



News for Immediate Release

June 10, 2013

Parole Board Announces Training Program to Change Offender Behavior

Harrisburg – Chairman of the Board of Probation and Parole Michael C. Potteiger today announced the beginning of a week-long national training program for agents to learn skills that can change offender behavior.

“We know that behavior change is necessary and has been proven effective in reducing recidivism,” Potteiger said. “As part of Governor Corbett’s ongoing efforts to enhance public safety, Pennsylvania is pleased to host this training and we welcome our partners from other government agencies, other states and the community.”

Since 2008, parole agents have been delivering the National Curriculum and Training Institute’s (NCTI) cognitive life skills program to parolees in its district offices. A study of the program by the Board found a 14 percent, one-year recidivism rate for participants, which is lower than its overall one-year recidivism rate of 20 percent.

“The board saw a need for programming to specifically address the criminal thinking patterns of parolees, and we have developed the capacity to provide this programming over the past five years by training almost 200 agents as facilitators,” Potteiger said.

The training involves 35 hours of professional and skill-based development using NCTI's Behavior Change System. At the completion of the training, individuals will be equipped to deliver any of the 15 programs in the NCTI’s Crossroads curriculum.

According to NCTI, offenders have been told what to do their whole life, which does not change their behavior. In this program, facilitators assist offenders in gaining insight into the differences between values, attitudes and behaviors in order to kindle an inner desire to make pro-social behavior changes.

The programs are based on cognitive behavioral therapy approaches which have been proven successful in preventing future crime – changing a person’s thinking can change their behavior. The group sessions that are held with offenders promote pro-social change by allowing participants to learn and practice specific life-skills, increasing participant self-confidence, and by identifying and cultivating lifetime patterns for self-improvement.

The program is accredited by the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA).

"The APPA is proud to be a partner with NCTI to provide this training and we are pleased with the results that the Parole Board is experiencing," Executive Director Carl Wicklund said.

Participants include individuals from the Board of Probation and Parole, Berks County Probation, Piedmont Court Services and Prince William County Probation in Virginia, U. S. Probation Department Western District of New York and a representative from Second Chance Development Foundation, York.

For more information about the Board of Probation and Parole, visit www.pbpp.state.pa.us

The National Curriculum and Training Institute offers curriculum, consulting, and related program services using evidence-based principles that promotes individual pro-social behavior change for those involved in the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems.

For more information, visit www.ncti.org.

APPA is an international membership organization representing over 35,000 pretrial, probation, parole and community corrections professionals from federal, state, tribal and local jurisdictions. APPA provides training, technical assistance, research, information clearinghouse services and written guidance for the field.

For more information, visit www.appa-net.org.

Media contact: Sherry Tate, 717-787-6208

###