

2006-2007 Annual Report

Prisons and Corrections Section

The Section entered its tenth year as an independent, voluntary entity of the State Bar of Michigan at the last Annual Meeting held on September 15, 2006. In addition to its business meeting, the Section sponsored a program on the Michigan Department of Corrections.

The Section strives to continue to publish the Prisons and Corrections Forum, a newsletter distributed to the Section's membership, prison law libraries and key legislators and policy makers within the State. The next issue will be distributed forthwith according to editor Adrienne Watts. Rachel Waterbury Johnson, Dan Manville and Kathleen Schaefer are also members of the newsletter committee.

The Section maintains its unique character and out-reach beyond the State Bar: (1) by designating three of its voting Council seats to criminal justice professionals who are not attorneys; (2) through its relationship with the Michigan Department of Corrections, the Michigan Sheriffs Association and the Michigan Corrections Association. For this term, Richard Stapleton participates as the designee for the Director of the Michigan Department of Corrections, Robert (Rick) Beracy serves as the liaison for the Michigan Sheriffs Association, and Michelle Van Dusen serves as the liaison for the Michigan Corrections Association. The Prisons and Corrections Section also interacts with the Criminal Law Section of the State Bar by holding a designated seat on its governing Council.

The Council decided to focus on collateral consequences of criminal convictions this year. Members Steve Gobbo and Miriam Aukerman and ICE Chief Counsel Kathleen Alcorn educated us regarding occupational licensing consequences, housing, employment, child support and parental rights consequences, and deportation consequences of criminal convictions.

The Council supported HB 6532 (to expunge convictions overturned based on DNA evidence, reissued its 2003 Blueprint for Cost-Effective Criminal Justice in Michigan and adopted a policy against the practice of extending parole terms for parolees who owe restitution absent a finding of willful non-compliance.

A proposed by-law, to be voted on at the next Annual Meeting, will permit non-attorney Council members to serve as Secretary and/or Treasurer of the Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Enid Livingston
Chair

