# FRONTLINE

THE NATIONAL VOICE OF CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS

ONE VOICE

UNITING CORRECTIONS

NOVEMBER 2026

# IN THIS ISSUE

A sharper look at the work, the people and the ideas that move corrections forward.




## KEEPING THE PROMISE TO REMEMBER

Honoring the corrections professionals who responded and sacrificed on September 11.

## OPEN CALL FOR TRAINING

New Jersey PBA opens up its Collective Bargaining Negotiations Seminar to law enforcement unions beyond NJ.

## SAVE THE DATE

Elevating Our Profession and the National Medal of Honor will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina.

## HONORING THE PROFESSION: ABOUT MOH & EOP

Through Elevating Our Profession and the National Medal of Honor Awards Ceremony, One Voice United brings correctional professionals together to elevate staff voices, recognize those who go above and beyond, and celebrate the people who make this profession stronger.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Union Leaders and partner organizations share firsthand why participation in OVU programs matter, and how they strengthen, connect, and elevate the profession.

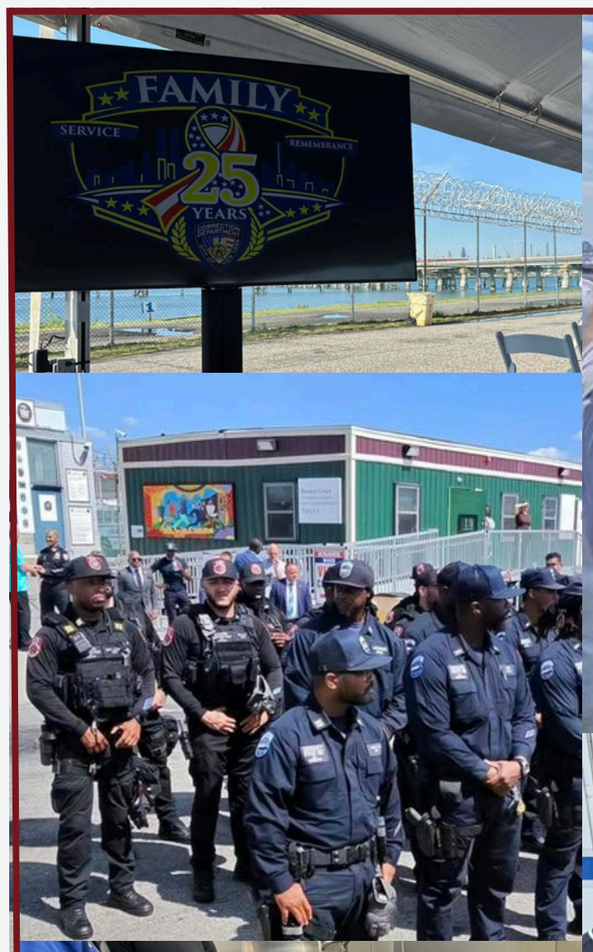
## TURNING OVER EVERY STONE: WHY CORRECTIONS NEEDS A BIGGER TABLE

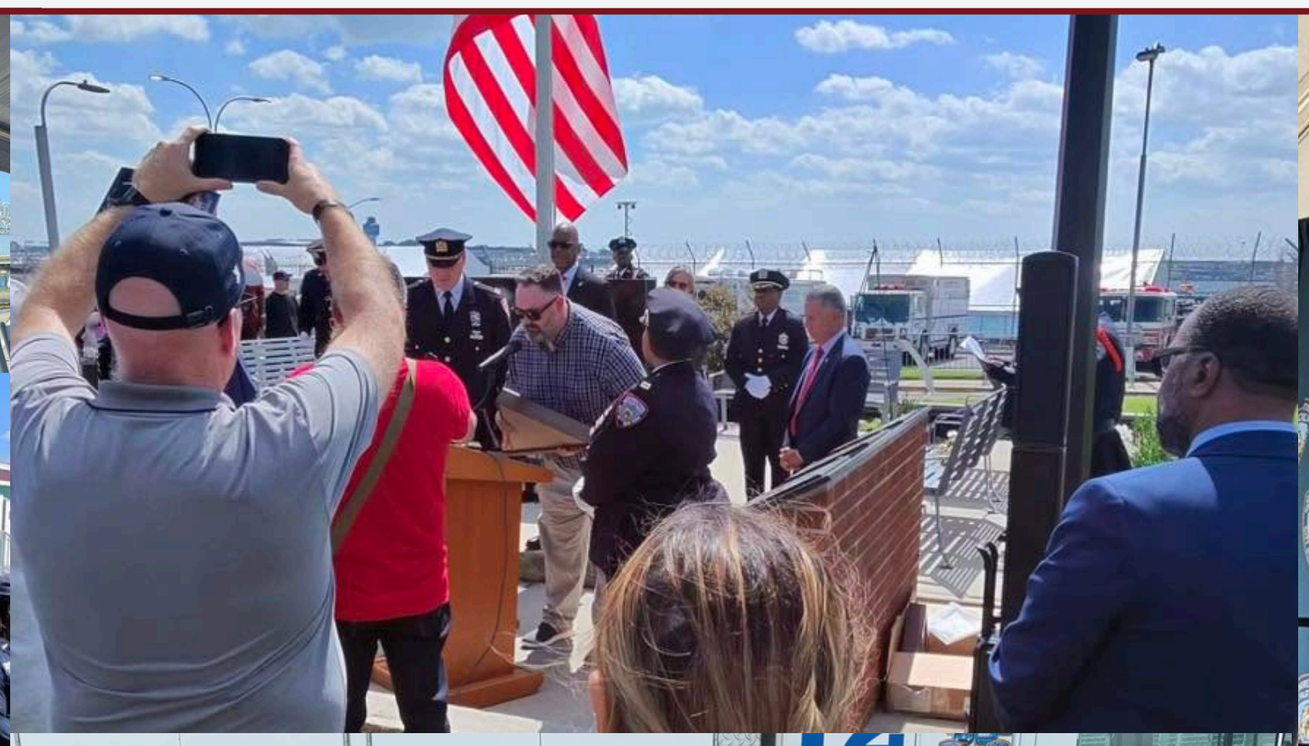
A larger table can create a stronger case for staffing, training, safety, and a profession that deserves to be heard.

## A LIFELINE IN REACH

CopLine is a confidential peer support resource for current and former law enforcement personnel and their families

# KEEPING THE PROMISE TO REMEMBER













This September, One Voice United attended the New York City Department of Correction's annual September 11 remembrance ceremony on Rikers Island, honoring a part of history that too often goes untold.

