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For Immediate Release...

Corrections News

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Tipton Correctional Center implements dog program

Mickey and Phideux may look like average strays, but the two mix-breed shelter dogs are the first students of Tipton Correctional Center's (TCC) Puppies for Parole program. TCC kicked off its Puppies for Parole program, Pals with Paws, Wednesday, making it the 18th Missouri Department of Corrections' (DOC) institution to adopt the program.

TCC is partnering with the Dogwood Animal Shelter in Osage Beach. Ronnie Jacobsen, shelter manager at Dogwood, said the program is a "great opportunity" for both the shelter and its dogs.

"The dogs get to find out what it's like to have someone care for them as a family member, and the shelter gets to have the dogs come back with better manners and more likely to be adopted," Jacobsen said.

TCC Warden Doug Prudden said he doesn't see a downside to adopting the program and hopes to eventually expand it and take on more dogs.

"It blends in well with our philosophy of restorative justice and giving back to the community," Prudden said of the program. "I also feel that the interaction with dogs by the offender population tends to have a calming effect and leads to improved behavior. And, of course, we feel really good about being able to help these abandoned and abused animals enjoy a better life and get adopted by new owners."

Puppies for Parole is the result of the DOC's partnerships with animal shelters and animal advocate groups all over Missouri. The program pairs rescued dogs with offenders at prisons throughout the state for obedience training that typically lasts eight to 12 weeks.

Puppies for Parole is funded by donations only and does not receive state funding. For Puppies for Parole adoption and donation information, visit: doc.mo.gov/division/dai/puppies.php.

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