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Good morning. I'm the Academy division chief of the national Institute of corrections. On behalf of director Jim Crosby and the staff at NIC we welcome you to the 2015 new directions and corrections virtual conference. Thank you for taking the time to join us today. Oregon Department of Corrections director Colette Peters will kickoff the conference with her keynote address. Corrections staff our test with -- task to -- with consumer bank. Despite disparity with this issue elects national attention. She will discuss the strategic plan to awareness -- raising awareness and address the efforts nationwide. She was appointed director of February 2012 after serving as director of the Oregon youth authority for several years. Fire to her role at the Oregon youth authority Ms. Peters served as Department of Corrections Inspector General and assistant director for public services. Ms. Peters oversees the operation and policies of a collection agency responsible for managing approximate 40,500 incarcerated adults and -- and 14 prisons across the state. She has the responsibility for the management of the department with 4500 employees and a bite annual budget of \$1.4 million -- \$1.4 billion. She was closely with state-funded community correction agencies to coordinate the local supervision of more than 31,500 offenders on probation and parole. Native of the Midwest Ms. Peters earned her master's degrees in criminal justice from the graduate school of Public affairs at the University of Colorado in Denver. A bachelors degree in psychology from the College of Saint Benedict and -- in St. Joseph Minnesota. At this time I'd like to turn the conference over to Ms. Peters.

Welcome to the national institutes of corrections for so conference 2015. I have the privilege of being the chair of the national Institute of corrections subcommittee on wellness. During our time together place in the questions you may have electronically. I hope to say 15 minutes for the question at the end. If I do not have time to answer your specific question I look forward to answering them electronically at a later time. This last week many of you have already accessed some of the information posted for this virtual conference. Please note you will be able to access all the information and today's event for a month following today's conference. It is NICs hope that thousands upon thousands corrections professionals will be able to benefit from this access. Please share with your friends and colleagues. Corrections professionals that wellness. This conversation is near and dear to my heart. It is filled with opportunities to learn about what is happening across the country to improve the well-being of corrections specials. Today I have the pleasure of spending the next hour with you to discuss where we are with corrections professional help today. I'm going to warn you the data points are beyond disturbing.

As you listen please know that should you need them you have resources readily available today in the conference resource room and inside the wellness information on the home site for the videoconference. I will begin with disturbing specifics I mentioned. National statistics is note that after 20 years in the business our average lifespan is 58 years old. We are overweight. Our client -- cholesterol and tried glycerides are through the roof. Towards the end of the 7 we are more likely than not to become a candidate for heart attack. We have more colleagues with PTSD than police officers firefighters even those in active military committees . Staggering statistics. Today my goal is not to supplement -- [ Indiscernible ] . To all of you and those administrations and policy makers out there listening today my hope is that to some degree by raising the issue we will begin to solve the problem. Some of the barriers to a well-balanced healthy lifestyle are inherent to working in a

corrections environment. Shiftwork, assault, overtime , these are few inherent risks in corrections that are barriers to a well-balanced life. It is not going away. We are running 20 4/7 facilities. We cannot promise that individuals will not assault you or that they will come to prison without a mental illness. We simply cannot. How do we balance our lives? How do we look outside our lives to find balance and wellness? This is an important issue. Not only do I want to raise awareness of this issue I want to begin to describe what you are doing day in and day out. I do not believe the public has a true appreciation. I want to acknowledge that you have one of the toughest jobs out there. Yet there are ways to deal with the stress trauma in the wake you and your family can have a more healthy well-balanced life. How are we here today? Thanks to the leadership of the national Institute of corrections who has been collecting data studying and training on this critical issue of staff wellness . NIC wants to create new directions in corrections.