In the hours and days following the terrorist attacks in NYC, more than 1,000 uniformed and civilian members of the Department answered the call. They searched for survivors at Ground Zero, moved supplies and equipment, supported the temporary morgue at Bellevue Hospital, established critical communications for first responders, and continued operating Rikers Island while New York City faced an unimaginable crisis.

At the ceremony, corrections staff, families, and public safety partners gathered to remember those who served on September 11 and those whose lives were later lost to illnesses connected to that service. It was a powerful reminder that the response reached far beyond the images most Americans know.

That message also carried through at the Heroes Honor Meal at Zuccotti Park, hosted by Scot Ward of the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police Corrections Lodge 263 and FOP Chicago Lodge 7.

Held near the World Trade Center site, the event brought people together to remember those lost and recognize the correctional professionals who stepped forward when their city needed them.

**TWENTY FIVE YEARS LATER.**

**WE REMEMBER. WE HONOR. WE WILL NOT FORGET**

## NJ State PBA Opens Its 38th Annual Collective Negotiations Seminar to Other Law Enforcement Union Members

The New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association will hold its 38th annual Collective Negotiations Seminar from February 2nd - 4th at Harrah's Resort in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Previously open only to NJ State PBA members, the seminar is being held at a larger location this year, allowing them to extend this educational opportunity to members of other law enforcement unions who are interested in attending.

