



# Association of Paroling Authorities International

www.apaintl.org

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings APAI Members:

Happy New Year to all of you!! I hope that you enjoyed the holiday season, and took time to spend with your loved ones. We often forget how stressful our careers in the criminal justice arena are, so it is vitally important that we all remember to maintain balance in our lives. As I look back on 2014, I am very honored and proud of the work APAI has accomplished, and I look forward to more accomplishments in 2015.

As the old saying goes, the only constant is change, and APAI is no exception to that rule. As was announced last month, our Secretariat, Natalie Payne has accepted a new position as Technology Trainer with the Information Technology Division at Sam Houston State University. Natalie has helped advance the mission and goals of APAI to an extent that would have not been possible without her expertise and dedication. I have enjoyed working with and getting to know Natalie, and her contributions are truly and deeply appreciated by not only myself, but the entire Executive Committee, and particularly our CAO Keith Hardison. Natalie will be deeply missed, but will always be considered a part of the APAI family. We wish her much success in her new position, and expect great success in her future. We welcome Monique Holman as our interim Secretariat, and appreciate her willingness to fill in for Natalie until her permanent replacement is selected. Monique has worked with CMIT for over 5 years, and is also the secretariat for the Texas Association of Court Administration. We look forward to working with Monique during this transition period.

Another change to inform you about is the position of our Western Region Vice President. Nevada Parole Board Chair Connie Bisbee resigned from this position last October. We appreciate her service to APAI's Executive Committee in this capacity, and wish her all the best. I am pleased to announce that Lonzo Henderson, Chair of the Alaska Parole Board has accepted the appointment as Connie's replacement as the Western Region Vice President. Lonzo has been an active member of APAI for several years, and is prepared to assume this leadership role. You can learn more about Lonzo and the other newly appointed Regional Vice Presidents in a separate article in this newsletter.

As for 2015, there are several projects and events that we are excited about. First, the Victim's Committee has worked hard on preparing and arranging a webinar on Victim-Offender Dialogue that will be broadcast on January 21, 2015. I encourage you all to take advantage of this opportunity to learn about the VOD program, and ask questions of trusted and leading advisors in the field. Thank you to the Victim's Committee for their hard work on this webinar. Second, I am pleased to tell you that our Professional Development Committee will soon begin working in collaboration with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) to incorporate mentoring into the Chairs' Training Curriculum. The goal is to incorporate mentoring into the curriculum for the Chairs' training that is slated to be conducted in September 2015. We will keep you posted on the progress, and will advise you of this training opportunity as well as the yearly New Parole Board Member Training as the dates for registration approach.

Finally, we are very excited about the 2015 Annual Training Conference program. We have secured speakers and workshop presenters on a wide variety of current and relevant parole and release topics. In addition, we have secured a dynamic set of general session speakers, including Dr. Ed Lattessa of the University of Cincinnati who is widely known for his work in developing the ORAS, a risk instrument adopted by many jurisdictions. In addition, Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Timothy McGinty will speak to the membership about his office's experience with investigating and prosecuting Ariel Castro, the defendant who held three women captive for over a decade in his Cleveland home, and lessons learned from that case. The host committee continues to work hard on planning a robust program agenda, as well as unique entertainment events. We look forward to seeing you all in May!!

Warmest regards,

Cynthia Mausser  
APAI President

## Inside This Issue

APAI MEMBER AGENCIES HOST SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY VISIT	2
APAI WELCOMES THREE NEW REGIONAL/SECTIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS	3
APRIL 2015 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK	3
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES	4

## Things to Do in 2015

- **Renew APAI Membership**
- **Serve on an APAI Committee**
- **Urge a fellow organization to join APAI**
- **Make plans to attend the 2015 Chairs Meeting and Annual Training Conference in Columbus, OH May 17-20, 2015**

## APAI's New Membership Fees

Individual - \$65

Organizational  
(up to 8 members) - \$375  
(9 to 13 members) - \$475  
(14 to 20 members) - \$575

Associate - \$40

Student - \$15



## APAI MEMBER AGENCIES HOST SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY VISIT

BY: KEITH HARDISON, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

In early December 2014 several APAI Member Parole Boards were privileged to host a delegation of corrections and justice professionals from the Republic of South Africa. Their agency has been seeking information about ways to improve their system of parole release decision making. Their system currently consists on over fifty separate, regional parole board without much consistency in qualifications, training and practices. They were also seeking to improve their practices in such areas as risk assessment and decision making guidelines.

