



# ASSOCIATION OF PAROLING AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

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### THINGS TO DO IN 2013

- **Renew APAI Membership**
- **Serve on an APAI Committee**
- **Convince a colleague to join APAI.**
- **Make plans to attend the 2014 Chairs Meeting and Annual Training Conference in Denver, CO May 18-21, 2014**

Dear Friends and Colleagues in APAI,

Another busy quarter of activity at APAI, as your executive leadership continues to be involved in events placing our Association alongside key criminal justice policymakers in attempts to advance “Best Practices” in parole.

In June, APAI Vice President Rissie Owens, Western Regional Vice President, Connie Bisbee, CAO, Keith Hardison, and myself, along with A.T. Wall, President of the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) traveled to the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) to participate in a planning session to operationalize our “Principles of Collaboration” project we began in 2010. NIC, as our project sponsor, intends to conduct a symposium in 2014 to bring together jurisdictional teams consisting of the Chief Releasing Authority/Parole Board Chair and their Department of Corrections counterpart Director/Commissioner. The purpose of this symposium will be for each team to develop a strategic plan to improve working relationships based on the “Principles”. A solicitation for participation will be made for jurisdictions to apply for scholarship participation.

Most recently, September 25 and 26, 2013, Southern Regional Vice President, Shannon Jones and myself participated in the semi-annual meeting of the Community of Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN) representing APAI. CCCN is a NIC sponsored network that APAI, as one of five Correctional Professional Associations, was invited to join in early 2012. As has been shared with you previously, CCCN serves as a forum to develop and work on the emerging issues, activities and goals of the community corrections field.

The five associations invited to participate represent all phases of the corrections continuum from pre-trial diversion, to release on parole, to revocation, by way of their respective membership. With the heightened attention currently taking place across all aspects of the social and political landscape in the U.S. focused on the reduction in mass incarceration in exchange for cost effective, research-based measures of community corrections proven to increase long-term public safety, this initiative is timely and of significant importance.

During our two days at NIC, we met with Director Denise O’Donnel and staff of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), The Pew Charitable Trusts; Adam Gelb and staff, and the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA). Previous meetings, along with those last week, and those in the future are intended to establish a partnership relationship between CCCN and these entities to assist in developing correctional policy and strategy and in relation to moving their agenda forward as to the advertisement, solicitation, and implementation of technical assistance grants. Important topics of discussion included Justice Reinvestment (JRI), 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance Act grants, and the Affordable Care ACT (ACA) as related to offender populations, among others.

You will be hearing from CCCN in the future asking for input on these subject areas. Please access the CCCN website as linked on our APAI website.

Warmest regards!

Jeffrey L. Peterson

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: COLORADO PAROLE BOARD

BY: JOE MORALES, BOARD MEMBER

The Colorado Board of Parole is a diverse, fair, dedicated and hardworking team, committed to serve the citizens of Colorado. The Board consists of seven members, and is led by a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson who provide oversight and management. The current Board Chair is Brandon C. Shaffer

Members serve full time and are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate. They serve three-year terms and may serve consecutive terms. The current Board is composed of representatives from many areas of expertise. Two members have experience in law enforcement and one member has experience in offender supervision, including parole, probation, or community corrections. Four members have experience in other relevant fields.

Each member is expected to have a minimum of five years of experience in a relevant field. In addition, knowledge of parole laws and guidelines, rehabilitation, correctional administration, the functioning of the criminal justice system, issues associated with victims of crime, the duties of parole board members, and actuarial risk assessment instruments and other offender assessment instruments used by the Board and by the Colorado Department of Corrections is required.

The Mission of the Colorado Board of Parole is:

- ◆ To insure public safety by utilizing the criteria set forth in the statutes, risk assessment guidelines, all pertinent data, and an interview with the applicants.
- ◆ To use agency and community resources as a bridge to help parolees reach self-sufficiency, reintegration into the community, and stable citizenship.
- ◆ To return to prison those who show by their behavior they will not abide by parole conditions.
- ◆ To use the full range of executive authority in order to accentuate equality, fairness, and justice for all under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Parole.