The program begins Tuesday, February 2, immediately following the State Board of Delegates meeting and continues until 4:00 p.m. Sessions on Wednesday, February 3, and Thursday, February 4, run from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Topics include preparing for negotiations, the negotiations process, grievance and interest arbitration, impasse procedures, discipline, and other important labor relations issues. Attendees will receive a padfolio, access to all seminar presentations and materials through Dropbox, daily attendance codes and certificates, and a certificate of completion on the final day.  The seminar includes lunch on Tuesday and continental breakfast and lunch for Wednesday and Thursday.

**Business casual attire is required for the educational seminar.**

The cost is $350 per person for PBA members and $500 for non PBA members when payment is made by December 31, 2026. Payments received after that date are subject to a late fee.

Single and double hotel rooms are available for $52 per night, plus tax and any hotel fees. For hotel reservations book online or call Harrah's Resort Atlantic City at 888-516-2215

If there are any questions concerning registration, please contact Colleen Dougherty at the State PBA office (732-636-8860) or email cdougherty@njspba.com.



ONE VOICE UNITED

# SAVE *the* Date





ELEVATING OUR PROFESSION CONFERENCE

NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

**April 27–29** | RALEIGH NORTH CAROLINA

ABOUT OVU A platform for all correctional professionals to have their voices heard, their concerns addressed, and their ideas included in the national debate over reforming our correctional system.

ONE VOICE UNITED

# Honoring *the* Profession

Everyday, corrections professionals enter unpredictable environments that most people will never fully understand. Much of their service happens without meaningful recognition. One Voice United believes the profession should be made visible, and the people behind it recognized.



CELEBRATING BRAVERY AND EXCELLENCE

## The National Medal of Honor

The nation's premier awards ceremony, bringing together uniformed and civilian staff from across the country to recognize their heroism, courage, and professionalism throughout the field of corrections.

Honorees are nominated by their peers or departments and selected by a committee of current and former officers and staff.

*Lifting up corrections professionals in a national spotlight honors their service and changes the narrative around the profession.*

NOT A TYPICAL MEETING

## Elevating Our Profession Conference

A purpose-built gathering of frontline corrections professionals, union leaders, researchers, policy experts, and innovators. Over two and a half days, attendees hold candid conversations about policy, technology, strategy, and leadership, and leave with solutions to take home.

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT • NETWORKING

RESEARCH • SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

**April 27–29 *in* Raleigh, NC**

FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

# In Their Own Words

"If you are in corrections, there is one organization you need to connect with and that's One Voice United. There is nothing like it in our profession. The tools and resources that One Voice United makes available helps not only as union leaders on a local level, but also to contribute on national reform initiatives that labor leaders and frontline staff were historically left out of."

**JON COREY · UNION PRESIDENT · MASSACHUSETTS**

"I thought that no one was dealing with the issues we are at my jail. I was shocked to realize that not only are we not alone, we are in the majority. Knowing that and working with other unions and officers at the One Voice United conference to address these same issues is a huge help."

**SGT DAN JOHNSON · UNION PRESIDENT · KENTUCKY**

"In Parole and Probation, we often feel left out of the conversation, like we are an afterthought in corrections. With One Voice United, every stakeholder in corrections is important, everyone's voice matters. I highly recommend getting involved with OVU."

**VIKKY URENA · STATE PAROLE OFFICER · NEW YORK**

"One Voice United not only focuses on corrections and parole officers, they focus on the issues non-custody staff face as well. When they say 'we are all in this together' they actually mean it. I never miss their events."

**DANA MUELLER · CASE COUNSELOR, UNION STEWARD · COLORADO**

"What makes OVU so special is their genuine commitment to supporting everyone working in corrections and bringing people together through a shared passion for wellness.