Because of their participation in past APAI Annual Training Conferences representatives reached out to APAI to locate sites to study to learn about the various ways in which parole is practiced in the United States. Two members of the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services staff, Mr. Kagiso Moleme, Chief of Staff and Acting Special Advisor to the Minister, Ms Thando Tsetsewa accompanied by Deputy Commissioner of Corrections, Ms Thandi Motlonye traveled first to Jefferson City to observe the workings of the Missouri Board of Probation and Parole.



Members of the South Africa study tour delegation meet with Missouri Board Board Chair Ellis McSwain and other members and staff of the Board.

There they met with members of that Board and heard a presentation about the organization and processes of that agency. According to Ellis McSwain, Jr., Chairman, Missouri Board of Probation & Parole, "Our participation in APAI conferences allowed us to form a

relationship with the South African paroling authorities several years ago. Being chosen to host an information exchange with paroling entities on an international level was very fulfilling for everyone involved. The Missouri Parole Board is proud and honored to have had an opportunity to showcase board operations and share our philosophy with our APAI colleagues."

From there the delegation traveled to Columbus Ohio where they had an opportunity to observe the Ohio Parole Board conduct several parole interviews of inmates being considered for release. Following the interview they had the opportunity to interact with the Board members and delve into the purpose and function of the interview process as well as see firsthand the consideration and discussion of the factors taken into account in making a release decision. They spent the afternoon with Chairperson and APAI President Cyndi Mausser discussing numerous facets of the structure and operations of the Ohio Board. Chairperson Mausser shared with them many of the operational policies and documents used by her Board.

In addition this writer had the opportunity to visit with the delegation in Columbus and discuss ways in which APAI could be of assistance to them as they advanced their studies and sought to improve their op-

erational practices. As with any such exchange this writer came away with greater insight and knowledge about the way in which parole is viewed and practiced in other parts of the world. Our hope is that this will lead to a long lasting and fruitful relationship between South Africa and APAI and its many and diverse members. And the delegation was of course invited to return to Columbus in May to attend the 2015 APAI Annual Training Conference. We look forward to seeing them there.



Members of the South Africa study tour delegation view Ohio Parole Board interviews with APAI President and Ohio Parole Board Chair Cynthia Mausser.



Study tour delegation viewing a Powerpoint presentation about Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole decision making process.

From Columbus the delegation made their way to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to spend some time in study with the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. There the delegation was provided with a binder full of materials about the structure and operation of their

host agency. They had a full day of discussions about the Boards legal authority, relationship to Governor's administration, decision making process, reentry practices and services and victim input.

They also had the opportunity at the end of the day to tour the capitol building, beautifully decorated for the holiday. They ended their day in Hershey, Pennsylvania – the sweetest place on earth – to shop, buy chocolate and have dinner.

"It was an honor and a pleasure to host the justice and correctional delegation from the Republic of South Africa," said the late Lloyd A. White, chairman of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. "We had a productive day of learning from one another as we all work toward our mutual goal of changing lives to make our communities safer. My colleagues and I wish them well as they embark on important changes to their system to improve public safety."

Following this visit the delegation was joined by Minister of Justice

Continued on Pg. 4



## APAI WELCOMES THREE NEW REGIONAL/SECTIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

BY: KEITH HARDISON, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The APAI Executive committee has three new members. President Cynthia Mausser made these appointments shortly after taking office on July 1, 2014 to fill vacant positions resulting from her election and two resignations. APAI Regional Sectional Vice Presidents are critical to the APAI Executive Committee as they serve to maintain ongoing communications with the membership and represent the interests of the membership in their regions/sections.

### Matthew Degnan

Matt, who currently serves as Administrator for the Rhode Island Parole Board was appointed Northeast Regional Vice President. He is a graduate of Rhode Island College. He began his career as a Juvenile Program Worker at the Rhode Island Training School. In 2001, he became an Adult Probation and Parole Officer where he was responsible for a general caseload and ultimately assumed supervision of an electronic monitoring caseload.

In 2008 he became the Board Administrator where his duties include supervising the personnel assigned to the Parole Board office, arranging and attending Board meetings, collecting data on parole applicants and notifying affected parties. In this position he also serves as liaison with the Director of Corrections on all matters relating to the activities of the board.

