



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APPOINTMENT OF NEW WARDENS ANNOUNCED AT SOUTH MISSISSIPPI CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

Leakesville - South Mississippi Correctional Institution (SMCI) Superintendent David Turner has announced, effective immediately, the appointment of Earnest Lee and Ron King to serve as wardens at SMCI. "We are indeed fortunate to have obtained the services of these two correctional veterans at our prison," said Superintendent Turner. "Their combined criminal justice career spans nearly 38 years, and I am strongly confident that their leadership experience will provide invaluable assistance to us as we push toward our May 19 goal to gain full American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation here at SMCI."

In his announcement, Turner reported that Warden Earnest Lee has been assigned supervisory responsibility of SMCI Area I, a 750 bed capacity prison complex, which houses primarily minimum and medium custody offenders. Lee is a fifteen and one-half year veteran with the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) and a graduate of Delta State University with a bachelor of business administration degree. Captain Lee served as Watch Commander at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility's 720 Special Needs Unit prior to his appointment to warden at SMCI Area I. Warden Lee is also active in the U.S. Army Reserve 412th Engineer Command. His combined active military and reserve service spans over 25 years. He currently holds the rank of E-9/Sergeant Major, the highest rank of a non-commissioned officer.

Commenting on his selection, Warden Lee said, "I feel most honored to have been chosen to serve in this challenging new post. I feel my appointment to Warden is a great opportunity! I have a vision that I can help the institution not only reach ACA accreditation but also that I can play a contributing role by helping the institution reach a higher level of achievement."

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Superintendent Turner reported that Warden King has been assigned as supervisor of SMCI Area II, a 1224-bed complex that houses both minimum and medium custody offenders. King, a 22-year veteran in corrections, including 10 years with the Texas Department of Corrections, is a graduate of Sam Houston State University. Throughout his criminal justice career in correctional management, King has been involved in the broad spectrum of penology. His management roles have ranged from supervising special response teams and serving as a warden of maximum security facilities to community corrections involving Intensive Supervision for probation cases and as an administrator of a center for young offenders. He has also played a supporting role in the ACA accreditation process. Prior to accepting his position as warden at SMCI, King served as the Administrator of the Colorado County Juvenile Justice Center in Eagle Lake, Texas.

“I am both excited and honored to have been selected to serve as warden at SMCI Area II, and to have the challenging opportunity to play a role in the history-making process as SMCI presses toward achieving ACA accreditation,” said Warden King. “I have been involved in the accreditation process throughout my correctional career, and I strongly feel my new appointment affords me many new challenges to assist prison management here achieve ACA accreditation.”

“South Mississippi Correctional Institution is indeed fortunate to have gained the services of Wardens Lee and King,” said Deputy Commissioner of Institutions Christopher Epps. “SMCI will unquestionably benefit greatly from these two outstanding correctional leaders. Their knowledge of corrections combined with their leadership skills will be most helpful to prison management as it moves toward gaining ACA accreditation.”

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Media Note: Biographical sketches attached. If you would like a digital photograph of the new SMCI wardens, e-mail bgreenleaf@mdoc.state.ms.us or phone him at: (601) 359-5646

Ronald Wayne King
Warden
South Mississippi Correctional Institution
Mississippi Department of Corrections

Ronald “Ron” Wayne King is currently Warden of Area II at the South Mississippi Correctional Institution in Leakesville, Mississippi. King has served 22 years in corrections, most recently as Administrator of the Colorado County Juvenile Justice Center in Eagle Lake, Texas. He began his career in 1979 as a Correctional Officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). King has worked in state correctional systems for ten years in Texas, overseeing high-risk inmates in both the institutional setting and probationers in the community corrections setting. He has served as a Correctional Officer, Administrative Segregation Sergeant, Special Operations Response Team Supervisor, Industry Security Supervisor and Intensive Supervision Surveillance Probation Officer. In addition, King has worked 12 years for private correctional corporations as Assistant Facility Director, Facility Administrator, Deputy Director of Operations, Deputy Warden, Warden and Administrator.

King, a native of Houston, Texas, received his bachelor’s degree in Law Enforcement and Police Science at Sam Houston State University. He is a member of the American Correctional Association (ACA), Rotary International and served as Chairman of the Board for the Palo Pinto County Crime Stoppers program and Institutional Division Vice Chairman of the Texas Corrections Association.

Earnest McCoy Lee
Warden
South Mississippi Correctional Institution
Mississippi Department of Corrections

Earnest McCoy Lee is currently Warden of Area I at the South Mississippi Correctional Institution in Leakesville, Mississippi. Lee is a 15 and a half-year veteran with the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC), most recently serving as Watch Commander at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility's 720 Special Needs Unit in Rankin County, Mississippi. King has served as a Correctional Officer, Sergeant and Assistant Administrator with MDOC. He also served as a Correctional Officer with the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Lee, a native of Clarksdale, Mississippi, received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration at Delta State University. Lee is also active in the U.S. Army Reserve 412th Engineer Command headquartered in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he currently holds the rank of E-9/Sergeant Major, the highest rank of a non-commissioned officer. His combined active military and reserve service spans over 25 years.