



IN MEMORIAM: REMEMBERING OFFICERS WHO GAVE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

This month, we remember two Michigan corrections officers who died serving their state and honor the sacrifice of all fallen corrections officers.

Josephine McCallum was murdered at the former State Prison of Southern Michigan in Jackson on March 24, 1987. McCallum was the only officer in the activities building when she was brutally attacked, raped, and left to die. Inmate Edward Hill was convicted in her murder and sentenced to life in prison. She left behind a husband and son.

Jack Budd was killed at the same prison December 27, 1987. An inmate, armed with a weapon, burst out of a shower area and stabbed Budd. He and an injured CO were taken to a hospital, but Budd was pronounced dead an hour later. His killer, James Miller, was sentenced to 80-120 years in prison. He is also serving two life sentences. Budd left behind a wife and son.

Earl DeMarse was a seasoned CO with

26 years of experience when he was murdered Sept. 25, 1973 at Marquette Branch Prison. He had been stabbed by an inmate while working in the auditorium. DeMarse's survivors included a wife, two children, a grandchild, and other family. A section of U.S. 41 has been named in his honor.

George Haight, a gatekeeper, was poisoned by an inmate March 27, 1893 at the Michigan State Penitentiary in Jackson.

Haight ate tainted food prepared by inmate Robert Irving Latimer. Latimer served Haight, the captain, and other workers food poisoned with prussic acid. Latimer had special permission to both cook meals and purchase hazardous chemicals.

When Haight passed out, Latimer swiped his key ring and made his break. He was apprehended days later.

Haight was survived by a wife and five

children.

May all four officers rest in peace.

Budd and McCallum's deaths in 1987 led to sweeping changes within the MDOC. Advanced training, increased staffing, revised

inmate discipline, and the breakup of the Jackson Central Complex into several smaller prisons were among the changes. Some

of those reforms have been scaled back in recent years due to budget cuts.

Much of MDOC's resources have been reallocated for inmate programming with the end goal of reducing the population and, in turn, the department's budget. Those programs have their place, but MCO leaders adamantly believe safety should be MDOC's top priority.

Our fallen officers will be honored at MCO's Fallen Officers Memorial Dedication Ceremony and Open House May 7. All members and retirees are invited. [RSVP now](#) or go to mco-seiu.org/memorial to get more information.

MACKINAC CENTER AND PARTNERS PUBLISH, THEN RETRACT, INACCURATE MDOC SALARY INFO

The Mackinac Center, a conservative think tank and lobbying group, has published a database that purports to give the name, salary, and worksite of about 300,000 state employees, teachers, police officers, and judges. But their numbers for MDOC staff were wildly inaccurate and pulled from the database this afternoon. MDHHS member salaries were still in the database as of this writing, although they are incorrect.

If this sounds familiar, it should. The legislature is currently working on a similar bill ([HB 4301](#)) to make a database of state employee wages. MCO has been working with legislators on this bill and was successful in securing language to allow Departments to request an exemption for their staff.

The Mackinac Center collaborated with the Michigan Coalition for Open Government and the Michigan Press Association to build the database, according to media reports. It only includes employees in the defined benefit retirement plan, for some

unexplained reason.

Not only does the database put members at risk by giving the names and worksites of individuals, but the now-pulled information on MDOC staff was nowhere in the realm of reality. The database showed many of-ficers earning \$100,000- \$200,000. Anyone can look up the hourly pay for a corrections officer or FSA on the Michigan Civil Service Commission website and see that these numbers are way off.

The Lansing State Journal wrote an article reporting on these bizarre figures. [Here's an excerpt from their report:](#)

"The database was to include salaries only, not benefit costs, but showed hundreds of Department of Corrections employees making more than \$200,000, including one making more than \$400,000. Department spokesman Chris Gautz laughed Thursday afternoon and said those figures are way off."

Jarrett Skorup, a policy analyst at the Mackinac Center who submitted the Freedom of Information Act requests used to build the database, could

not explain any discrepancies. He said he requested information through the state pension system and asked for "gross salary," including anything included in their "pensionable salary."

"That's what they reported back to us," Skorup said.

That still didn't explain the apparent errors, said Kurt Weiss, spokesman for the Office of Retirement Services. He said there's "nothing that would drive a salary over \$400,000."

These off-the-chart numbers should have given the Mackinac Center, the Michigan Coalition for Open Government, and the Michigan Press Association serious pause. Instead, they barreled ahead and published these numbers, only to remove them this afternoon. MCO believes these groups have lost some credibility for this carelessness.

As this story continues to unfold, MCO leaders and staff will closely monitor this situation and take appropriate steps. We'll keep fighting for your privacy and safety.