In addition he also serves as Domestic Violence Coordinator and Transitional Housing Coordinator at Bridgemark Addiction Recovery Services.

Matt has been a long time member of APAI and was instrumental in

planning the 2008 Annual Training Conference in Newport and the 2013 Conference in Providence. He is a frequent attendee at APAI events and trainings.

Matt started a "Ride Along" program with Probation Officers and the Warwick Police Department to monitor offenders in the community with strong information sharing to promote public safety and offender rehabilitation. He was presented the 2004 Community Corrections Award in recognition of the commitment to the betterment of community corrections.

Matt is married to Megan Elizabeth Hannon who has supported him in his career path. They have one son Ian Matthew Degnan.

### Danielle LaCost

Danielle, who currently serves as Parole Commissioner in the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, was appointed as Central Regional Vice President. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services Leadership and began her career with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections in 1994 as a Correctional Officer. She worked her way up through the ranks holding the positions of Sergeant, Stores Supervisor, Program Director and ultimately Parole Commissioner. Throughout her career she supervised multiple departments and served on committees tasked with writing institutional policies, updating Wisconsin Administrative Code and implementing new laws that effect an inmate's sentence structure. She has also developed, implemented and assessed inmate programming.

Continued on Pg. 5

## APRIL 2015 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

BY: KEITH HARDISON, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed the first Victims' Rights Week, calling for "a renewed emphasis on, and an enhanced sensitivity to, the rights of victims." Each April since, communities throughout the Nation have held public rallies, candlelight vigils, and a host of commemorative activities to promote awareness of victims' rights and needs.

This April marks the 35th commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVCRW). This year's theme – Engaging Communities. Empowering Victims – emphasizes the importance of creating an atmosphere where victims feel believed and supported by their community.

Creating a victim response system that is open and accessible to all survivors and highlights the importance of building partnerships throughout our communities to better address all victims' needs is vital. When we engage the communities that victims live in and identify with, survivors feel embraced and supported and will in turn be empowered to find a path to healing and justice. Every community member has an important role to play in supporting victims of crime.

Each year during NCVCRW, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) with the U.S. Department of Justice, coordinates an annual awards cere-

mony to honor individuals and organizations from across the nation for their outstanding service to crime victims. OVC also supports the development of the annual National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide, a ready-made, adaptable toolkit, for the victims' field to use in its efforts to heighten the public's awareness of crime victim issues nationwide during NCVCRW and throughout the year.

More information about NCVCRW can be found at [www.ovc.gov/ncvcrw](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvcrw). OVC also provides financial support each year for competitively selected Community Awareness Projects in their efforts to raise awareness of crime victims' issues in local communities during NCVCRW. You can learn more about some of the creative and innovative ways communities are honoring crime victims by visiting [www.cap.navaa.org](http://www.cap.navaa.org).

The APAI Crime Victims Committee would very much like to serve as a conduit for the dissemination of information about the commemorative activities of parole boards and releasing authorities during this week. An excellent example is the work of the Victim Services' Division in Tennessee.

The Tennessee Board of Parole will be planting trees honoring crime

Continued on Pg. 6



## APAI MEMBER AGENCIES HOST SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY VISIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2



Mr. Kagiso Moleme, Ms Thando Tsetsewa and Ms Thandi Motlonye, members of the South Africa study tour, in the Capitol Rotunda with Pennsylvania Parole Board staff Daniel McIntyre, Sherry Tate and Kim Barkley,

and Correctional Services, Advocate Michael Masutha and Special Advisor to the Minister: Mr. Prince Maluleke to travel to Connecticut to spend two days with the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles. The visit to the Nutmeg State included a tour of the Garner Correctional Facility

as well as a lengthy conference with Board officials, including members of the Parole Board, the Staff Psychologist, Executive Director and Chairman. “We found the visit and experience exhilarating,” said Chairman Carleton Giles. “It’s fascinating to see the striking similarities in the two systems, which are geographically a world apart.”

APAI would like to thank these host agencies for taking time from there

busy schedules to host this impressive delegation of justice and corrections professionals. It was truly an honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to share our practices with this group and to learn from their experience as we all go about advancing our mission of protecting the public.

We look forward to seeing them again in May and hearing about their progress and the lesson we can learn from their journey.