The Board seeks to accomplish its objectives and to meet challenges by being proactive, informed, and involved with key stakeholders and the community. To accomplish this board members volunteer to take on additional duties and assignments in their field of expertise or interest. These collateral parole board assignments include;

**Data Liaison:** interfaces with the Department of Corrections and

Division of Criminal Justice research offices. The goal of this representative is to maintain continuity in our communications, research and tracking of board statistics.

**Legal Liaison:** interfaces with the Attorney General's office on behalf of the Parole Board. The goal of this representative is to maintain continuity in our communications and tracking of legal issues related to the Parole Board.

**Outreach Coordinator:** assists with scheduling and coordinating outreach efforts and activities for the Parole Board. The Outreach Coordinator, as the individual responsible for the "public face" of the board, actively seeks opportunities to present the Parole Board and its mission in a favorable light,

**Scheduling Coordinator:** manage the Parole Board calendar from week-to-week. With the oversight of the Parole Board Chairperson, the Scheduling Coordinator makes assignments to other Board members, ensuring enough time is budgeted each week to complete board hearings.

**Training Coordinator:** creates an annual training plan for the Parole Board. The annual training plan will ensure each board member completes statutory training requirements. The Training Coordinator will document such training and maintain training records on behalf of the Board.

The Colorado Board of Parole is honored, proud and excited to be hosting the 2014 APAI Annual Training Conference in "The Mile High City", of Denver. Colorado is a majestic and beautiful state, steeped in proud western history. The capitol city of Denver is energized and exciting, offering the simple to the elegant in hospitality to residents and visitors alike. The Omni conference site is located in the foothills between Denver and Boulder with amazing views of Colorado's high county, the Rocky Mountains. The conference site is close to and surrounded by one of the metro areas premier shopping venues, the Flat Irons Mall. There is also night life, and numerous restaurants in the area.

The host and planning committees are working diligently to provide attendees an excellent conference agenda with the goal of providing a positive, valuable and fun experience in an environment where attendees can network, learn and share valuable paroling experience. The host committee is excited to see you here in Denver to share the theme of "Defining Success: Increasing Public Trust and Confidence in Parole". For additional information about Colorado and the greater Denver area visit: [www.denver.org](http://www.denver.org) and [www.colorado.org](http://www.colorado.org).

Don't forget to bring or ship your silent auction items!



## HEARING THE VOICES OF VICTIMS

BY: TENA M. PATE, CHAIR, FLORIDA PAROLE COMMISSION AND APAI VICTIMS COMMITTEE

On any given Wednesday morning in Florida, crime victims and their families gather in Tallahassee to appear before the Parole Commission to tell their stories. Some sit stoically, some struggle to contain strong emotions as painful stories are retold, but all of them come to convey the impact a crime and its perpetrator has had on them and the ones they love.

As a strong proponent for crime victims, Florida Parole Commission's Victim Services Department is committed to locating and representing those impacted greatest by crime, the victims. When the Commission began in 1941, victims did not have a voice at parole hearings. This changed when the Victim Assistance Law was enacted in 1989 and empowered victims and their families to contribute to the parole process.

In a 2010 national survey of parole board members conducted by the APAI Crime Victims Committee, respondents were asked to identify the specific types of information in victim impact statements at parole board hearings that were most helpful in their decision-making process. The types of "helpful information" identified were descriptions of the emotional, financial, physical, social and spiritual impact of crime, including both the short- and long-term impact of the crime; the relationship between the victim and the inmate; details about the crime; the way(s) the crime changed the victim's life; and input into any special

conditions of proposed release.

Anne Seymour, a national crime victim advocate, recently expressed her view regarding victim's roles in the parole process. "While crime victims and survivors in all 50 states have the right to participate in parole hearings, their involvement goes far beyond federal and state laws. Victim involvement in parole hearings provides useful information to paroling authorities in making difficult decisions about the potential release of incarcerated persons. They can address not only the impact of the crime on them and their loved ones, but also share any knowledge of unwanted contact from or harassment by the inmate, as well as their wishes for community supervision should the inmate return to the community."

Hearing the voices of the victims in parole proceedings provides officials with valuable information that helps paint an entire picture of the crime and the offender who committed it. With this priceless information, critical release decisions can be made, which ultimately ensures that the public continues to be protected.

