MAKING HISTORY IN
ORLANDO

AJA’s 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo sets records and lays foundations of success for an industry in transition. Hosted by the Orange County Corrections Department, the Nation’s jail community united for need-to-know education, networking, and partnerships in Orlando, Florida.

More than 900 jail professionals and 200-plus exhibitors travelled across the United States and around the world to convene at AJA’s 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo in the Orlando World Center Marriott in Orlando, Florida. Arriving from 42 States, the District of Columbia, and 4 countries, corrections officers, jail administrators, sheriffs, dozens of first-time attendees, and AJA’s Indian Country partners came together to create pathways for career advancement and to develop tomorrow’s leaders today. From April 9 to 12, they learned from—and connected with—the top minds and innovators in the field.

The only national event focusing exclusively on local jails and detention facilities, this year’s AJA Conference and Jail Expo offered a wide range educational workshops from experts in the field and demonstrations from the Nation’s leading suppliers for the corrections profession. After attending the conference, participants returned to the field with the skills and tools needed to build a better tomorrow for themselves, their agencies, and their communities.

Beginning a New Year in April

“As we look to the future, we can expect challenging conditions,” said new AJA President John W. Johnson Sr., MBA, CJM, as he addressed members during Sunday’s
Luncheon & Business Meeting on the first day of the conference. He explained how AJA is carving out an increased role in leading regulatory reform and protection of the profession; disseminating information and training to membership and attendees; conducting cost and comparative effectiveness studies; and developing the industry’s value-added message of making local communities safer and stronger.

“AJA has dedicated resources and energies to accomplishing these tasks, but this is not enough,” he continued. “The real game changer will be the involvement by you and the other associations. All of us have to work together, and if we do, we will be successful in exploiting the opportunities that always accompany change.”

That same sentiment of teamwork and expanded thinking were reflected in all of the 70 educational workshops, on the floor of the Jail Expo, and throughout the conference. The themes of the conference challenged correctional officers, jail managers, local detention facility professionals, industry manufacturers, and service providers to “Breakthrough to Excellence” and encouraged them to “Lead, Innovate, and Inspire” the future of the jail industry.
Participants could feel the energy in workshops that provided industry professionals with the most up-to-date information and best practices for success in a challenging and ever-changing correctional environment. This year’s workshops touched on both the professional concerns and personal interests of the attendees. A few of the standard topics returned, such as legal issues, PREA, NCCHC standards, and Tribal County jails; however, a few new topics were introduced such as web-based training, human resources and the law, and implementing Stephen Covey’s popular seven habits in a jail. And other workshops helped officers with AJA’s certification process, provided a historic look at jails on the frontier, and discussed stress management.

Creating Future Leadership

During Sunday’s AJA Luncheon & Business Meeting, Wayne Dicky reviewed AJA’s significant accomplishments in expanding an officer’s professional development. “AJA has launched several jail leadership initiatives designed to prepare and develop leadership skills among different managerial levels and emerging leaders to effectively equip them to become even better staff, managers, and leaders in our Nation’s jails,” he said. “We currently have five programs: the Southwest Florida Leadership Initiative, the Virginia Association of Regional Jails Leadership Initiative, the California Jail Command Academy, and—in partnership with the Correctional Management Institute of Texas—the National Jail Leadership Command Academy (NJLCA) and the Jail Executive Development Program (JEDP). We are happy to announce that we are also currently in development with the New Jersey Jail Wardens Association to launch the.”

JAIL EXPO IN ACTION

With a never-ending flow of innovation and inspiration from more than 200 exhibiting companies, the Jail Expo was truly an amazing experience. Attendees excitedly gathered on Sunday evening for the Ribbon Cutting & Grand Opening of the Jail Expo. In between workshops and other events, attendees connected with their favorite companies, met many new vendors, and examined the latest technology and products available to meet their agencies’ needs.

For a list of sponsors, turn to page 36.
New Jersey Correctional Leadership Series.”

AJA also announced the completion of the 24th NJLCA session in addition to the three academies that were provided for Bureau of Indian Affairs participants. At the time of this article’s publication, NJLCA will have graduated its 1,000th participant in the academy’s 25th Class this past June in 2017.

