

Bristol County Sheriff's Office welcomes 17 new Corrections Officers

Seventeen people arrived at the Bristol County Sheriff's Office on July 9 for the first day of the Corrections Officer Academy.

On Aug. 29, those 17 people left the Academy graduation ceremony in the auditorium at GNB Voc-Tech as one team, one cohesive unit.

"We are a team and a family," Academy class president Jared Neville told the crowd at the graduation ceremony. "We will have each other's backs every day."

Over the past eight weeks, Bristol County's newest corrections officers learned everything from defensive tactics to first aid and policy and procedure, and further developed their communications and teamwork skills.

Bristol County Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson spoke about how far society has come, and how much law enforcement has changed, since the Ash Street Jail was constructed in 1888.

"Most of the inmates back then were in for public drunkenness or unpaid debts, some as small as \$5. Today, more than 80 percent of our inmate population is here for drugs and drug-related offenses," Sheriff Hodgson said. "And while our society, our neighborhoods, and our cities and towns have become more dangerous since the late 19th century, our security staff has become far more than just prison guards. They're mental health counselors. They're first responders. They're overdose experts. They're self defense experts. They're communicators. They're life coaches. They're an open ear; a shoulder to lean on.

“They’re corrections officers.”

The 17 new corrections officers are Nicholas Almeida, Jacob Biello, Kyle Dow, William Dowd, Michael Furtado, Derek Jerome, John Lobo, Jared Neville, Edmund O’Connell III, Josue Ostolaza, Jessica Paquette, Paul Pimental III, Cory Pires, Alexis Plante, Victoria Rodriguez, Manuel Sequeira and Robert Welch. Paquette earned the title of Valedictorian with a 97.07 scoring average.

The Class of 2018 earned a guidon, a special marker used throughout history in the military and law enforcement to signify unit designation. The guidon is awarded by the training staff based on the class’ teamwork and togetherness; not every class receives the honor of carrying a guidon to graduation like 2018 did.

Training Director Craig Assad expressed gratitude for the new officers, and his teammates in the training department.

“Welcome to the Bristol County family. You should be proud of your accomplishments, but your education has just begun,” he said to the graduates before directing his remarks to the crowd about the training team of Sgts. Martha Silveira, Robert Matos and Moses Isidoro. “These three professionals go above and beyond. This training division would not be where it is today without their efforts.”

Bristol County is accepting applications for the next Academy, which is slated to start in January. For more information about becoming a CO, including a downloadable application, visit www.bcso-ma.us/employment.