I'm incredibly grateful for the support, encouragement, and opportunities they've provided, and even more grateful to be surrounded by people who truly care about making a difference. There is something incredibly powerful about finding a community that not only shares your passion but empowers you to turn that passion into meaningful change."

**SARAH KIRKENDALL · UNION STEWARD · CALIFORNIA**

"When they told me there were no dues and no membership and what they wanted was my participation, ideas and expertise, not our members money, I had to see what this was all about. They weren't lying. My union won't miss another conference."

**JOHN FLAHERTY · UNION TREASURER · MASSACHUSETTS**

"For three years they tried to get me to come to one of their conferences, promising me that if I went I'd never miss another. They were right, and not only have I not missed, I've brought several other unions with me."

**SCOT WARD · PRESIDENT FOP CORRECTIONS · ILLINOIS**

"Every time we visit with OVU we learn something new. Many of the moves we have made, are making, and will be making, are the result of new knowledge picked up from One Voice United."

**MICHAEL THOMPSON · SERGEANT, UNION VP · NEVADA**

★ **One Voice United is not a union, and we do not compete with unions.** We partner with over three dozen unions representing corrections, parole and non-custody staff. Every union or association that attends our events strengthens all our voices.

## Get Involved

- ★ Attend the Elevating Our Profession Conference
- ★ Send delegates from your board, membership, or department
- ★ Nominate a member for a National Medal of Honor Award
- ★ Sponsor or support the Medal of Honor Awards

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# WHY CORRECTIONS NEEDS A BIGGER TABLE

Article by Jeremy Tripp



Corrections is a profession most people will never see up close.

While those on the outside can express understanding, they can never truly grasp the danger of starting a day short staffed, being assigned to another overtime shift, or being asked to enforce a policy that, although logical on paper, falls miserably short in practice.

That disconnect has been a problem for corrections professionals for a long time, and one of the main reasons we struggle to reach the people and positions that could make a real difference.

That is not to discount the tremendous work that unions, associations, and corrections staff themselves have done.

For decades they have fought for better pay, safer working conditions, stronger staffing, and greater respect for the profession.

However, the problem remains that this type of work still does not receive the proper attention, investment, or respect it deserves.

That is why we need to expand our reach.

Getting there will require us to think differently about who we are willing to talk with and who might be willing to stand shoulder to shoulder on the issues that matter most.

Some of those conversations will be with people and groups you expect and others will be with those you would not.

**Yet, in a world that is comfortable with corrections work staying hidden, we cannot afford to limit ourselves to the same voices, the same rooms, and the same traditional partners as we once did.**

More and more, getting a meaningful seat at the table has meant starting conversations with unlikely allies.

At times this could mean researchers, reform organizations, formerly incarcerated people, foundations, philanthropy, community organizations, and others who have historically approached corrections from a very different lens.



[Meeting with Congressional Black Caucus, One Voice United and Representatives from SEANC]

I understand why that can raise eyebrows, and before I lose anyone, I ask that you humor me for just a minute.

I'll concede that skepticism on this subject is well placed. Many professionals have spent their careers watching people who have never worked inside make decisions that affect their safety, then pass judgment on who they are and how they do their jobs.

They have seen policies developed without staff feedback or input, and watched public discussions about corrections focus on nearly everyone except the men and women who keep these institutions running.

After years of feeling ignored, misunderstood or talked about, rather than talked to, there is good reason to be cautious about who we invite into the conversation.

At the same time, we can also acknowledge that staying in our own corners has not brought the attention, understanding, or progress this profession desperately needs, and it might be time for corrections to expand the table ourselves.

Don't get me wrong, I am not saying that we are going to agree on everything, nor am I implying that we should. What I am saying is that we can still find ways to work together, maintain a dialogue and set aside topics and issues that are simply a bridge too far.

That does not erase the differences or make the difficult conversations any easier. It simply means we should not let every disagreement prevent us from acting on the things we already know.