After recognizing graduates of the multiple leadership academies and initiatives, Wayne Dicky urged participants to encourage their colleagues to participate in AJA—to build the organization into a stronger advocate for the industry and to help professionals tell the story behind the importance of our Nation’s jails and local correctional facilities.

During the Plenary Session on Monday, the graduation ceremony for the first Jail Executive Development Program (JEDP) class was held. Launching the first class in the fall of 2016, JEDP is an intensive program designed to serve newly assigned jail administrators and help the corrections industry create the leaders of tomorrow.

“Thank you to the architects of the JEDP, committee members, participants, and facilitators for this groundbreaking work,” said President Johnson at the graduation ceremony. “Congratulations to the JEDP graduates! You exemplify the leadership and drive we all strive for in our lives.” (For the list and picture—along with the topic of their white paper—of this first graduating class, turn to page 50.)

While in Orlando, AJA also recognized its 20th anniversary of offering certification programs towards elevating the careers of our Nation’s jail staff. “Certification is an important part of career development and the corrections profession,” said now-Immediate Past President Wayne Dicky, CJM.

ACHIEVING A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

In recognition of career-long commitments to the professional advancement of local corrections, the American Jail Association was proud to award the Francis R. “Dick” Ford Distinguished Service Award to Arthur M. Wallenstein.

Now retired, Wallenstein served as the Director of the Montgomery County Department of Correction & Rehabilitation from 1999 to 2015. He also served on the National Institute of Corrections Advisory Board, appointed by Attorney General Janet Reno from 1994 to 2004 and by Attorney General Eric Holder from 2010 to 2013.

“Art is a force in corrections. He led the Montgomery County Department of Corrections in Maryland for 15 years and created a model facility. Art consistently encouraged his staff to be involved with AJA for professional development and growth,” Wayne Dicky said.

The award was named after its first recipient, Francis R. “Dick” Ford. This distinguished service award was created to recognize Ford’s contributions as the first executive director of the American Jail Association.
As the corrections environment presents jail professionals with ever-changing demands, many of the educational workshops focused on what officers can do to demonstrate their vital role in the overall corrections landscape. The 70-plus workshops focused on both professional issues as well as personal growth. Attendees could receive tips and guidance on AJA’s certification process in addition to learning how to decrease the risk of inmate death whether by suicide or detoxification. All returned to the field with a better understanding of PREA and NCCHC standards, direct supervision, and myriad inmate issues.

“As chief of the host agency, I can guarantee that the next three days will help you develop professionally through the many training workshops & networking opportunities,” said Chief of Corrections Cornita Riley, CJM. “This is your place to be!”

Many agencies also volunteered that it takes three or more months between application and hiring. “If you can’t hire someone from application-to-hire in six weeks, you need to get rid of what’s holding you up. When it takes that long, they [will] get a job somewhere else. Triage your jail’s hiring process!” McCampbell exclaimed.

Conversations focusing on the intense political and regulatory challenges facing American jails and correctional officers were also at the forefront at this year’s

AJA offers three certifications—the Certified Jail Manager (CJM), the Certified Jail Officer (CJO), and the Certified Correctional Trainer (CCT). To date, AJA has certified 343 active CJMs, 435 active CJOs, and 28 active CCTs. In addition, the members of the Jail Manager Certification Commission were in the AJA Pavilion during the conference to help attendees interested in obtaining their certification.

**LEAD, INNOVATE, INSPIRE**

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event. Elias Diggins, CJM, AJA’s Legislative Committee Chairman and new 1st Vice President told attendees: “We made clear that the American Jail Association is the first organization to be contacted when any legislation is being discussed concerning local detention facilities.

There is a power that we need to tap into as an association. A jail is in every congressional district—or at least men and women who are working in jails that can express the needs of the jail.”

To that end, those who attended “From the Hill: AJA Working for You in the Nation’s Capitol” were able to participate and speak in a roundtable-style discussion with AJA’s Legislative Committee about the challenges in their facility each day. The committee met with 22 congressional staff and reported on mental health reform, opioid addiction, restrictive housing, bail reform, inmate calling services, and the distinction between jails and prisons when it comes to policy and lawmaking.

