



STATE OF DELAWARE  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION  
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## **New program at Sussex Correctional Institution has inmate volunteers training basic obedience skills to dogs from Delaware SPCA**

A program that brings together inmates from the Sussex Correctional Institution (SCI) in Georgetown and dogs from the Delaware SPCA's local shelter is providing positive results for both parties.

Dogs in the "Paws with a Cause" program are being taught basic obedience skills by volunteers from the prison's inmate population, which can increase an animal's chance of being adopted, while the inmate-trainers are learning social responsibility. There are three dogs currently in the program and they live inside a prison housing unit with their inmate-trainers.

"This is a win-win proposition for both the Delaware SPCA and Sussex Correctional Institution," said Anne Cavanaugh, Executive Director of the Delaware SPCA. "It will benefit the dogs to spend more time with humans, and their adoptability will improve with basic obedience training."

"This program has exceeded our expectations, and we look forward to extending it indefinitely," said SCI Deputy Warden Linda Valentino. "It provides interaction with a companion animal, which can help with rehabilitation, and the participating inmates, as well as those not directly involved in the program, love having the dogs around the facility."

Eight inmate-trainers attend instructional sessions once a week from an outside volunteer certified dog trainer, and then spend time each day working with their dogs on the training assignments. Dogs that successfully complete the program will earn 'Canine Good Citizen' training certificates that can increase the likelihood they will find forever homes.

-more (photos on following pages)-



Allen Jolley, an inmate trainer in the Sussex Correctional Institution 'Paws for a Cause' program, takes a break from play time with his dog, Lucky.

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Raymond Bradley, an inmate trainer, takes his dog, Sire, for a walk around the grounds of Sussex Correctional Institution.

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Inmate trainers Session Boyd (left) and Raymond Bradley (center), speak with a visitor about the 'Paws for a Cause' program at Sussex Correctional Institution. Their dog, Sire, rests, while inmate trainer Chase Fehrenbach stands in the background.

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