**We should be able to agree that chronically understaffed institutions are dangerous and that corrections professionals deserve quality training that prepares them for the job they are expected to do.**

We should be able to agree that excessive mandatory overtime is not a sustainable staffing model, that recruiting good people into this profession and giving them a reason to stay both matter, and that violence, drugs and contraband inside correctional institutions create dangerous conditions for everyone.

We should also be able to agree that deteriorating buildings, extreme temperatures, poor air quality, and other basic environmental conditions deserve more attention than they have received, and that the physical and mental wellbeing of the people working inside these institutions matters.

These are not small issues. They are some of the biggest challenges facing the industry today and that is where the opportunity lies for honest dialogue with other stakeholders.

A legislator might hear a union raise concerns about staffing and view it as a labor issue. That same legislator might hear an administrator talk about retention and view it as an operational problem. An advocate might describe how constant staff turnover affects conditions inside a housing unit, and a researcher might show what the data says about staffing and safety.

***Each brings a different perspective of the same story.***

Now imagine all of us having this conversation together. It becomes much harder to ignore the problem and even harder to dismiss the need to do something about it.

In my work across the country, I have seen firsthand how different a conversation becomes when unlikely allies sit across from one another and share information. I have watched people come into those rooms expecting to disagree, only to realize they were describing the same problem from two very different sides.

**Collaboration does not mean giving up our positions. It does not mean being less forceful about what corrections professionals need and it certainly does not mean that we stop advocating when someone across the table disagrees with us.**



What it does mean is recognizing that the realities we face require a different approach and addressing them will require attention, investment, and resources at a time when all three are increasingly scarce.

In any given budget, corrections is competing with schools, roads, health care, public safety, and countless other priorities for limited government dollars.

The same challenges exist in the philanthropic world, where staffing issues and inclusion from the frontline have historically received far less attention and investment than other areas.

Continued...

These truths are not going away, and neither are the needs of people working behind the walls or in our communities. If traditional paths have not been enough to improve operations, strengthen parole and probation, advance community reentry, or address longstanding safety issues, don't we have an obligation to find new ones? Shouldn't we turn over every rock and stone looking for people willing to help move the needle?

If a union wants to work on staffing and retention, that should be supported. If an advocacy organization wants to talk about safer institutions, we should be willing to discuss what that looks like. And if philanthropy is willing to invest in the health and wellness of the correctional workforce, we should make sure they understand where those investments can have the most impact.

For change to happen, though, we need to be willing to enter rooms where corrections professionals have not been represented and give people the opportunity to hear the unfiltered experience of the men and women doing the work. And yes, there will still be disagreements, pushback, and uncomfortable conversations with people who see the system differently.

At the end of the day, doesn't that come with having a seat at the table? If we aren't willing to have those deeper conversations and pursue collaborative solutions, we risk watching the same problems get worse while everyone fights over their small slice of an ever shrinking pie.

## RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT: COPLINE

SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS THE JOB.

**1-800-COPLINE** **1-800-267-5463**

**COPLINE** is a confidential, 24 hour peer support hotline for current and former law enforcement professionals and their families. Calls are answered by trained, retired law enforcement officers who understand the pressures of the profession.

Callers can reach out about workplace stress, trauma, relationships, anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance use, or simply a difficult day. When additional help is needed, COPLINE can also connect callers with vetted professional resources.