The following letters were received from victims describing their personal experiences appearing before two separate paroling authorities. A very special thank

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## NEW VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM AVAILABLE SOON

BY: KEITH HARDISON

By the end of October, crime victims will be receiving automated notification of certain significant events surrounding the interstate transfer of offenders. This is all made possible due to a technology upgrade at the National Office of the Interstate Commission on Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS). (*ed. note: ICAOS is the body that makes and enforces the rules governing the transfer of offenders between U.S. states and territories*).

In June of 2002, the new Interstate Compact for Adult Offender Supervision was ratified by a threshold number of states and was scheduled to become effective shortly thereafter. ICAOS was formed to promulgate rules to achieve the goals of the compact and to oversee the day-to-day operation of the compact between the states. A major impetus for the revision of the rules regarding interstate transfers was the advocacy of Pat Tuthill, whose daughter was murdered by an offender who had traveled from the state of their conviction, without supervision or monitoring. Pat has remained an active participant in Commission business and crime victim's issues are a major focus of the Commission.

In the early days, the compact operated using a system of paper transfer forms sent by mail, fax or email. In 2008, the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS), a national electronic information system, came into existence and greatly streamlined the process for generating and maintaining records of interstate transfers.

Rule 3-108 of the Compact Rules has always required the

sending and receiving states to make notifications to victims in accordance with its pertinent statutes and regulations. However, the next logical step, with offender transfer data now located in a central repository, was to enable states to provide victim notification using an automated system. The Commission contracted with the Appriss, Inc., the original developer of ICOTS to build automated victim notification capabilities into the system. The system is scheduled to go operational in October 2013.

States will be able to sign up crime victims for automated notification of any one of fifteen distinct triggering events

- ◆ Request for Report Instructions Transmitted
- ◆ Transfer Request Transmitted
- ◆ Request for Report Instructions Approval Transmitted
- ◆ Transfer Request Approval Transmitted
- ◆ Change of Offender Address
- ◆ Offender Violation Report Transmitted
- ◆ Notification of Departure Transmitted
- ◆ Notification of Successful Arrival Transmitted
- ◆ Successful Case Closure Reply Transmitted
- ◆ Return to Sending State Transmitted
- ◆ Unsuccessful Notification
- ◆ Registration Confirmation
- ◆ Transfer request withdrawn

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## HEARING THE VOICES OF VICTIMS, CONT FROM PAGE 3

you to Commissioner Jasper Clay of Maryland for sharing one of the letters he received from a victim who appeared before him and his colleagues. Each letter has been reprinted with the permission of the victims.

Maryland

Dear Commissioner Clay,

First, I would like to say to you, that I hope that all is well with yourself and your family. Next, I would like to apologize for not getting this letter to you sooner. However, it has been deeply on my heart to write to you this correspondence.

The "main" purpose of my letter to you, is really to say "*Thank You*" to you, as well as to the other commissioners, Commissioner Blount, Ms. Lywanda Johnson, Commissioner David Blumberg, and all of you for the so delicate yet professional manner with which you "all" handled and dealt with me and my family in this so painful situation. I would also like to express to you my view of my personal experience with having an "open" parole hearing. So that this information may be shared hopefully with others, from the Parole Commission side as well as the Victim side. With you in particular, I would like to incorporate a little of the personal side of my story.

I was born and raised in New York City, mother an alcoholic and father absent and on drugs. So the serious issues was there to deal with in all aspects.

In spite of, I excelled academically all through school, and I wasn't attracted to the drugs and the street life at all. But obviously the odds were not really in my favor. So brilliant me left home as a teenager (couldn't possibly stay any longer), had my very first boyfriend, became a teenage mom, and never returned home again. Kept my son, raised him well, went back to school including college (was on welfare and had my son always in private school), and set about with one fierce determination that was deep within me from the moment that I could remember having a memory. That determination was to work hard and "clean" and to be the absolute *best mother that I could be*. Ten years later after the birth of my first son, God so blessed me with the birth of my second son, David.

With all of the atrocities of living with parental addiction, and they were pretty bad, I never felt sorry for myself because I always knew right from wrong. I always knew, that I could rise above my circumstances, way above. I always prided myself on pulling up my boot straps, dusting myself off, getting back up and at it.