“Specific concerns we have with the Solitary Confinement Act of 2015 (H.R.3399) is that they directly lift, cut, and paste restrictive housing text from the PREA bill (S.1435) into this new legislation regarding restrictive housing reform,” said AJA Immediate Past President Wayne Dicky. “Prisons measure solitary confinement in months and years. Jails measure solitary confinement in hours and days. It’s not the same, and believe it or not, policymakers don’t know that.”

Sharing the spotlight of workshops on current issues, there was standing room only for many sessions discussing mental health reform. During the presentation “Mental Health First Aid: Tools for Use by Staff in a Jail Environment,” Nicole Primus reported on “free” mental health training available in your jurisdiction, as well as augmentation to skills currently possessed by custody staff.

“Our Nation’s jails are feeling the impact contending with the rising number of inmates who have mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and dementia. This subset of inmates is on the rise and staying in our jails longer. In fact, people with mental health issues in the United States are 90% more likely to find themselves in the beds of your jails [rather] than receiving treatment,” stated Primus. “Staff are seeing an increase in workload and an increase in the amount of stress associated with effectively supervising and managing the housing unit. Are your agencies taking care of their own well-being—are you providing training in stress, trauma, PTSD, or officer suicide?”

On the same day in a different presentation, “Hot off the Wire: Managing the Mentally Ill in Your Jail,” AJA’s First President, Ray Coleman, stated from the audience, “The NIC (National Institute of Corrections) is sorely under budgeted as a resource to support local jails. Their budget is 25 million dollars; that is 150 million dollars less than the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts).”

This commentary highlights the importance of advocacy and what AJA stands for. President Johnson echoed sentiments inviting jail professionals to join AJA and support its advocacy work, and that it’s a vital function for all AJA members and correctional staff.

“We are agents of change and we want to take the reins on these issues, and the best thing we can do is keep communicating about it. If we could provide a tour to the entirety of our local populations, most of our issues would go away. We have to keep educating them.”
NEW AJA PRESIDENT

JOHN W. JOHNSON, SR., CJM

A JA provides leadership to the local correctional profession through education, research, and best practices. Supporting this commitment, the organization recognizes the men and women who have made significant contributions to the field of corrections. Presented at AJA’s Annual Banquet on Tuesday night, awards were given in the following categories:

- **Volunteer of the Year**: Simon Light, Ute Tribe Public Works Supervisor/Volunteer, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Towaoc, Colorado
- **Civilian Employee of the Year**: Melinda Myers Fellner, Director of Inmate Services, McLean County Detention Facility, Bloomington, Illinois
- **Correctional Officer of the Year**: Michael Cheung, Deputy Sheriff, Washoe County Sheriff’s Office, Reno, Nevada
- **Correctional Training Officer of the Year**: Kerrilyn Greathouse, Lieutenant/Training Coordinator, Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center, North Charleston, South Carolina
- **Correctional Supervisor of the Year**: Dawn T. Livers, Sergeant, Sumter County Sheriff’s Office, Bushnell, Florida
- **Correctional Administrator of the Year**: Jamie L. Clayton, CJM, Chief Deputy of Corrections, Imperial County Sheriff’s Office, El Centro, California

After the banquet, entertainment and music was provided by the Broward Sheriff’s Office Department of Detention Band. Comprised of sworn detention employees of various ranks, they perform in the South Florida community on behalf of Sheriff Israel.

*Look to the September/October issue of American Jails for more info on award recipients.*
JUDGE STEVEN LEIFMAN

Judge Steven Leifman shared the story of his career and unique, one-of-a-kind perspective on how jails can better serve mentally ill inmates.

When Steven Leifman was elected judge he had no idea that he was also becoming “the gatekeeper to the largest psychiatric facility in Florida—the Miami-Dade County Jail.”

According to Judge Leifman of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, there are 10 times as many people with serious mental illnesses in the Miami-Dade County Jail than in any State hospital in Florida, and it is home to the largest percentage of people with serious mental illnesses of any urban area in the United States. He estimates that 20,000 people in need of mental health treatment are arrested each year in Miami-Dade County, primarily for misdemeanors and low-level felonies. The county spends $80 million a year to house and treat this population.