**COPLINE.org**

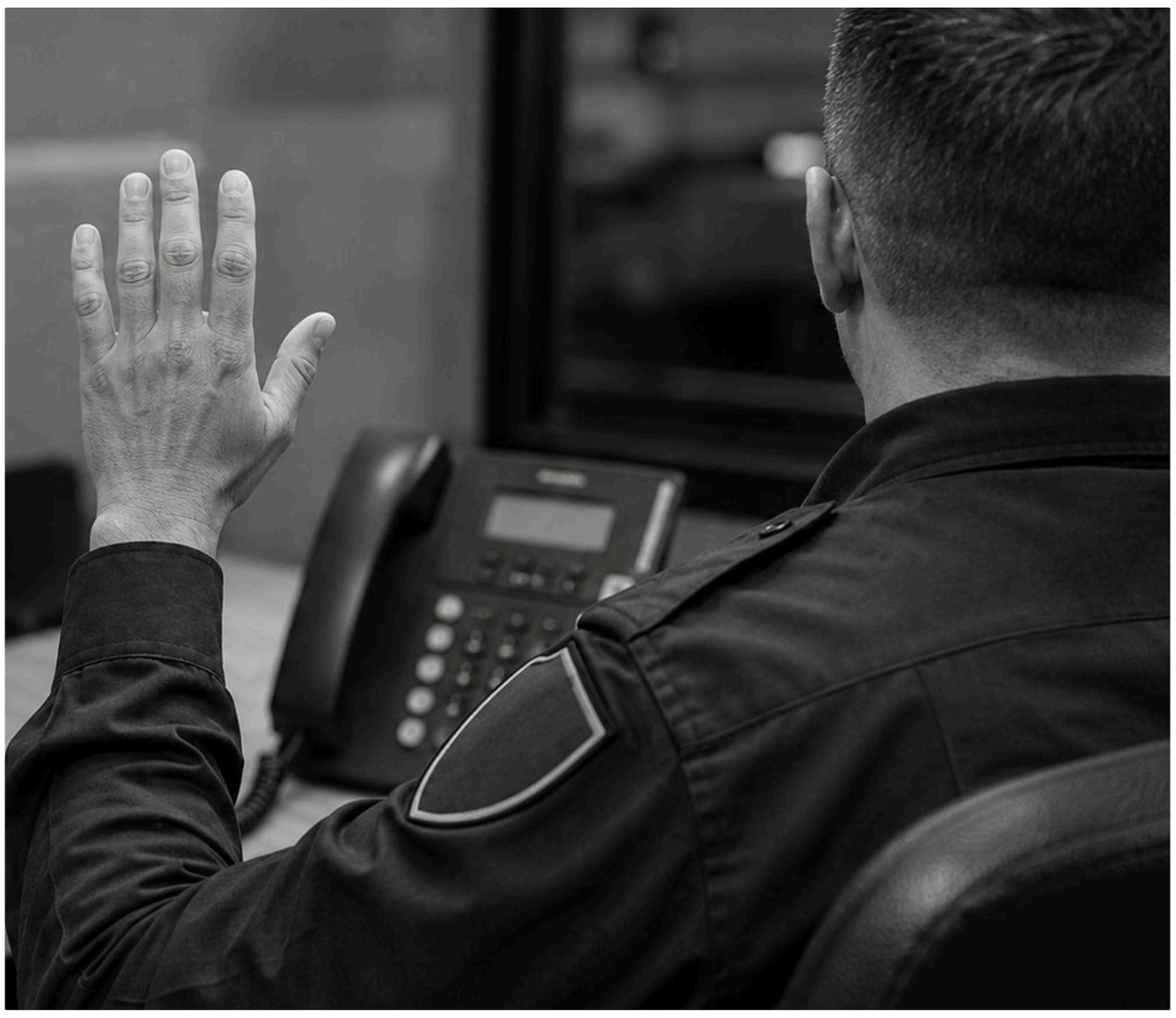
**You do not have to be in crisis to call.**

# INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS STILL NEEDED

**3 - 4 Hours Per Year Is All It Takes**

OVU's Intel Network is a trusted, rapid response exchange for corrections professionals.

When a question arises, Intel Officers share relevant policies, examples, lessons learned, research, and practical leads. Responses generally arrive within 24 to 48 hours and are compiled for the Network.



Ideally we would like at least one corrections officer and one non-custody staff member representing every state, county, federal and juvenile facility across the U.S.