More importantly, why are we here? The national Institute of corrections wanted to but this conference together because you are our [ Indiscernible - low volume ]. If you are not healthy and well-balanced empowered with the tools you need to carry out missions every day and keep our prisons and communities safe and some of the toughest environments with some of the most difficult and dangerous individuals then NIC knows we have lost. We have lost individually with each of you and we have lost collectively. I am passionate about this issue. During the last 24 years I have worked in many parts of our public safety system as a front-line staff cyst -- person as a juvenile [ Indiscernible ] as an assistant director and Inspector General for the organ Department of Corrections. As director over juvenile corrections and Oregon. For the last year the sitting director for the Oregon Department of corrections. This career that I love all came about because I realized what I wanted to do in kindergarten. I do not truly know but I wanted to be -- I have a memory. One-day classmate of mine who came a different but a pocket knife to school. I remember watching my teacher and she took him holding him under her arm like a football and marching into the principal's office. I remember thinking to myself I can help them. I want to help them. So I did. For nearly a quarter of a century I attempted to assist victims juvenile offenders and adult offenders. It was not until I became the director of the Oregon Department of Corrections that I was shocked to see with an 18 month period the agency occurred the loss of for staff to suicide. I realized if we were going to help the Dems and juvenile and adult offenders we need to start with our corrections professional both inside our prisons, jails are used correctional facilities -- youth correctional facilities, and in the community. You have one of the toughest jobs out there. As I look across the country we have over 600,000 team members. This includes correctional officers Copwital officers, treatment specialist , and frontline supervisors. All dedicated professionals in prisons, jails and the corrections for today is not like you see in the movies. >> In our country we do not hire guards.

We higher correctional officers who were to ensure our prisons are safe with a constant focus on programming treatment and reentry. We do not hire probation officers to engage in I gotcha encounters with those on [ Indiscernible - low volume ]. They hold the offenders accountable . Yet they help them transition back to the community with the right program treatment and -- employment and family engagement. Reentry is our focus. It has to be. And Oregon 90% in our care and custody are coming back to our communities. Together our correctional officers and probation officers work to ensure our prisons and communities are safe by working closely with offenders to ensure they do not create victims inside our prisons or in the community. In our work we remember that we do not send offenders to prison for punishment but as punishment. This nuance is very important. Removing them from their family and community and all the restrictions that come with it is their punishment. Those of you have been around a while this has been an evolution.

As I said it is complicated and Oregon the first part of our mission is to promote public safety by holding offenders account for the actions. This is where it gets complex during the first discourse of your day. Holding offenders accountable is simply more than carrying out quarter orders and incarcerating them. Hold them accountable means working with them to acknowledge and take

responsibility for their crimes and make commitments to change. Because none of us want them leaving our prisons and creating victims. As a former victims advocate that is a primary reason why I am in this [ Indiscernible - low volume ]. The brings us to the second part of our mission. Reduce the likelihood that individuals commit another crime after release. No more victimization. If we are truly successful when they leave prison we transitioned them in a way where another victim is not created. They return home , find jobs copy taxes, engage with their children and family. We break the intergenerational cycle of criminality. You are doing all of this with offenders who have committed the most serious and violent crimes and have often come up with mental health guidance. >> As corrections professionals you hold yourself to a very high standard. You know you have the responsibility to protect the public. Keep our prisons jails youth correctional facilities safe and help these offenders successfully transition back into the community. It is a tall order. On top of that there are so many inherent difficult issues you are faced with day and day out. Shiftwork is inherently difficult on individuals and families. Those are often compounded with overtime. At the beginning of your career -- those of you have been around for a while, overtime may have become a way of life in many your family relies on. While it used to be something your body could handle now the where and tear on your body and mind is starting to show. This shiftwork not only impacts physically and mentally but your family as well. I had a great conversation with one of our employees at coffee Creek. I could tell he loved his job. He was thanking me for our efforts around staff wellness. He was glad to tell me about the work they were engaged in on the ground. This individual loved his job. He was fit, tram, in new what he was focused on. >> He said thank you actually believe you care about our wellness but my wife doesn't. As an okay I'm listening. He explained she does not believe me because the family plans their day and week in order to juggle the demands of a growing family. Contrary to those plans he often does not return home on schedule because of overtime. Having to pull 16 hours rather than a -- eight. There's nothing I could argue with. Before the legislation and Oregon one of the things was that we give additional staff and eliminate some of our overtime. You have shiftwork. You may have to say the college life. You may have to respond to a disturbance. You may save and makes life. You may take it makes life. -- Inmates life. We had an incident where a inmate [ Indiscernible ] because our officer had the training and skills to take in other inmates life who was savagely beating the officer. Our officer did everything right. He was so well-trained and confident he knew exactly what to do. He did not have to think about it. It was muscle memory. He was trained up to the point he pulled the trigger per -- . Debriefed fully prepare him for the next seconds, hours come moments , days, weeks, months? How do we respond? How does your mind react? How to explain it to your family? Not only do you have one of the toughest jobs out there you are as tough as nails.

