



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Ten Mississippi State Penitentiary Employees
Receive Outstanding Recognition Awards**

Parchman –Ten Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP) employees at Parchman, Mississippi were presented Employee Service awards Tuesday, May 7, by Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Commissioner Robert L. Johnson. The employees were saluted for their loyalty and dedication to their profession. “As we build our professionalism in the field of corrections we have to be mindful that the quality of the work we perform will come back to us and be our legacy,” said Commissioner Johnson. “The quality of your work that we honor today and that you have earned is one of dedication to providing public safety to the state of Mississippi.”

**Mississippi State Penitentiary employees
receiving awards for April 2002 included:**

Ether Ware Greenwood, MS	Correctional Officer IV Central Security – Area V	Correctional Officer of the Month
John Rogers Parchman, MS	Correctional Supervisor K- 9 Tactical Unit	Security Employee of the Month
Valencia Hawkins Cleveland, MS	Correctional Officer III Unit 30 – Area II	Extra Effort Award
Marvin “Bo” Bowen Indianola, MS	Construction Supervisor MSP - Maintenance	Extra Effort Award
Juanita Spivey Greenwood, MS	Correctional Case Manager Area I – Unit 29 C Building	Extra Effort Award
Dilworth Ricks Greenwood, MS	Case Manager Offender Services - MSP	Extra Effort Award
Al Bass Cleveland, MS	Correctional Case Manager Area II - Unit 30	Extra Effort Award

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**Mississippi State Penitentiary employees
receiving awards for April 2002 continued**

Stella Johnson Phillip, MS	Correctional Case Manager Area II – Unit 30	Extra Effort Award
Alma Holman Marks, MS	Correctional Case Manager Area II – Unit 30	Extra Effort Award
Michael Weeks Coahoma, MS	Correctional Case Manager Area II – Unit 30	Extra Effort Award
Kimberly Jaco Drew, MS	Food Services Director Mississippi State Penitentiary	Extra Effort Award

The 2:00 p.m. special awards presentation ceremony was held in MSP’s Spiritual Life Center. Superintendent Emmitt Sparkman announced the names of the award recipients as MDOC Commissioner Robert L. Johnson presented the employees with lapel pins and certificates. Additionally, plaques were presented to the Correctional Officer of the Month, and to the Security Employee of the Month recipients.

“I wish to congratulate each one who received awards here today,” said Commissioner Johnson. “I’m also equally proud of the over 1800 other employees here at the Mississippi State Penitentiary who daily dedicate their lives so that the general public may enjoy a safer place in which to live. We owe an equal debt of gratitude to them as well. They are also to be saluted for a job well done.” Commissioner Johnson added, “I’m strongly supportive of this awards program. I feel that these presentations serve as a vehicle for the administration to properly recognize our employees for their outstanding performance and dedication.”

The Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP), the state’s largest prison, is located in Sunflower County Mississippi. The Mississippi State Penitentiary, often referred to as Parchman, was developed at its present location in 1900 after “The Walls” was torn down to make room for the New Capitol Building in Jackson. MSP has the capacity to house 5551 prisoners. “Our prison facility plays a key role in the overall mission of MDOC,” said MSP Superintendent Emmitt Sparkman. “Our staff does a tremendous job daily as it houses all custody levels of prisoners including Death Row,” Sparkman added. “They have a most difficult assignment due to both MSP’s size and the custody level of its prison population which averages approximately 5200 prisoners on a daily basis.”

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Ether Ware, Correctional Officer IV, of Greenwood, received the Correctional Employee of the Month award at MSP. Ware, a 14-year veteran with the prison system, has worked at Area V – Central Security through her whole career with the prison system. Her duty posts have included gate security, radio dispatcher, count control, switchboard, and she has served as filled in when called upon on prison security and escort units. In 1990, Officer Ware received her certification to operate the National Crime Information Communication (NCIC) system and has since used her knowledge to train others working in Central Security in its operation. Nominated by Correctional Commander Tony Champion, Officer Ware was described as being a highly motivated employee who works hard to get the job done. “She never seems to tire and is professional in every sense of the word,” said Champion. “She always has a smile on her face and is respected by both staff and inmates alike.”

John Rogers, Correctional Supervisor, of Parchman, a 11-year veteran with the prison system, received the Security Employee of the Month recognition award. Nominated by Correctional Administrator Barbara Holloway, Rogers was characterized as being highly dedicated to his job. Rogers currently serves as administrator of MSP’s K-9 Tactical Unit. “He is highly vigilant,” said Holloway. “Rogers displays a strong personal commitment in fulfilling job responsibilities and he consistently exceeds performance expectations in his management role. He leads by example and enjoys the respect of his subordinates. K-9 has been very successful under his direction in locating and contraband on the prison grounds.”