South Africa Minister of Justice and Correctional Services Advocate Michael Masutha (left) and Connecticut Board of Pardons and Parole Chairman Carleton Giles (right)

## APAI MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

BY: TIM MCDONNELL, BOARD ADMINISTRATOR, TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP), a constitutionally created state agency established in 1936, renders discretionary decisions to parole eligible offenders; determines the specific conditions of release for each offender; and applies appropriate sanctions, which may include revocation for offenders who have violated the terms of their release. The Board also provides recommendations to the governor concerning clemency. A separate agency, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) is responsible for the actual supervision of offenders that are released by the Board on parole.

The governor, with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate, appoints the Board’s seven full-time members. These members hold office for six-year staggered terms. To be eligible to serve, Board Members must be representative of the general public, be a resident citizen of Texas and have resided in the state for the two years preceding appointment. In addition, the governor selects a Board Member to serve as the Presiding Officer of the Board, that individual serves as the administrative head of the agency, reporting directly to the governor.

As well as Board Members, BPP employs 14 Parole Commissioners hired by the Presiding Officer to assist the Board in making parole release and revocation decisions by serving as voters on parole panels. The department employs a total of 621 employees and operates with a biennium budget of approximately \$52 million. In addition to its Board offices, BPP has several other departments which provide direct support in fulfilling the mission of the agency.

BPP has seven Board Offices throughout the state, with each office consisting of a Board Member and two Parole Commissioners. The majori-

ty of cases are voted by these 3 member panels with each office covering cases from specific prison units, generally close to the particular Board office. Additionally, Texas statute defines “Extraordinary Cases,” which can only be voted by Board Members and are many of the state’s sex offense cases.

The seven-member Board also provides recommendations to the governor on executive clemency matters, including pardons, reprieves and commutation actions.

Board Support Operations manages the day-to-day operations that support agency operations. Other functions include requests for special review after a denial of parole release, Motions for Reinstatement regarding revocation of parole, tracking of parole hearing waivers and transmittals, as well as responses to correspondence dealing with other related issues. In addition, administration schedules hearings, prepares statistical information and provides technical support for the agency.

Institutional Parole Operations is responsible for interviewing offenders in the parole review process and preparing a detailed case summary to be provided to a parole panel. Additionally, Institutional Parole Officers (IPO’s) provide written notification to the offender of the Boards’ decision. In fiscal year 2014, IPO’s prepared nearly 95,000 case summaries.

Hearing Operations handles the revocation hearings and processing of offender cases when violations of supervision rules are alleged. Hearings are held in county jails or in TDCJ-CID units statewide and are conducted by Hearing Officers, who are designees of the Board. BPP

**Continued on Pg. 5**



## APAI WELCOMES THREE NEW REGIONAL/SECTIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In addition to being a member of APAI since 2006 she is a member of the Wisconsin Correctional Association (WCA) and American Correctional Association. She serves on the WCA Conference Planning Committee holding the positions of Secretary, Topics Coordinator and Chairperson.

Danielle is a long time member of the APAI Professional Development Committee and currently serves as Chair. Under her leadership this committee has been instrumental in setting the agenda for the 2015 Annual training Conference.

Danielle has attended many APAI Conferences as well as many trainings offered by the National Institute of Corrections and the National Parole Resource Center. She is a tireless advocate for the resources that APAI can provide to our membership.

Outside of work Danielle enjoys spending time with her significant other and two beautiful daughters who are all Green Bay Packers fans. She enjoys many outdoors activities including boating, camping, hiking, skiing and hunting. She is an exercise junkie that relishes the opportunity to cycle, jog, and workout with friends.

### Lonzo Henderson

Lonzo, who currently serves as Chair of the Alaska Board of Parole was recently appointed as APAI Vice President for the Western Region. He earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1981, a master's degree in Adult and Continuing Education from Alaska Pacific University in 1989 and has several credits

towards an Ed.D Degree in Adult and Continuing Education.

Lonzo served 21 years with the Alaska Department of Corrections in increasingly responsible positions such as Probation/Parole Officer, Chief Parole Officer /Administrator, before retiring in 2001 as Assistant Director/ Deputy Compact Administrator of the Division of Community Corrections. Lonzo also served as Case Coordinator with a Community Residential Center Offender Supervision Program, a private contractor for the Department of Corrections.

