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Saluting Employees

2012 SHSU/CMIT criminal justice scholarship recipients announced

Sam Houston State University's (SHSU) College of Criminal Justice, in partnership with the Correctional Management Institute of Texas (CMIT), recently awarded Master of Science in Criminal Justice Leadership and Management program scholarships to Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) employees Debbie Erwin and Chris Cirrito. The intensive education program teaches criminal justice professionals critical management skills required to advance in the field of criminal corrections.

"It is a great opportunity for staff members who are invested in criminal justice careers to expand their education," said Jan Thornton, Human Resources Director at TDCJ. "This program will help them to meet their personal and professional goals with our agency."

Erwin began her career with TDCJ in 1984 as a correctional officer and rose through the ranks to assistant warden at the Eastham Unit in Lovelady. She shares her commitment to continuing education, saying "If you are going to advance, you need to have the educational background. Within this agency, if you are willing to put forth the effort, you have endless opportunities."

Cirrito began his career as a correctional officer in 1995 while pursuing his bachelor's in Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University. He later joined the Internal Audit Division where he currently serves as an audit manager. Recognizing the immediate value of this scholarship, he says "The master's program will allow me to apply the concepts I learn to my current position in management."

Erwin and Cirrito begin the two-year Master of Science program in August. "It is a tremendous honor for the Correctional Management Institute to play a role in the continued educational achievement and growth of Texas criminal justice professionals," said Doug Dretke, Executive Director of CMIT. "Both recipients represent the highest level of professionalism within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and serve as a tribute to their agency and the public they serve."



TDCJ employees Debbie Erwin (left) and Chris Cirrito were awarded scholarships to the SHSU Master of Science in Criminal Justice Leadership and Management program.

Submitted photo