It is inherent in our culture. After the officer who fired the shot he came right back to work because that is what we do in this business. We are certainly not going to let the offenders know we were impacted. We do not want our colleagues to know either. We want them to know and believe that they can rely on us. Following a shooting I know you can imagine what the first responders to. They performed their duty. Some covered in blood to keep the injured inmates a lot. They changed clothes and came back to finish the shift. Because that's what we in the corrections culture expected ourselves. With administrators need to realize is that the impacts of these events are well beyond the officer who fired the fatal shot. It is all the first responsible -- responders. It is even those who were not on duty at the time. In this case we have nurses and other officers staff members managers etc. We need to stop business as usual. We need to change our culture and figure out ways to empower people in the system to care for our staff appropriately following these incidents.

You have one of the toughest jobs out there. You have shiftwork you may have to say the college life. You may have to respond to a disturbance. You may save in inmates life you may take an inmates life. When I worked as a front-line staff member I came to work every day knowing I could [ Indiscernible - low volume ]. Knowing I might have to engage in extraction or in the takedown of the used. How did I know? Because they told me. They changed me on extraction tactics. Takedown

tactics and self-defense tactics. What we learned is while you're at work you are often in a state of hypervigilance. You are. And it does not end when you go home. It doesn't and as a corrections officer or a youth counselor when you look at the gate. You wonder if a former inmate or someone in prison and jail is going to project the park, grocery store, in your neighborhood with your family etc. it happens. It has happened to me. I had former inmates approach me. So far it has all been positive. It has been things like a director it was that one program that led me in the right direction or I am doing great. I landed a job. That's not going to be my reaction when I have my little girls at my side. We have had instances in prisons and communities across the country that validate our state of hypervigilance. >> We have colleagues assaulted every day in this country. We have former directors assassinated . We have officers targeted and killed in our prisons and on our streets. Let's go back to the growing list. The ultimate test for -- sacrifice is you could you lose your life still call with all of that most of you love your job. I am continuously impressed by the passion and interest in this profession by nearly every corrections professional I encounter. While I paint a pretty grim picture the good in what you do is phenomenal. It shows. It can wear on you. I remember a personal moment when I realized that wear and tear. One of my favorite and most adrenaline filled jobs was when I was working for dinner -- Denver Police Department. As a civilian reporting to the captain and the Bureau. I was charged with helping run the victims assisted unit that respond on all seems to crimes against persons. Homicide, suicide, text assault , mystic violence, and -- domestic violence and [ Indiscernible - low volume ] . I saw the dead bodies and held the hands of survivors. >> I loved my job. I had the police radio, jacket, I got to lift up and walk under the yellow tape. It was the closest thing I was ever going to get to CSI in my career. I love my job and everyone who knew me knew it. It was not until three months after I left that job to work for the like -- Colorado legislator when I realized it had an impact. I was out to dinner with my husband before we had children. We were laughing about something. I don't remember what it was. He looked at me and said I haven't seen that smile in 3 years. We can love our jobs and it can still have a negative impact on our physical and mental well-being. At the beginning you might be okay. After one or 2 years with about five? 15? 25? 35?

I mentioned earlier when I came director in 2012 our agency grieved the loss of four staff suicides in 18 months. We also have staff dying for two young. The national data suggest that after 20 years in corrections the average lifespan is 58 years old. Just two weeks ago in Oregon we lost a great captain who passed away in his sleep from a heart attack at a very young age of 51. I also watch as we recertify staff or DUIs. I watched the divorces unfold. Knowing and observing all this we knew we had to do something. Our previous director began his conversations and the agency partnered with Oregon health and science University and Oregon State University to conduct studies on our correctional officers. As I warned before the data points are startling. PSU conducted a study that focused on correctional officer stress well-being and worklife balance. Over 1300 correctional officers across the state participate in the survey that gathered information on demographics , psychosocial workplace factors, work-family conflicts, well-being, and health [ Indiscernible - low volume ] . The study identified a number of concerns pertaining to job related demands and correctional officer well-being. First and foremost PSU confirmed that our team members experience high levels of perceived danger and hypervigilance. It does not change when you leave your office or walk out the gate. As correctional professionals you have some of the highest levels of stress among occupations. In fact, Oregon has staggering statistics. One in three Oregon Department of correctional employees has symptoms of PTSD. This is a rate four times higher than the general population. It is also a rate higher than that of firefighters couple his officers, and those in active military duty of -- . That one surprised me. We have more staff with PTSD than those officers in a war zone. PTSD left untreated has long-term negative health effects. Research has shown that employees exhibiting PTSD related symptoms have higher levels of tobacco use, alcohol use, more health problems, and a higher lever -- number of doctor visits and work absences. And Oregon our staff takes more leave than they earn each year. This results in a compounding effect for them. It is a financial stress. The time off then his leave without pay.

