

COVID-19 Update - May 08, 2020

Hi all-

I'm back! Well, kind of. I wish I could tell you I bravely fought off some horrible illness through grit, determination, and an insanely high tolerance for pain. Instead, an ear infection got the better of me. All things considered, I'm on the mend but my pride will take longer to heal.

Thank you, Teachers: I noted earlier this week it also is National Teacher Appreciation Week, and I can't say enough about how important everyone associated with education at IDOC is to helping people in our custody find success. Truth is, there isn't anything else we do proven to improve outcomes more than education. What's more impressive than the research showing education reduces recidivism by 43% is the quality of the people facilitating learning in our system. If you want a punch to the heart, go check out one of our graduation ceremonies. The sense of accomplishment is evident on the faces of the men and women receiving their GED's, technical certificates, or other recognition. But what's even more inspiring is the pride on the faces of our instructors. They pour their hearts into their students, and it is truly inspiring to see how much pride they take in helping others see what is possible through education. Thank you, teachers!

Hazard Pay Update: It's going to be really anticlimactic when we are finally able to announce the details around hazard pay, but we're close. Late this afternoon, we received a draft of the hazard pay guidance from DHR. We're providing some feedback, and they intend to finalize the guidance on Monday. Hold tight. It's coming.

We're nearing the conclusion of Corrections Professionals' Week, Teacher Appreciation Week, and Nurse Appreciation Week. It's been really cool to see and hear all the ways the sacrifice and service of so many in this agency have been honored this week. From the bottom of my heart, thank you! I hope you have a great weekend, and a special thank you to all the mothers out there. Happy Mother's Day!

Stay safe, take care of yourself, and keep looking out for each other.

Thanks-
Josh