We also need at least one Intelligence Officer from parole and probation agencies in each state.

Your Voice Matters. Your knowledge helps others. Together, we make each other stronger

**Contact Us Today to become part of the greatest think tank in our industry.**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR JURISDICTION?

HELP US TELL THE STORIES THAT MATTER TO PROFESSIONALS NATIONWIDE

### STAFF TO RECOGNIZE?

TELL US WHO IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### NEW POLICIES OR DIRECTIVES?

SHARE CHANGES OTHERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

### GOOD NEWS OR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

LET US HELP AMPLIFY AND SHARE WHAT IS WORKING

## HELP SHAPE THE NEXT ISSUE

INFO@ONEVOICEUNITED.ORG

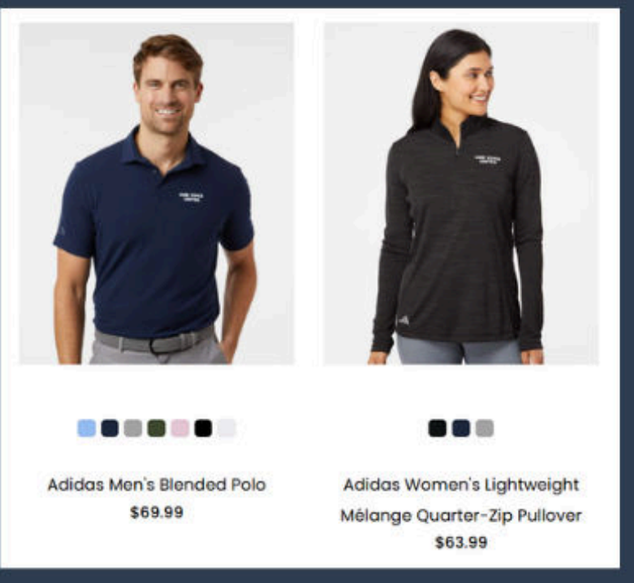
# ONE VOICE UNITED MERCH COLLECTION

Wear the Mission, Support the Profession



Grove Sling Bag
$32.99

ONE VOICE UNITING CORRECTIONS



Adidas Men's Blended Polo
$69.99

Adidas Women's Lightweight Mélange Quarter-Zip Pullover
$63.99

**ONE VOICE UNITED APPAREL AND GEAR OFFERS CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS, FAMILY MEMBERS, SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS A WAY TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES FACING THE PROFESSION WHILE HELPING FUND PROGRAMS THAT ELEVATE LEADERSHIP, WELLNESS, AND RECOGNITION ACROSS THE FIELD.**