It's a compounding and circular issue. It is compounded again when you think about the impact their absence have on their colleagues who now have to pull a double shift. The effects of all the stress is profound. Declining health, high divorce rate, some, suicide, and a short lifespan. As I stated earlier this can impact not only just you but your family. The research confirms this for us. Our employees have higher levels of work-family conflict. When an officer comes home after a shift often times you need to be -- decompress. This is generally taking. You may either choose to enter share a in the SAAR because you do not want to relieve -- relive the day or you may over share leaving your loved ones fearful of what is actually happening at work. It is difficult to stay positive in our line of work. Our families to the point of that. Correctional officers left -- average less than six hours per sleep a night.

We learned that getting less than six hours per sleep is the equivalent of smoking a pack of cigarettes. This is a data point I had to work on personally. 4 years, -- for decades I would work late . That I would get up at the crack of dawn and head to the gym. Little did I know I might as well be smoking. I'm changing my habits . To combat all of these findings we introduced mindfulness in prison. If you think for a minute I was not nervous about the reaction or get to bring mindfulness and including limitation to prison the new would be incorrect. I was worried about what that 25 year veteran with think about the idea. Other public safety agencies are trying it. While we have some bumps out of the gate our teams have latched onto it. They have given a great reviews. Sharing experiences with colleagues and allowing support. Our first pilot has ended and we have been working with the center for 7 and corrections in training team members with an emotional intelligent approach to build resiliency. While also addressing and reducing staff burnout.

The program teaches specific skills like relaxation Kostas management, self-care, emotion regulation, and conflict de-escalation. Our vision of the program is to teach our team how they can move from the state of hypervigilance to simply vigilant. We recognize while at work clearly our staff needs to remain vigilant at all times. Yet when responding to an incident you do not need to be in that state. Biologically the stress markers begin to drop. TSU -- PSU also found [ Indiscernible ] embedded in the data. To those managers out there listening I hope you find the next data point very empowering. Research has found that for all employees who have supervisors that are supportive of them individually and generally cared about their life and well-being and health and well-being of the family their wellness increased. It makes sense. Everyone wants a boss that is supportive of them. We all want a work environment where we feel valued. And dollars it would feel valued. Now for our physical well-being. OHS you conducted medical exams of 200 conducted medical exams of 220 correctional officers at four prison sites and Oregon. I don't think you are surprised to learn that the study found prison security level increased and so did correctional officer stress . The findings are alarming. Staff has high cultural, -- cluster all, high -- cholesterol, overweight -- 52% of our officers had metabolic syndrome. One out of two of our correctional officers are at risk of a heart attack in the next 10 years. The observation deck concerns the doctor the most [ Indiscernible - low volume ]. They do not know they were in the obese category. The new shape -- they should alter the diet or have one last year or one Western or get to the gym more but they did not realize the outcomes were this bad. Which means they are not seeing doctors for preventative care per to combat these findings the suggestion is you get your annual exam. And in evidence-based easily implemented health and safety program will work. To select piloted in and -- intervention program. It was a 12 week program entitled healthy teams healthy you. It included curriculum on nutrition, bodyweight, exercise cost strength training, and stress management. Those in the program worked together in clusters of four and five to approve the health outcomes together. Research shows that when we make a commitment to others to make improvements in our own life we're more likely to do it. >> The officers that participate it in this program resulted in a tremendous health outcomes among participants. After the 12 week program significant changes were observed. Including, weight loss, reduce fatty mass index, reduce blood pressure, increase physical activity, reduce missed workdays , reduce incidences of depression and stress and reduced workers compensation claims. While we're making progress in Oregon we

