

The Department's Values Statement regarding "professionalism and quality of service" states, "As correctional professionals, we demonstrate our commitment through competency, accountability, ethics, and pride in work." Chris Idso, Facility Plant Manager, truly exemplifies this value and is an inspiration to staff every day.



At Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC), Idso stands out among the many with a welcoming nature through his very visible dedication, sense of humor, and strong work ethic. He worked extensively on a project that surrounded the construction of the relocated EFV units (SCCC acquired a duplex from McNeil Island Corrections Center (MICC) and was reassembling them to double the Extended Family Visits (EFV) capacity). He consistently kept all staff in this arduous process in the loop, updating them and keeping them apprised of the various status changes.

The movement and introduction of the EFV trailers was only one of the main projects Idso prides his work in. "Whether it was to learn about the prairie grass project, the tilapia project, or the offender gardens—I've found him to be a rich source of knowledge and insight," said Correctional Program Manager Gary Bohon. "He was patient and knowledgeable and imparted that knowledge in such a way that his enthusiasm was infectious. "

A prime example of the excellent qualities Idso possesses: The offender garden grew pumpkins for use within the facility. Most were earmarked to go to the kitchen, but Idso arranged for some to be available for the October Family Fun Night--the families (and especially the children) could paint the pumpkins and take the small ones home. Idso worked with his staff to make this happen. On the day of the event, staff member hosting the family event found the pumpkins had not been delivered. This was after regular business hours, and Idso had just recently left the facility after having stayed late to work on another project. "I called him to ask him where the pumpkins were located so I could retrieve them, and instead of merely telling me, he drove back to the facility to help me get the pumpkins to where they needed to be," states Bohon. Bear in mind this was a Friday evening and when Idso answered the phone, he was picking up a video to spend time with his kids that night; his return to the facility delayed his arrival at home, but he made that sacrifice to ensure the family program went well and that the children of the offenders who were there to paint pumpkins were not disappointed. Idso drew his keys again, escorted Bohon out beyond the HUB to get a Gator and trailer, helped load the pumpkins into the trailer, and then drove them through multiple gates to the visit room and helped unload the pumpkins (some of which were quite large and heavy, not to mention muddy) before he returned the Gator and trailer back to where they were stored and again departed the facility. This was truly above and beyond his job description, and yet he did so with grace and good humor. What's more, his actions proved that not doing this was *not* an option--he takes his job and the mission of the agency seriously.

Yet this is only an example of his behind-the-scenes work that not only helps keep the SCCC running, but provides services to the offenders/families/staff unseen and unheralded. He ensures his staff work to keep the facility in good operational order, completes projects quickly and within budget guidelines, looks for solutions rather than obstacles, and does it all so smoothly that it can be easy to miss just how much work it all is. Furthermore, he chairs the SCCC Sustainability Committee, which he (and the other members) keeps active and relevant within the facility.

In conclusion, Idso is an excellent staff member and one who provides an outstanding example for others to follow. He is selfless and dedicated beyond compare and deservedly so is a recipient of the agency's 2013 Employee of the Year award.