

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## CORRECTION SUPERVISORS COUNCIL

CSEA, SEIU LOCAL 2001

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### Sleep App Aids Correction Supervisors

The lead in article on our sleep app and healthy sleep training was published in the Connecticut section of the Hartford Courant on Monday, September 24th. Courant reporter Rebecca Lurye details the development of the sleep app and it is our hope that it will be rolled out nationally to frontline correction workers. According to the article, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention states that people need seven solid hours of sleep to stave off higher risks of developing arthritis, depression, diabetes and heart disease. The CSC Health and Wellness Committee had previously reported that the average

amount of sleep a supervisor receives after working a double shift was about 2.5 hours. The Committee recommended the implementation of a sleep bank wherein a member can make up for the lack of sleep by sleeping longer at some point during the week or during time off from work. The goal is to get 49 to 56 hours a sleep per week. Julius Preston, President of CSC is quoted in the article as saying, "We tried to address what we can fix right now, or at least talk about right now. The easiest thing for us to tackle was (sufficient) sleep because we all know we didn't have it." Millie Brown, Executive Vice-

President, stated "Just the day-to-day operation of a jail is stressful in itself. Everyday there's something going on." The training session and the app which took one year to develop, taught people how to prepare their minds, bodies and environment for sleep. The article concluded that the next intervention would be about emotional health and post-traumatic stress disorder. UConn Health Professor Alicia Dugan was quoted as saying, "Just acknowledging that mental health is a thing that people have as a part of their physical life and self, and sometimes you need help with it or to think about it, we can get people talking. You're not alone. It's a thing. Let's talk about it."

### Choosing a Therapist

Choosing a therapist to help you address your mental health and/or substance abuse issues is not an easy task. You can ask your primary doctor, look on-line, or call the Employee Assistance Program or your health insurance company. Or you can watch someone on a TV commercial pretending to be a doctor refers you to a toll free number to a treatment site where you can sit in an infinity pool in Malibu, California with your favorite movie stars. But these referrals may or may get you to the right person to help you get better.

Our UConn Health colleague, Dr. Alicia Dugan, recommends three attributes for a good therapist:

- 1 Does the therapist appear to be genuine? This is a real person to you and your family, not some phony that spends time talking about themselves or looking at the clock to see when your time is up. If your therapist falls asleep during your session, look elsewhere.
- 2 Is the therapist empathic to you and your issues? If therapist says to you, "You think you have it bad, I have a client who is in a worse condition than you," look elsewhere.
- 3 Is the therapist unconditionally positive in guiding you to resolve your mental health and substance abuse problems? If the therapist says

you are completely screwed up and only by spending the next six years of your life with that therapist will you have any hope of getting better, look elsewhere.

Just like anything in life, if you don't believe your work with a therapist is helping, discuss it with the therapist and seek help, if necessary, from someone else.

If you have a positive story about an experience with mental health or substance abuse treatment, you can share your experiences with us by posting it on SLACK or by emailing your story to Julius Preston or Millie Brown. The slack app and email addresses for submitting your story are included in this issue. You can do so anonymously.

Our goal in sharing mental health experiences is to:

- Reduce stigma, shame, and silence around mental health issues
- Help others find quality resources for getting help from mental health professionals or peer support networks
- Increase mental health literacy

If you have a bad experience, please let us know that as well.

## Mediterranean Diet

On September 5th, the CSC Health and Wellness Committee attended a seminar presented by Dr. Stefanos Kales of Harvard University titled, "Feeding American's Bravest: Survival Mediterranean Style in the Fire Service."

Dr. Kales is implementing an intervention in the Indianapolis Fire Department. The first year of his two-year study was just completed, and it shows

promising results for both the physical and mental health of firefighters. The intervention group has adopted the Mediterranean diet both at the firehouse and at home. The control group in the other 22 firehouses will continue their typical diets. The results of the intervention group and control group will then be compared.

More of the first year results will be reported in the January 2019 issue of the CSC Health and Wellness Newsletter.

## TRAINING DIRECTOR APPOINTED

Kim Jones has been appointed as Director of the Training Academy by Commissioner Scott Semple. With this appointment, Correction Supervisors Council (CSC) leadership will meet with her to schedule our annual paid day of health and wellness training for each supervisor.

The CSC Health and Wellness Committee is finalizing the curriculum for their Mental Health Training. The training will include our healthy sleep training and the sleep app developed by the Committee with the UConn Health Center and as reported in the Hartford Courant on September 24th.

The annual paid day of health and wellness training was negotiated for the first time in the 2016 -2017 contract.

## SLACK APP

The Correction Supervisors Council has implemented an application that can be used on your mobile devices including your personal computer to receive information and articles of interest to correctional supervisors and our union. Members may want to add information that would be of interest to other members. Nearly 70 members have signed up to use the SLACK app.

Council President Julius Preston said, "Our members work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and our union wants to communicate with you, and we want you to communicate with us. While our union officers take regular tours of the facilities where our members work, we know that we cannot talk to each and every one of you. We are adding the app as an additional tool in our communications tool box."

In addition to the SLACK app, our Council has a webpage on the CSEA website, [www.csea-ct.com](http://www.csea-ct.com) and we send out quarterly newsletters on our health and wellness activities. If you visit the CSEA website, we are under the tab for State Workers labeled "CSC."

If you want to join our app user group, please submit your PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS, not your State email address, to Julius Preston at [jpreston@csea760.com](mailto:jpreston@csea760.com) or Millie Brown at [mbrown@csea760.com](mailto:mbrown@csea760.com). Once your personal email address has been entered into SLACK, you will receive an "INVITE" via email to participate in our online community.

We are committed to keeping you informed and engaged in the activities of our union.

## CORRECTION SUPERVISORS COUNCIL LEADERSHIP 2018 to 2020

### PRESIDENT:

**Julius Preston**

860/951-6614 (work); 860/608-4158 (cell);  
email: [jpreston@csea760.com](mailto:jpreston@csea760.com)

### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT:

**Millie Brown**

860/951-6614 (work); 203/525-0087 (cell);  
email: [mbrown@csea760.com](mailto:mbrown@csea760.com)

### VICE PRESIDENT (CAPT/CCS):

**Tim Newton**

959/200-3083 (work); 860/539-9317 (cell);  
email: [tnewton@csea760.com](mailto:tnewton@csea760.com)

### VICE PRESIDENT (LT'S):

**Noel Brown**

860/679-2708 (work); 860/951-1549 (cell);  
email: [nbrown@csea760.com](mailto:nbrown@csea760.com)

### SECRETARY:

**Tawanda Kitt**

860/253-8253 (work); 413/426-2284 (cell);  
email: [tkitt@csea760.com](mailto:tkitt@csea760.com)

### CHIEF STEWARD:

**Neil Liskey**

860/848-5836 (work); 860/885-4762 (cell);  
email: [nliskey@csea760.com](mailto:nliskey@csea760.com)

### TREASURER:

**Tara Keaton**

860/253-8259 (work); 413/433-5669 (cell);  
email: [tkeaton@csea760.com](mailto:tkeaton@csea760.com)