“People are dying in jail when they could be getting the things that they need for recovery,” he said. “In fact, people with mental health in the United States are nine times more likely to find themselves in the beds of your jails.”

On any given day, Judge Leifman told attendees, there are 360,000 people behind bars with mental health illnesses in the United States, and another 670,000 under correctional supervision. “This is a shameful American tragedy, and it is one that must, and can, be reversed,” he exclaimed. “You would think by now we would treat inmates in clinics with treatment, but often, we can’t. And while sentencing has increased by roughly 166 percent, it would be nice to see our leaders providing the resources to tackle this massive growth in the United States.”

Judge Leifman created the groundbreaking Eleventh Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project in 2000, which consists of programs to steer people with mental illnesses who have committed low-level offenses from incarceration to a community-based care.

If a person with a mental illness is arrested for a low-level offense, he or she is diverted from jail to a community-based mental health program to receive treatment and continuing care. A person who is accepted into this diversion program is provided with case management assistance and help finding housing to lower their likelihood of reoffending.

Despite Miami-Dade’s successes, Leifman said that much work remains to be done. “There’s clearly something very wrong with a society that is willing to spend more money to incarcerate people that are mentally ill than to treat them,” Judge Leifman said. “I hope that you will speak to your local county commission. It truly takes a collaboration of us all in this room. No one situation works for everyone. It starts with us, and we have to keep the conversation going.”

If you missed this year’s conference, the planning for 2018 in Sacramento, California is already underway! AJA’s 37th Annual Conference & Jail Expo will convene at the Sacramento Convention Center on April 21–25, 2018. Registration and housing opens in late 2017.

announcing its newest additions while acknowledging its outgoing Board Members for their service. All sworn Board Members began the 2017–2018 term effective immediately on Sunday, April 9, 2017.

“This team that has been elected by AJA’s membership is comprised of professionals who have extensive experience in local corrections and have demonstrated their commitment to the profession,” President Johnson stated in an interview with CNN. “I look forward to serving with this distinguished panel as we begin a new year that will demand hard work on the State and national level engaging our members, providing them with quality training, and continuing to be ever-present on Capitol Hill as their voice.”

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California Board of State & Community Corrections
Congratulations to the American Jail Association’s 2017–2018 Officers and Board of Directors, who were sworn in at our 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo in Orlando, Florida in April. We thank them for their service to AJA and to local corrections. For their contact information, please turn to page 65.
36th ANNUAL CONFERENCE & JAIL EXPO

DRAWS HUNDREDS FOR EDUCATION & ADVANCEMENT IN OUR NATION’S JAILS

Lots To See
More than 900 jail & local detention professionals convened at the AJA's 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo.

4th ANNUAL
Criminal Justice Student Day
Valencia College's Criminal Justice Students attended workshops and a special Q&A session with jail practitioners, advancing AJA's mission and building tomorrow’s leaders today.

75+ GRADUATES
Leaders of the Future
More than 75 Graduates and Alumni of the National Jail Leadership Command Academy (NJLCA) attended the 2017 AJA Conference.
200 EXHIBITS
200 exhibiting companies filled the Jail Expo in Orlando, showcasing the latest and greatest in supplies, devices, and technology in corrections.

5 Days
Attendees partook in five days of training workshops that included sessions on Direct Supervision, Leadership Succession, Mental Health, Training Personnel, and more.

70+ SESSIONS
Attendees had the chance to attend their choice of 70+ educational workshops and Special Topics Saturday Workshops.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR APRIL 21–25, 2018 IN SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA!
2017 CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Please thank and support the following companies for sponsoring AJA’s 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo. We deeply appreciate their partnership and support.

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2017 AWARD SPONSORS

This year the American Jail Association presented six different awards at the 36th Annual Conference & Jail Expo Banquet. Thank you to the following sponsors for their support and recognition of the AJA Award Recipients.

Correctional Administrator of the Year
Correctional Supervisor of the Year
Volunteer of the Year

Correctional Officer of the Year
Correctional Training Officer of the Year

Civilian of the Year

To see the list of winners, turn to page 30.