Valencia Hawkins, of Cleveland, a 6-year veteran correctional officer with MSP received the Extra Effort Award recognition award. Hawkins, who is assigned as Unit 30 Control on third watch, was described by Correctional Supervisor Al Bass, who nominated her for the award as being very personable and dedicated to her job. In addition to her Unit Control assignment, Hawkins also works in Unit 30 transportation, kitchen and tower security and occasionally serves in the capacity of a security and escort officer. “Officer Hawkins is a very energetic and dedicated employee and the Mississippi State Penitentiary is most fortunate to have her in its employ,” said Bass.

Marvin Bowen, of Indianola, a 5-year veteran with MSP, who serves in MSP maintenance, was nominated to receive the Extra Effort recognition award by Jerry Morris, Director of the prison’s maintenance program. Bowen was described as being a devoted employee who refuses to provide anything less than the very best in all assignments he undertakes. “He’s a team player that is a true asset to our operation,” said Morris. “He goes beyond his assigned duties and is always willing to help his co-workers complete a project after his work assignments are complete.”

Juanita Spivey, Area I Case Manager, of Greenwood, was nominated to receive the Extra Effort employee recognition award by Associate Warden Jimmy Parker. A 19-year veteran with the prison system, Spivey was characterized as a highly organized employee. “Spivey was recently assigned to a Support Unit to handle 128 offenders,” said Parker. “Additionally, during the absence of an inmate movement coordinator she assumed the added responsibility of ensuring that 300 other offenders were properly oriented and classified. It takes a person with unwavering loyalty to her job to handle two jobs with no extra pay.” Parker added, “We are indeed fortunate to have her on our team here at the Mississippi State Penitentiary ‘

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Dilworth Ricks, Correctional Case Manager, of Greenwood, was nominated to receive the Extra Effort recognition award by her co-worker Case Managers. Hicks, a 13-year employee with the prison system, is currently assigned as case manager assigned to the Classification Department and is assigned to the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP). Her duties include numerous calls to and from various families, correctional field officers, judges,, case managers and sheriffs inquiring about various offenders who have requested to be located in the Joint-Placement ISP. “These calls can be nerve-racking,” said Ricks’ co-workers who nominated her for the employee recognition. “Case Manager Ricks embodies all of the attributes of a successful employee. She maintains composure and handles each call in a professional manner.” Ricks was also commended for skill and ability in her important role in the placement of offenders into the Joint-Placement program and was applauded by her co-workers for Ricks’ untiring efforts in the alternative sanctions project.

Correctional Supervisors, **Al Bass**, of Cleveland, **Stella Johnson**, of Phillip, **Alma Holman**, of Marks, and **Michael Weeks**, of Coahoma, were jointly nominated to receive the Extra Effort employee recognition awards for Area II by Warden Maud Irby. “All four of these supervisors are a valuable asset to the on-going operation of our prison’s security,” said Irby. “These loyal members of our security management team here at Area II are assigned to the First (12:00-8:00AM) and the Third (4:00PM-12:00Midnight) Watches. They might be more appropriately labeled as our ‘Pulling Pool’ supervisors. Even when they are not on the job, they are subject to being called out by the Institution Watch Commander to dispatch officers to other areas of the prison to relieve security staff who have pulled double shift security duties. In reality, they ensure that we have proper security staffing in their management role, which is of utmost vital interest to our never-ending responsibility of ensuring a safe and secure prison operation.” The four correctional supervisors were lauded for their dedication to duty.

Kimberly Jaco, Correctional Aide, of Drew, and a 3-year employee with the prison system, was nominated by Associate Warden Stanley Flagg to receive the Extra Effort employee recognition award. Officer Jaco is assigned as clerical aide to the Associate Warden at Unit 24. “Corrections survives through a team approach, said Flagg. “Jaco is a living testimony of how we adapt to that challenge filled operation. In addition to assisting me, Jaco never ceases to assist other departments at Unit 24 with a smile.” “She frequently provides clerical assistance to the warden, the deputy warden, the major, unit captains and supervisors. She is a veritable dynamo of energy and a valuable asset in the truest sense to the successful operation of our unit.” Jaco was saluted for her untiring effort and her willingness to go the extra mile to see that the job gets done.