Polar Camel Insulated Slim Beverage Holder
$24.99



40oz Polar Camel Travel Mug
$39.99



9.5x12" Leatherette Portfolio with Notepad
$34.99



Polar Camel Insulated Beverage Holder
$24.99

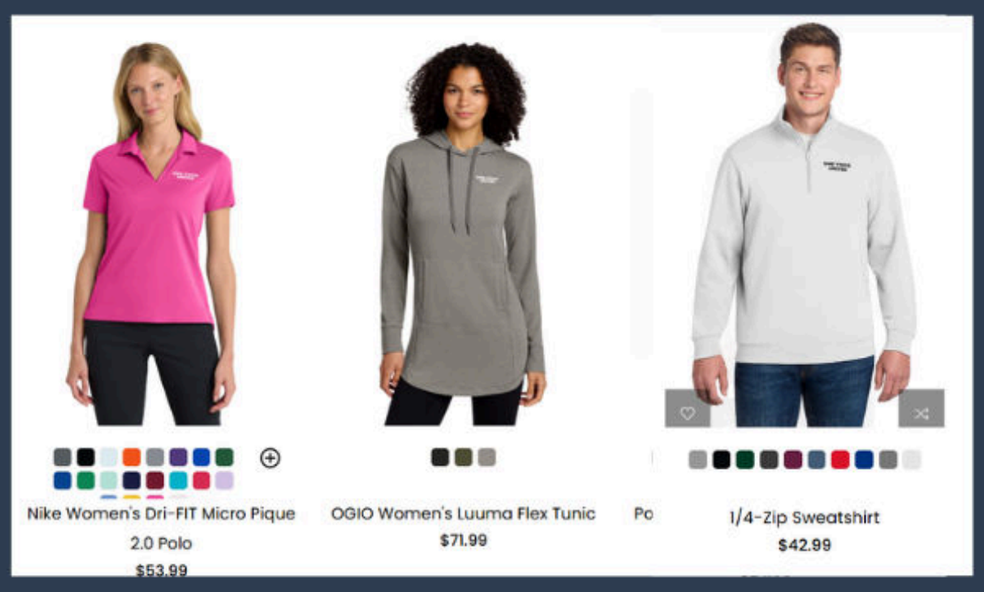
## SUPPORT THE MEDAL OF HONOR

A PORTION OF PROCEEDS FROM MEDAL OF HONOR MERCHANDISE DIRECTLY SUPPORT RECOGNITION AND PROGRAM GROWTH, HELPING HONOR & RECOGNIZE EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE AND SACRIFICE ACROSS CORRECTIONS.

FEATURED ITEMS







Nike Women's Dri-FIT Micro Pique 2.0 Polo
$53.99

OGIO Women's Luuma Flex Tunic
$71.99

Po

1/4-Zip Sweatshirt
$42.99



Nike Dri-FIT Micro Pique 2.0 Long Sleeve Polo
$61.99

Nike Dri-FIT Micro Pique 2.0 Polo
$53.99

Nike Dri-FIT Vapor Polo
$68.99



Eddie Bauer Adventurer Backpack
$63.99



The Wrightson Cap
$28.99

**HTTPS://OVUMERCH.IDEASIDEAS.COM**

# ONE TEAM
# ONE VOICE

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE MISSION



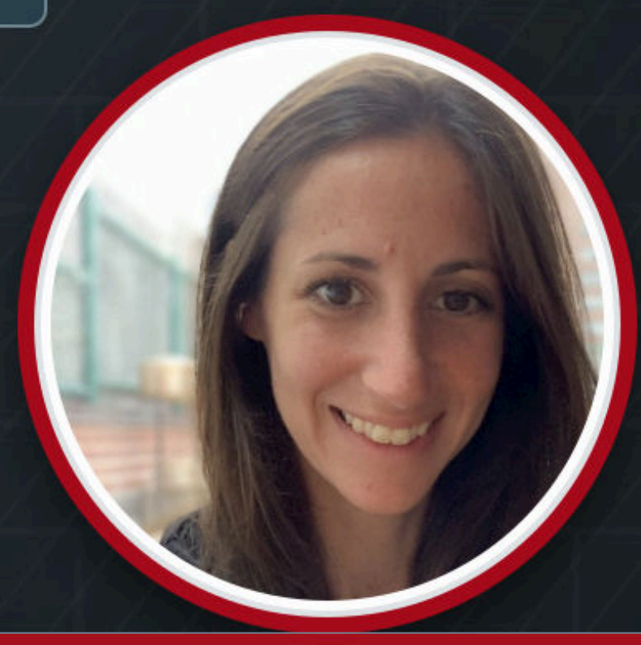
## ANDY POTTER
FOUNDER + EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## BRIAN DAWE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR



## JEREMY TRIPP
POLICY DIRECTOR



## COREY POST
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



## SIMON GREER
SENIOR ADVISOR



## JENELLE WOOLDRIDGE
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS + EVENTS



## BRENT KOWITZ
PROGRAM ASSISTANT

WORKING NATIONWIDE TO CONNECT CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS,
AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES, TELL THEIR STORIES
AND ELEVATE THE PROFESSION