



Probation Association of New Jersey

Serving New Jersey Since 1904

An affiliate of the American Probation and Parole Association

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PRESTIGIOUS PROBATION AWARD GIVEN TO BURLINGTON COUNTY OFFICER, UNION LEADER

*Covaleskie Honored for Leading the Fight to Protect Workers in Tough Economy,
Dedication to Supervising Juvenile Offenders*

Atlantic County, N.J. – The Probation Association of New Jersey (PAN) has chosen Dwight Covalleskie of Cinnaminson as this year's recipient of the John Augustus Award which is considered one of the highest honors within the community supervision system. Mr. Covalleskie, who serves as a probation officer in Burlington County overseeing juvenile offenders, was nominated by his peers in the employee union.

George P. Christie, president of PANJ, congratulated Covalleskie on winning this prestigious award which proves as a testament of the respect he has earned from his fellow probation officers.

“Given the challenges facing the state budget and attempts to slash benefits for hard-working probation officers to close deficits, it was critical for our members to have a strong advocate in Dwight Covalleski serving as a leader on contract negotiation,” said Christie. “Because of Dwight's efforts, our probation officers were able to avoid drastic layoffs or steep cuts that would have left gaping, dangerous holes in the supervision system.”

“I am honored and humbled to accept this award, having been nominated by my peers. I look forward to continue working on the many diverse issues which affect each and every probation officer throughout the state, to better enable us to perform our jobs and serve the citizens of New Jersey,” said Covalleski.

A probation officer since 1994, Mr. Covalleski currently serves as PANJ's first vice president for line staff; chairman of the Legal Committee; chairman of the Negotiation Committee; and member of the Legislative Committee. He also serves as the coordinator for National Staff Organization (NSO) training for line staff and supervisors.

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During his tenure as a member of the union, Covaleskie served as local vice president in Burlington County; regional vice president of the southern region; and chair of the Warning and Response Special Committee.

Covaleskie was honored with the John Augustus Award at the recent 67th annual PANJ Educational Foundation training institute, "Tackling Tough Times in 2009" which focused on addressing new and growing issues in the supervision system.

The award is named after the "Father of Probation," John Augustus, who supervised an adult drunkard who would have otherwise been incarcerated at the time. After expanding his supervisory role of successfully overseeing offenders in the community, the first law was passed in 1878 creating what has now evolved into the modern day probation system.

At the group's annual conference, State Senator Sean Kean (D-Monmouth) was honored as legislator of the Year for his support of measures to strengthen the state's community supervision system including a measure to ask voters to allow the Legislature to move the Division of Probation to the State Parole Board. Outstanding leaders among probation officers received awards for their commitment and dedication to supervising offenders and serving and leaders in their respective divisions. In addition, six scholarships were presented to deserving students continuing their college education.

With an estimated 139,000 adults and 20,000 juveniles under probation system, New Jersey is the nation's ninth largest adult probation system. There are approximately 2,800 probation officers and supervisors in New Jersey.

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