



Office of the Sheriff

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Surry County Sheriff's Office
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First Graduating Class of the Surry County Detention Center's New Surry Transition Project Recovery Program

Sheriff Steve C. Hiatt and the entire Surry County Sheriff's Office are proud to celebrate the first graduating class of the Surry County Detention Center's new Surry Transition Project Recovery program. In partnership with the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery, the Surry County Detention Center has begun offering and facilitating counseling, recovery support and classes for inmates to aid in a more successful reentry into society upon their release. Headed by Jamie Edwards (Director of Surry County Substance Abuse Recovery) and Emily Venable-Schiff (Recovery to Work Business Advisor), the new Surry Transition Program (STP) aims to reduce recidivism and substance use disorders by offering criminal justice and substance use services and practical training for a positive community reintegration. In addition to substance use the Surry County Detention Center offers general classes in job readiness, financial skills, and fundamentals of resume writing skills as well as more specific certification classes in hospitality services and NCDOT-certified flagging, with additional certifications arriving in the near future.

The first graduates of the program - Jordan Marsh, Ethan Brown, Devan Deskins, Damian Watson, Robert Hodge, Zachary Perry, and Geoffrey Duncan – all completed the 12-week course on June 18, 2025, logging 130 hours of total combined treatment inside the Surry County Detention Center. All participants have logged over 200 hours combined in the STP program as it continues to grow weekly. Director of Surry County Substance Abuse Recovery Jamie Edwards stated, "We are excited to be welcomed by the Surry County Detention Center staff and look forward to a growing relationship delivering rehabilitation services for years to come."

In addition to the inherent qualifications that the inmates have achieved by graduating, the Surry Transition Program will also offer prerelease planning and support for the inmates throughout their time in the Surry County Detention Center and for an additional 6 months after their release. Chief Jail Administrator Tony Holyfield added "I'm grateful for the opportunity to facilitate opioid recovery classes through The Surry Transition Project. It's a privilege to support individuals in the jail as they take meaningful steps toward healing, growth, and lasting change."

Sheriff Steve C. Hiatt stated, "This is something that we have wanted to implement for a long time, but the overcrowding and insignificant space in the old detention facility limited programs and activities. In the new detention facility, it provides classroom and additional space, opening up opportunities to add and expand

programs. I appreciate Jamie and Emily and I'm proud of the partnership we have with SCOSAR. I am also proud of the accomplishments that these graduates achieved."

Both the Surry County Sheriff's Office and the Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery are happy to celebrate the achievements of this first graduating class while also noting how important it is to address the root causes of criminal justice involvement, substance abuse and addictive behavior. For further inquiries into the program, please contact the Director of Surry County Substance Abuse Recovery Jamie Edwards at 336-401-8218 or Recovery to Work Business Advisor Emily Venable-Schiff at 336-374-9145.

