



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Incarcerated Veterans of Roxbury Holding First Ever
POW-MIA Remembrance Ceremony Behind Bars
Friday, September 18 at Noon**

TOWSON, MD (September 14, 2009)---To mark National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the Incarcerated Veterans of Roxbury (IVOR) will hold a remembrance ceremony at noon on Friday, September 18 at RCI. It marks the first time a Maryland prison has ever done such a ceremony.

IVOR, composed of thirty inmates who were honorably discharged from American military service, meets monthly and is supervised by an inmate board of elected officers. Outside veterans' affairs personnel are frequently brought into the prison to assist with matters such as medical and disability benefits, reentry services, vocational rehabilitation, job placement, and personal development. IVOR is advised by a correctional lieutenant and assisted by RCI's volunteer activities coordinators.

The September 18 ceremony will feature an inmate choir, moment of silence, and speeches by both inmate IVOR members and outside guests from the Vietnam Veterans of America and the Martinsburg Veterans Administration Medical Center, a key partner working with all three Hagerstown prisons.

DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard, recognizing the strength of the many prison veterans groups, has instituted several programs designed to assist eligible inmates who were honorably discharged. Maryland has the nation's only program offering inmate veterans the opportunity to restore State veterans' cemeteries while incarcerated, potentially earn paying Veterans' Affairs jobs upon their release from prison.

The three Hagerstown prisons each have active veterans' groups. MCI-H was the first prison in the nation to have its inmates participate in the Library of Congress' effort to videotape the service stories of veterans from all American wars since World War Two. And MCTC's veterans' group will hold a walk-a-thon to raise money for the U.S.O. on September 26. Several hundred general population inmates are expected to join the prison's veterans. All will voluntarily contribute money to the U.S.O. in order to participate, and the proceeds are expected to exceed \$1,500.