still have a long way to go. We have handmade staff wellness our top agency initiative and have made commitment that if we prove these programs successful we will share it with our corrections professionals across the country. As I said earlier my goal is not to present solutions but to ways -- raise awareness. I wanted to acknowledge that you have one of these -- the toughest jobs out there. My hope is that to some degree of simply raising the issue we will begin to make change. Even though some of the barriers are inherent to working in the corrections environment. We talked about them today. While there are inherent in your work and ongoing were research suggests that there are tools out there to counter those inherent barriers with wellness and create a healthy well-balanced lifestyle. To begin we must ask ourselves how do I balance my life? How do I look outside my life and work to find balance and wellness? Furthermore, while I primarily focused on physical and mental health while billing -- well-being we have to adjust spiritual health, relationship health, etc. It is the whole package. It has to be. Anyone of those factors can drag us down or pushes up. It is all about balance. On the front and as we trained individuals entering our professionals -- professions on how to be the best corrections provisional they can be no need to do a better job of preparing them with coping with so they are prepared to combating it on the front and establish healthy well-balanced lifestyle at the beginning of their career. And I see kicked off this national conversation. As a nation what steps do we take to hire the best and brightest? Keep our staff well-trained and prepared to carry out responsibilities? Go home safely the end of the shift and return each day motivated to perform at their very best . Then lifelong healthy happy lives. No matter where you think you fit continue to move towards the middle and look for healthy outlets to provide balance in the demands of your work. I want to share with you with Doctor Cary from [ Indiscernible ] reminded me. It is up to us as individuals. We ask actions administrators can and should create the best resources and provide the best tools for success. Until that person sitting in front of me is ready to make change how lifelong change, those resources are not going to matter. Look out for each other. We often see signs and friends and family and colleagues before we see it in ourselves. I know it is a tough business but begin to make it okay to talk about wellness and stress in the workplace. With that dialogue we will turn it around together. Wanted to think the leadership and vision of the national Institute of corrections. It is through your efforts like these that we will bring a higher awareness to the well-being of our corrections professional. To this correctional professionals out there thank you for spending time with me today and thank you for taking the work so seriously. Thank you for giving as professionals we can be proud of. As I said earlier clearly you have one of the toughest jobs out there. It can be immensely rewarding. You are our most valuable resource. If we're going to continue to improve public safety and reduce victimization and help juvenile and adult offenders become successful, we must first help them prepare you. I hope the information I provided it you ready to move the nation towards a new direction in corrections as the title of today's conference states. I hope you take advantage of the next month and access to resources available on this website. Please do share them with colleagues friends and families. Thank you for joining me today. Now I will be happy to answer questions. >> Thank you Ms. Peters. We have a couple of questions. The first question is as a corrections officer I am concerned about my wellness. Where do I start?

Great question. It really has to be a personal choice. The research can tell you if you can grab a couple of colleagues or friends who do not work for the Department of Corrections who are interested in improving health and well-being that is the place to start. 18 committed with you to improve wellness. I would also say don't start big start little. It's a little life changes that can add up over time. My example is getting more than six hours of sleep a night. That little change helped me be more clear at work and feel more healthy and strong. Don't try to take it all at once. >> I am a probation officer and I worry that I bring my job home to my family. What can I do?

If you worrying -- are worrying about it you likely are. I think taking the time to reset before leaving the office or after you left the office before coming home is so important. As I said these jobs can wear and tear on our family. I think what we have shown in our mindfulness program is that if you are able to engage in relaxation techniques before you go home or meditate for five minutes and

reset that really helps before you enter the door. Your family worries about you. They know you have a difficult job. Being able to reset and take care of yourself will allow you to better take care of your family.

We have one more question. In your experience was there any differences between women and men in these wellness findings?

From a statistical perspective the only difference we found was around the category of having a heart attack in the career. Men were far more likely to fit in that category. We did not see much of a gender difference. That was not the focus of the study. I would not want to make any conclusions. Both for women and men it is important that you come into this field to maintain your health and well-being and stay focused on that. Not only have to work at the gym but at work. Figuring out where you presences and what he -- what your state of vigilance and being aware of your surroundings stress and well-being.

Another question recommend. My coworkers and I have been trying to get our employer to justice but they say there is no budget for staff wellness. How can we get leadership to help us address this?

I hope sharing these staggering statistics will help corrections administrators across the country understand. I think they do. As I talked to my colleagues across the country while some states have it studied this they have seen the divorces unfold, attended the candles -- funerals. Budgets are tight. I get it. We're talking about closing prisons and staff layoff. Finding the money to spend on training and wellness can be difficult. I would say do what you can yourself to make change and find wellness. There are so many things you can do that do not cost money. Create safety and wellness committees that talk about bringing in organizations from the outside who would come in for free to do medical assessment and screenings. To talk about classes in the community that can improve your health and well-being. Start small. Don't try to take out the full issue at once. Focus on small steps you can do personally and that you can bring to the worksite . >> I do not have any more questions at the moment. What we will do is end here and if people post questions to the form we can answer those at a later time. On behalf of the national Institute of corrections I want to thank you for following to assist us today.

It was my pleasure. >> [ Event Concluded ]