



MCO MEMBER-TO-MEMBER VOLUNTEER WORK HELPS OFFICERS IN FLINT

On Tuesday, a group of MCO members, retirees, and staff stopped by the homes of all 48 MDOC corrections officers living in Flint to deliver water, cards, and a water resource flyer.

Volunteers were very moved by some of the stories officers told at their doors. A few are experiencing health concerns, on top of the stress of using bottled water for drinking, cooking, and other daily needs.

"I want to thank you for donating this water for my son and I," Officer Anderson said. "We've been in this battle for three years with the water crisis, and I just ask for your prayers for us."

"When I saw (the water) on my porch when I got home, I just thought, 'oh my gosh,'" Officer Walker said. "I read the card and thought, 'this lady is from my job,' so when I saw her, I definitely gave her thanks."

Some of the officers volunteers visited said they aren't connected to Flint city water and haven't been impacted. But even they were happy to see MCO in their community. Those who have clean drinking water said they would give the water MCO delivered to friends or

family who need it.

Volunteers, including MCO Executive Board Members were energized by meeting members face-to-face, hearing their stories, and doing something positive for them and their families.

"The interesting thing was that we were actually helping each other," Board Member Cary Johnson said. "In the negative environment we work in every day, as a volunteer, I felt fantastic when we were done with our 48 deliveries and wanted to do more!

There were officers from Detroit, St. Louis, Ionia, Carson City, the Forensic Center, both retired and probationary. It was so inspiring to see everyone coming together in our brothers' and sisters' time of need."

President Tom Tylutki said hearing some of the Flint officers' stories was humbling.

"In my 32 years as an MCO member, I've never been prouder to see members, retirees,

staff, and SEIU staff come together for such a worthy cause," Tylutki said.

Executive Board Member Ray Sholtz agreed.

"It was great to be part of members looking after members and their families," he said.

MCO will also provide some humanitarian relief with a semi-truck full of water for the community.

MCO leaders and staff have been listening to members, who are telling us they want to see their union involved in the things that matter most. We know our brothers and sisters in Flint need our help, so we're doing what we can to bring them some relief.



Flint volunteers pose for a photo before heading out with water. Photo by Cindy Kogut.

Anyone wishing to give to the

MCO Crisis Fund may mail a check to: MCO Crisis Fund, 421 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, MI 48933. To the many who give regularly to the fund, we thank you.

For more photos from Flint, go to mco-seiu.org or go to flickr.com/photos/mcoshots.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CO OF THE YEAR CRAIG ALTOFT AND FINALISTS, FACILITY WINNERS

The Michigan Correctional Officers' Training Council has named **Craig Altoft of Michigan Reformatory** as the 2016 Corrections Officer of the Year.

"Craig Altoft is an excellent corrections officer. He has set an example we should all strive to match," said Bill Henderson, MCO treasurer and union representative on the Training Council. "All the candidates have outstanding records of leadership, service, and dedication. Congratulations to all facility officers of the year."

Altoft trains officers in weapons, cell rush techniques, and Taser use, in addition to being an OJT mentor. His coworkers who nominated him for RMI's facility officer of the year describe him as reliable and knowledgeable. They also say he encourages staff members and communicates well with inmates and staff. He responded heroically when an inmate seriously assaulted an officer in December, bringing as much calm as he could to the situation.

Altoft started his MDOC career in 1994 at Deerfield Correctional Facility, where he served on the Emergency Response Team. He transferred to RMI in 2009.

Finalists:

Paul Jensen, Ionia Correctional Facility

Jensen has received numerous accolades over the years, including a Life Saving Award, Director's Award, and two letters of commendation from his warden. He has also received the Good Government Symbol of Excellence for his work as the MCO ICF chapter president.

Jensen, a US Marine Corps veteran, also volunteers with several organizations in his community.

Paul Schneider, Thumb Correctional Facility

Schneider works with youthful offenders unit, where his "calm and consistent manner" has diffused many tense situations, according to his nomination materials. He has an excellent work ethic.

Outside of work, he teaches Bible study, coaches a traveling baseball league, and mentors the Lapeer High School Robotics Team.

Jeff Vanderkooy, Muskegon Correctional Facility

Vanderkooy is a 3-year MDOC veteran and a bid yard officer.

He remains calm in times of emergency,

like when a prisoner was unresponsive on the yard. He is often the first officer to answer calls for assistance, according to nomination materials. Vanderkooy consistently comes up with innovative ways to improve safety and efficiency at MCF. His volunteer service includes the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

Rita Wise, Women's Huron Valley

Wise has nearly 20 years with the MDOC, first at Scott Correctional Facility, and now at WHV.

Wise implemented an art program at a unit at WHV and the "Excellence in Room Standards" program, which encourages tidiness in the unit. She leads by example and trains new officers, her warden wrote in her nomination. Wise is a former MCO chapter president and former chapter steward.

Wise is an active volunteer at her church.

Congratulations to CO of the Year Craig Altoft, the finalists, and each and every facility's officer of the year!

For photos of the Officer of the Year and the finalists, go to our website, mco-seiu.org or visit us on Flickr at flickr.com/photos/mcoshots.