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COMMISSIONER SWEARS-IN DIRECTOR FOR NEW ATLANTA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CAMPUS

(ATLANTA, GA) When Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner L. Gale Buckner announced the opening of the agency's newest Youth Development Campus (YDC) in metro Atlanta this month, she was pleased to name *Sharon R. Shaver* as the facility's first Director. Ms. Shaver came to the Department of Juvenile Justice from the Georgia Department of Corrections where she served as Deputy Director of Operations, Planning, and Training Division since June 2011.

Commissioner Buckner administered the official oath of office for Director Shaver during a special ceremony on April 11th where the Commissioner also swore in the first two Assistant Directors for the state's new Youth Development Campus. "This will be a great new team of Directors to lead our professional staff of Juvenile Corrections Officers at the state's newest Youth Development Campus," said DJJ Commissioner Buckner. "This new YDC is designed to serve the juvenile detention and rehabilitation needs for the Atlanta metro area with a safety-upgraded and secure facility."

Commissioner Buckner swore in *Gerald Pearson* as the Assistant Director of Security for the Atlanta YDC following six years of recent service with the Jonesboro Parole Office where he was Senior Parole Officer in the Metro District since 2007.

Commissioner Buckner also swore in *Tim Prewett* as the YDC's new Assistant Director of Programs. Before coming to DJJ, Assistant Director Prewett was Board representative for the Strategic Intervention Program at Georgia's Coastal State Prison.

This new staff of directors brings years of professional correctional experience to Atlanta's newest secure facility for young offenders. *Director Sharon Shaver* began her career in State Government in 1997 as an Accountant Paraprofessional with the Department of Corrections at Bostick State Prison. She was quickly promoted to Business Manager at Dooly State Prison in 1998 and just a year later appointed Deputy Warden of Administration at Macon State Prison. Before the year was up she transferred to Rivers State Prison where she served for the next 9 years, graduating BCOT with Honors in 2002.

As a certified POST Instructor, Director Shaver was an adjunct instructor for management training classes in the Milledgeville area. In 2008, she was appointed Director of Offender Administration where she was instrumental in the development of Coastal State Prison's Strategic Intervention Program and developed integrated processes for the Pardons and Paroles Clemency Unit. In May 2010 she was appointed as the first Campus Superintendent at State Offices South at Tift College where she served until accepting her current position at DJJ's Atlanta YDC.

Director Shaver received her AS in Business Administration from Georgia Military College, graduating Summa Cum Laude. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Georgia State University, graduating Cum Laude and was recognized as Outstanding Criminal Justice Major by the Department Chair. After attending the Georgia Law Enforcement Command College in 2008, Ms. Shaver received her Master in Public Administration from Columbus State University. As an active member of the Southern States Correctional Association she will serve as host committee chair for the 2014 SCA Conference scheduled for Savannah.

Assistant Director of Security Gerald Pearson began his criminal justice career at the Bill Ireland Youth Development Campus in 1992. After six months with the Department of Juvenile Justice, he was hired as a Correctional Officer at the Hancock Correctional Institution and transferred to the Men's Correctional Institution in 1994. He received an Associate of Science Degree from Georgia Military College in 1999, the same year he was promoted to Correctional Lieutenant at the Men's State Prison.

After receiving his Bachelors of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Georgia College & State University in 2006 Pearson began work as a Parole Officer for the Jonesboro Parole Office and was promoted to Senior Parole Officer within two months of graduating from Parole Officer Basic Training.

While participating in joint Federal and State law enforcement operations with US Marshals, FBI, and GBI, Pearson has served high risk warrants and conducted sex offender compliance checks. He is certified as a Georgia Crisis Intervention Training Officer through the National Alliance on Mental Illness and has attended mass fatality training and exercises with the US Department of Justice to combat human trafficking, terrorism, and suicide bombing.

Assistant Director of Programs Tim Prewett began his state law enforcement career in 2002 as a Parole Officer with the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. In 2007 he was promoted to the position of Hearing Examiner for the Parole Board. Prewett earned his Bachelor's Degree from Berry College where he was the inaugural recipient of the 21st Century Socrates Award. He is currently pursuing his Masters of Public Administration at Columbus State University.

Prewett is a member of the Parole Association of Georgia, the Georgia Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, the Georgia Gang Investigators Association, and the Georgia Probation Association.

"This new Atlanta Youth Development Campus will be a DJJ blueprint for a '24-7' secure-campus for Georgia's troubled youth," said Commissioner Buckner. "Seeing the increased statewide need for juvenile offender resources like this one, the Department of Juvenile Justice spent more than seven-and-a-half million dollars to bring this campus up to date to help us cope with the current backlog to place our youth in proper facilities."

"While young offenders are here, this team of Directors will help hold them accountable for their actions," said Commissioner Buckner. "When residents are eventually released from this new facility they will be much more successful transitioning back into their community. The Department is proud of its newest campus and juvenile corrections team and what they add to DJJ's statewide capacity for rehabilitating juvenile offenders into productive law-abiding citizens."

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