

**CELEBRATING RECIPIENTS OF THE GOVERNOR
GENERAL OF CANADA'S CORRECTIONS EXEMPLARY SERVICE MEDAL**

Mr. Speaker, our mandate has outlined direct actions to improve the lives of Northerners. For the Department of Justice, this includes a commitment to offer programming that meets the rehabilitative needs of inmates.

As integral part of the work that the Department of Justice does, requires that dedicated individuals in our Corrections Service constantly learn and adapt to the needs and best practices for helping inmates in our system. These professionals are tasked with providing the safe and secure custody of inmates, and supporting their successful reintegration upon release.

This is not easy work Mr. Speaker, and our corrections professionals work hard to provide culturally appropriate programming and to foster an environment that responds to the various and changing needs for rehabilitation. While this field of work is challenging, we know that it is extremely important.

Tonight, joined by many of my colleagues in this Chamber and the Honourable Commissioner Margaret Thom, 23 Correction, Probation and Peace Officers from the Northwest Territories will be honoured for their exceptional service. Corrections professionals from Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Hay River will be awarded the Governor General of Canada's Corrections Exemplary Service Medal.

These medals recognize distinguished service and are a tangible expression of national gratitude. The fact that we will recognize a total of 23 individuals tonight speaks to the strong calibre of the Corrections Service in the NWT.

To be considered for this honour, you must have worked for more than 20 years in the corrections field including as peace officer or probation officer in an institution, or in a capacity which has brought you into contact with offenders as part of your regular work duties. All of the medal recipients for the Northwest Territories, many of whom are here with us today, have demonstrated good conduct, industry, efficiency and most importantly have served our residents in an exemplary manner.

Today's corrections professionals are involved with inmates from the moment they enter a facility or receive their probation orders. They work alongside inmates and model behaviours, demonstrate leadership and encourage programming options so that people can begin making positive changes in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of our Corrections Service. As the outstanding individuals who will be receiving the Corrections Exemplary Service Medals demonstrate, we have caring, compassionate and dedicated employees who are committed to making a difference in the lives of others. On behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories, please join me in expressing our congratulations to this dedicated group of professionals.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.