When my son, David, was murdered on November 29th, 1994, that was it for me, I was done. There has been for many years no pulling up my boot straps, no dusting myself off. I functioned because I had to, but there was no getting up for me.

Eighteen years later, my family and I walk into the waiting room of the correctional institution for the open parole hearing for the person who had committed this horrific act. I did not know what to expect.

From the moment that I entered that waiting room for this hearing, until I walked out of that facility, my family and I were treated unexpectedly so,

with the utmost of respect, care and concern. Beginning with the officer who escorted us through the whole entire process, then there was the Assistant Warden who took us into his office and spoke a bit with us, really trying to make sure that we, especially me was okay to proceed. I did not expect anything like this. And then there was "you", as well as Commissioner Blount, but especially "you".

I would be writing until tomorrow, Commissioner Clay, trying to convey to you the way that meeting you under those type of circumstances and the very, very "decent" and yet "professional" manner in which you conducted yourself, the way that you handled the entire hearing from both my and my family's side as well as the offender himself. *I will never forget you*. I will always have the utmost of respect for the *manner* in which you carried out your duties. You were "caring", but you were professional first and you were "fair" to both sides of the situation.

Am I happy about the outcome? Extremely! However, the process and the manner in which we were treated was extremely important to me.

I want you to know that when I walked out of that building and away from that hearing that I came home with a little "strength", with a little "hope", and as time is passing I now feel that maybe, just maybe, that young person in myself who always rose to the occasion, that maybe now, maybe I can begin to "dust myself off" a little (smile). That maybe now, just maybe, I can stop feeling so weighted down and emotionally paralyzed that maybe, I can gather a little strength and get my "*mojo*" working again.

I hope that I have not burdened you with my story. This experience has certainly made me a strong advocate of open parole hearings. And I want you to always remember, that the service that you and the other commissioners endeavor to provide there is *recognized, valued and oh so necessary*.

"*Thank You*" from the bottom of my heart (C. Matthews)

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Florida

Dear Commissioner Pate:

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and decision in yesterday's parole hearing. I don't envy your task at these hearings, particularly after listening to evidence of some truly horrible crimes (including ours). You run the Commission hearings in a calm, even-handed way, respectful to all parties concerned and mindful of the significance of your decisions. (G. Cohen)

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After sitting through many cases before ours was heard, it is evident what a difficult job you all have, deciding when compassion and mercy is warranted, and for whom, a victim's family or the perpetrator. In addition to your fair approach to each case, you all seem to know how to put those testifying at ease, reassuring each through your words and reactions, that you are sincerely interested in what each person has to say. It would be easy for anyone to lose their composure in this circumstance, but all of you, with a kind and interested demeanor, made a difficult day much easier. (G. Heifman)

**NEW VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM AVAILABLE SOON, CONT FROM PAGE 3**

- ◆ Offender failed to arrive
- ◆ Offender absconding

Victims may sign up for notifications either by phone or e-mail. Victims' advocates in each state and territory have been designated as the point of contact for issues regarding this new system.

According to Pat Tuthill

*The new National Automated Standardized Victim Notification system has been a labor of love and passion for me. It was a matter of having the opportunity to do the 'right thing' and doing it. The implementation of the notification system ushers in a new era of rights for victims when offenders are moving across state borders. Victims will no longer need to concern themselves with each states notification statutes and guessing if they will be*

*informed or not. All victims opting in for notification will receive notification of significant events involving the perpetrator and their movement as well as significant violations of conditions of supervision.*

*Because the Interstate Compact Rules have the effect of federal law, the rights of victims in Interstate Compact matters is now enshrined into federal law and victims are assured they will be notified no matter in which state they reside or which state the perpetrator may transfer to as long as he or she is under supervision. Victims will be informed and have the opportunity to be heard and the right to comment to advocate for their safety.*

Pat also expresses her gratitude to the National Office staff of ICAOS for their persistence in overcoming the obstacles to making this system a reality.



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[APAI has a BLOG!!!](#)

**Make sure and check out the APAI Blog with up-to-date articles and news from around the world!**

[www.apaintl.blogspot.com](http://www.apaintl.blogspot.com)

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