Lonzo was first appointed to a five-year term as a member on the Board of Parole by Governor Sarah Palin in December 2008. In February 2011 Governor Parnell, appointed Lonzo as Chair of the Parole Board. He was reappointed to a second five year term as Chair by Governor Parnell in March 2014.

Lonzo is a long time member of APAI and is a frequent attendee of APAI Trainings and Conferences. He currently serves on and is an active member of the APAI Crime Victims Committee.

Lonzo also has previously served as a Member of the Board of Victim for Justice and Big Brothers- Big Sisters. He is a member of the Anchorage East Rotary Club and is a Paul Harris Fellow. In 1989, Mr. Henderson won a governor's Distinguished Public Service Award.

APAI welcomes these three dedicated parole professionals to the Executive Committee.

## APAI MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

employs 61 Hearing Officers and in fiscal year 2014, they conducted over 22,000 Preliminary/Revocations Hearings. Hearing reports are presented to parole panels for revocation decisions.

BPP when evaluating appropriate actions to be taken on offenders who have violated the terms of release employs a graduated sanctions approach where possible. Graduated sanctions may include continuation on supervision with modified conditions of release such as electronic monitoring, substance abuse treatment or placement in an Intermediate Sanctions Facility for a period not to exceed 180 days.

Clemency Section is responsible for processing and preparing clemency requests for consideration and decision by the Board. There are several types of clemency available in Texas, with the primary requests being for full pardon, commutation of sentence, and reprieve of execution and emergency reprieves. The Clemency Section's staff investigates, compiles all information and notifies trial officials of clemency consideration prior to presentation to the Board.

In fiscal year 2014, BPP considered approximately 76,000 offenders for parole and another 18,000 for Discretionary Mandatory Supervision. In 1996, Texas Statute gave BPP the authority to make discretionary release decisions for offenders whose good time and flat time equaled their total sentence. Prior to this change those offenders were automatically

released on Mandatory Supervision.

BPP is striving to make use of the rapid advancements in technology. Due to the size of the state and the fact prison units are scattered throughout the vast region, BPP utilizes video-conferencing for offender interviews. Texas is also in the process of converting from a paper to an "electronic file" for the parole review process, currently about 40 percent of the cases are electronic. BPP's website has recently been enhanced to reflect the status of each offender in the review process thus saving numerous employee hours by not having to answer status calls. Finally, BPP is continually reviewing operations to enhance the parole review process so sound discretionary release decisions can be made utilizing evidenced based practices to ensure an offender's successful re-entry into society while always taking into account public safety.

Please feel free to contact the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles at:

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles

P.O. Box 13401

Capitol Station Austin, Texas 78711

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## APRIL 2015 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

victims across Tennessee during National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April 2015. "A tree is a symbol of strength, determination and perseverance and that is a powerful comparison to what we see from crime

victims who overcome tragedy to make a difference in their communities. It is important that we remember and recognize the challenges facing victims and their families, as well as the dedication of advocates who help them in the healing process," stated Tina Fox, Board of Parole Director of Victim Services' Division.

This will be the seventh year the Board of Parole will organize this series of victim awareness events. Board Chairman Richard Montgomery said the concerns of victims are among the agency's top priorities. "The Board of Parole places a strong emphasis on victim input, as well as on serving victims of crime with information about the parole process. It is important that the victim's voice is heard." During each event, BOP presents a victim advocate with a Voice for Victims Award in recognition of commitment and dedication to helping crime victims.

To facilitate the exchange of information about NCVRW activities the APAI Crime Victims Committee has designated a section of the APAI Discussion Forum as the repository for information about activities in our member jurisdictions. We would ask our US member organizations to take a few minutes to post a description of your activities during NCVRW. We would ask our international organizations to also post any activities they engage in during any special commemorative periods or in general related to the recognition of crime victims' rights and involvement in the re-entry process.

APAI member may access the Discussion Forum through the APAI website at [www.apaintl.org](http://www.apaintl.org) or directly at <http://www.apaintl.org/forum/>. Look for the "Committees" section and find the posts related to NCVRW activities.

*Editor's note: Information for this article was provided by Kimberly Kelberg, Victim Justice Program Specialist at the office for Victims of Crime and Tina Fox, Director of Victim Services' Division, Tennessee Board of Parole.*



### Executive Committee

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