



# PRESS RELEASE

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## MDOC Holds Graduation Ceremony

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Jackson – The Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) held a graduation ceremony today for 56 new correctional officer cadets at the Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP) in Parchman, Mississippi. This class is the largest to graduate so far in 2001; these new cadets will help MDOC fill much needed correctional officer positions at MSP.

Commissioner Robert L. Johnson was the featured speaker. In his message to the graduating class,

These new cadets will begin working as full-time correctional officers at MSP next week. Cadets have to complete eight weeks of training at the MDOC Training Academy, which includes classes in hostage negotiations, firearms training and self-defense. As part of the training program, cadets also have to spend a minimum of one week of on-the-job training with a supervisor.

Of the 56 cadet graduates, 12 were recognized for academic and skills achievements. The Top Gun Award is awarded to the cadet with 100% accuracy in the firing range; the recipient from this class is David Payne, of Belmont, Miss. In addition, academic awards are given to the cadets with the first and second highest grade point average, and all cadets with a 95% or higher grade point average. The cadet with the highest grade point average of 99% is April Horne, of Cleveland, Miss. The cadet with the second highest grade point average of 98% is I'sis Hamilton, of Indianola, Miss. Nine cadets received honor graduate awards (95% or higher) and they are:

Carrie Stewart, of Cleveland, Miss.  
Freddie Turner, of Ruleville, Miss.  
Donnell Armstrong, of Clarksdale, Miss.  
Maurita Graham, of Boyle, Miss.  
Stacy Haire, of Parchman, Miss.  
Lavernda Hall, of Gunnison, Miss.  
Sharon Harris, of Ruleville, Miss.  
Dana Prado, of Merigold, Miss.  
Varnika Sewell, of Lexington, Miss.

MDOC is searching for new correctional officer applicants to work at all three of the facilities. Anyone interested in receiving more information about becoming an MDOC correctional officer can contact Jesse Smith, MDOC Recruitment Director, 723 N. President Street, Jackson, MS, 39202. Or, e-mail Smith at [jsmith@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:jsmith@mdoc.state.ms.us) .

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