. Hembree noted that Ms. Creech is a valuable asset to MDOC. Investigator Creech is a 13-year veteran with MDOC.

**Sherman Wally**, Correctional Supervisor at SMCI Area - II, was nominated to receive the Extra Effort Service Award by Captain Timothy J. Morris. "Correctional Supervisor Wally is an asset to SMCI," said Captain Morris. "Lieutenant Wally is thorough in his work and seeks perfection in each assigned task. He takes great pride in his profession and leads his staff by example which is the mark of a true administrator," he added.

**Walter Porter**, Correctional Supervisor at SMCI - I's Special Treatment Lockdown Unit #7 was nominated by Captain Timothy J. Morris to receive the Award of Excellence. "Lieutenant Porter is not only dedicated to his job, he leads those he supervises by example, and also finds personal time to devote to his community," said Captain Morris. "Lieutenant Porter is a member of the Greene County Responsible Fatherhood Initiative program. Correctional Supervisor Porter is dedicated to his job and to his community. These outstanding attributes of leadership make him a valuable asset to SMCI's staff."

**A Memorial Award** was presented to the family of Correctional Officer Shelton Wayne Madden. Officer Madden, who was named SMCI's Correctional Officer of the Month on September 26, 2001 lost his life in an automobile accident the next day. "Officer Madden's accident was a tragic loss to SMCI," said Superintendent David Turner.

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Media Note: If you would like a digital photograph of the Service Award recipients, e-mail [bgreenleaf@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:bgreenleaf@mdoc.state.ms.us) or phone him at: (601) 359-5646.