

## This is What is Happening

By Shawn McGowan 8 7 17

My intentions are to question the credibility and integrity of the DOCWI by bringing attention the actions of DOCWI employees which I'm lead to believe in my opinion, resulted in the introduction of illicit and/or illegal substances, and the remittance of drug-overdosing in inmates housed in Oshkosh Correctional Institution. I'm aware that information regarding this subject has potentially reached the media, and I'm only interested in assuring this potential is met. It seems in my understanding, a majority, (if not all), of the inmates involved in their share of the responsibility for introducing and/or possessing illegal and/or illicit substances have been reprimanded or removed from the institution. However, in my opinion, to remain under the guise of inmates being behind the pandemic of incorporating drugs into the institution and the total breach of safety, security, and overall welfare of staff, inmates, and the compromising of the integrity of the community is absolute ignorance.

As the common practice goes (for obvious reasons), inmates are held under a gross scrutiny for security and supervision. For example, officers and staff are trained to detect cues in our behaviors and/or actions to assist them in determining how to handle each situation and possible outcome, varying from minimal threats where a simple written or verbal reprimand can resolve the problem or confliction, to extreme cases where physical mediation is required to prevent harm to others or further escalation. Such as going to and coming from contact visitation there is a protocol in place for securing and searching both inmates and their visitors before, during, and after contact visitation. Whether it's utilizing drug-detecting K-9's patrolling the car-park, strip-searching, or monitoring activities on closed-circuit video feeds, this common practice makes even the most determined, creative, and enterprising of inmates discouraged from acting on such moves.

It seems in my opinion, that officers and staff are not held or subjected to the same standard of protocols as inmates when it comes to entering, exiting, or other forms of movement through the institution. Officers and staff can enter and exit the institution (from my understanding), as they please and with any frequency they so choose. Perhaps this is how opiates, cellphones, marijuana, and other forms of miscellaneous contraband is being introduced into the institution so easily and freely. Just as they enter the institution with fast-food containers containing anything without so much as a glance. One can only speculate. With the ideation of such speculation, there is of course the proverbial great risk which would perhaps cite miniscule chances of such activities occurring in a "professional" work place, especially within the walls of a prison. However, like the tortoise to the hare, with great risk comes great reward. For example, on the streets an ounce of marijuana sells easily for \$50-\$100 (depending on the quality and quantity purchased). In prison walls, that same amount can fetch for \$500-\$600 in a matter of hours (again, depending on the quality and how it is divided). Great reward.

I feel the focus of scrutiny in the DOCWI should not only be directed at inmates, but with staff and officers in mind bringing awareness to every aspect and holding accountable those responsible for incorporating illegal and/or illicit substances or other forms of dangerous contraband into the institution(s). Keeping institutions in perpetual limbo using lockdown, control tactics to divert attention

from the real problem(s), and military-like methods is not an ideal practice for maintaining order, structure, or for preparing incarcerated individuals for release. This is not only a recipe for disaster, but a set-up for failure.

Since June 1st, we have had several drug-overdosing's which have lead to the deaths of a large number of inmates. Currently, the drug(s) of choice is heroin and synthetic opioids such as Carfentanil and Fentanyl. Carfentanil is 100 times deadlier than Fentanyl, and Fentanyl is 30-50 times more lethal than heroin. We have been under institution lockdown since June 1st and are still under a slight "modification" of lockdown. There doesn't seem to be any light at the end of this deep, dark tunnel, which in my belief, only contradicts the DOCWI Mission Statement Core Values: "We value safety for our employees, the people in our charge, and the citizens we serve. We provide the resources and training necessary for employees to safely accomplish our mission." The statement and the actions are not only counter and contradictory from the paper-form to the physical actions, but in the years I have been incarcerated, I have not witnessed this in physical form. I feel the DOCWI in their claims of recognizing professionalism do nothing more than stare blankly at something alien and unfamiliar to them.

In other recent events, as of July 20th, in a neighboring living unit, an inmate threw water from a pitcher at an officer. The officers have claimed it was scalding hot water up to 200 degrees Fahrenheit from a hot water dispenser. Inmate accounts claim it was water from the inmate restroom which does not exceed 135 degrees. Three officers were "injured" and were taken to hospital for their "injuries", but DOC/DAI protocol dictates mandatory medical attention for any and all work-related injuries. The inmate who threw the water was removed from the living unit and placed in restrictive housing pending investigation and reprimand.

Next to the denial of hot water machines access for cooking and hot beverages, we have no access to hot-pots or immersion heaters. The choice (unofficially), we have is obtaining luke-warm water from the restroom sinks from where people misuse by spitting into, blowing their noses in, or emptying their urine collection containers. Our other available resource is the use of "stinging" the water by dropping an electrical cord into a water pitcher to electrically induce hot water which often produces a metallic taste, blows electrical fuses, sets off the fire alarms, and causes electrical fires. When asked about the possibility of ordering hot-pots, we are told that because not everyone will be able to afford one, they more than likely will not be allowed. Then why are we still allowed to purchase personal property, televisions, radios, and other items from the prison property catalogues?

Officers and staff raise issues about security and safety. However, when officers at their stations routinely (while using DOCWI computers), play Candy-Crush Saga, surf and troll the web, or engage in activities using their smart phones or handheld devices, the credibility of security concerns drops. It's hard to believe that the prisons are as dangerous as they are claimed to be. Of course, when things do go sour, it has nothing to do with officers or staff instigating or provoking the situation. That is just unheard of.

In the past year, a DOCWI employee (p.m. shift Sgt.), was arrested and walked out of the institution and formally charged for sending and receiving sexually explicit messages and images with someone whom

he believed was an underage female. It turned out to be an undercover officer involved in a sting operation against online sexual predators. That is only a fraction of what officers and staff do while they're on the "job" at their place of "professional" work. That does not include napping, playing dice/table games, cards, personal phone calls, extended and/or excessive break times, etc., and so on.

Consistent in their inconsistencies, the DOCWI's expression to their expectation of competency and professionalism in their communications, demeanor, and appearance is more said than done. For the sake of the DOC, favoritism and fraternization is against policies and procedures. Rightly so. However, that doesn't deter officers and staff from expressing bias for or against inmates with certain cases, charges, backgrounds, or even sexual identity/preference such as with LGBTQ inmates for employment opportunities or institutional requests.

Such as policies in place to protect the safety of transgender inmates, there is rooming/cell placement in close proximity to the officer stations as well as designated shower times. But more often than not, when inmates arrive to their designated housing unit, they are "dumped" into which ever cell/room has an available bunk regardless of "preferential" (prejudicial), expression and therefore potentially creating a dangerous or significant risk to the safety of others, including transgender and other LGBTQ inmates.

"We recognize employees as the department's most important resource. We work towards building a work force of diverse individuals to achieve great things together. We recognize exemplary performance. We advocate in the best interest of our work force."

What standard(s) of work ethic is this based on? And why does it appear to not be followed?

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