

BCJ TIMES



Facilitator of the year *By Cecilia Rodriguez*

I interviewed Lt. Cook after he received Program Facilitator of the year award.

Question: What does this award mean to you?

Answer: It validates all the hard work people have put into building this program. This award doesn't mean to me what it means to everyone else. My reward is seeing inmates grow and change and become the best versions of themselves and this community.

Question: What do you plan for this program moving forward after receiving this award?

Answer: Before I knew anything about this award, I was already planning to make this program even better for 2026.

Below is a show of appreciation for Lt. Cook from the MRT Ladies:

Katherine Whittenburg (Class 5): 2 years ago, Mr. Cook took a chance on me and allowed me to come from another county to have the opportunity to better myself through the classes, tools, and support that he offers in the MRT program.

Lorna Mitchell (Class 8): Congratulations on the award, it was much deserved. Thanks for all you do!

Corie Beth (Class 8): Mr. Cook took a chance on me when no one else would. Mr. Cook made me believe in myself again.

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Facilitator of the year Continued *By Cecilia Rodriguez*

Continuation of Appreciation for Lt. Cook

Destiny Finch (Class 9): I'm extremely thankful for Mr. Cook and the opportunity he gave me when he accepted me into this program. In just two short months my life has been completely transformed, and I couldn't be more grateful.

Jamie Ryan (Class 5): Lt. Cook never gives up, dreams big, and really believes it's possible to make a difference. Because it is!

Leandra Plemons (Class 9): Facilitator of the year is such an understatement. Lt. Cook is so much more than that. He is an important role model in our lives. Thank you for believing in me before I believed in myself.

Bridgette Miller (Class 9): I am so glad that Mr. Cook is being recognized because he looks at us as human beings and not just inmates. He also stands for us, so we have a space to recover and be able to dream again.

Janette Adcock (Class 8): Mr. Cook has been an inspiration to me since I came to the MRT program. He genuinely cares about our recovery and futures.

Clarissa Darnell (Class 9): I am grateful to be a part of such a well-supported program and even more grateful to have Lt. "Dad" aka Lt. Cook as our facilitator. Thank you for letting me finish what I started four years ago.

Donna Hicks (Class 9): I am so grateful for this program and especially for Lt. Cook. He has helped me have a different outlook on my life. This would not be happening without Lt. Cook.

LaKisha Benson (Class 9): I've been in this program for 5 months. Since I've been here, I've seen the change in myself, and I owe it all to Lt. Cook. Thanks to him I've met my better self.

Janet Rhodes (Class 8): I have immense respect for Mr. Cook. I am so grateful to him for the opportunity to be a part of MRT. I look forward to passing on what I have learned onto others.

Angela Ray (Class 9): I am grateful to Mr. Cook and this program. Having MRT and all of the classes that it offers has been such a blessing it would be a very different experience without it. It's no surprise he won facilitator of the year; he definitely deserves it.

Hayla Sanders (Class 8): A year ago I hugged Lt. Cook and said, "This is for my son. He doesn't know it yet, but you saved his mommy's life." What Mr. Cook is doing here is more than saving lives. He's restoring families and improving the community. Who knew rock bottom is where I'd find my life. Thanks for all you do for us, but especially the hope you've given us.

Diamond Walker (Class 9): Mr. Cook is my life saver. He believed in me and helped me realize my life means more than getting high.

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I am Worthy Gala



By Shawna Barrier

Hello, I would like to share my heartfelt appreciation for Mr. Cook, Mrs. Sylvia Pinson and countless others that support the MRT (Moral Reconciliation Therapy) program. My life has been dramatically changed since 2022, and it is all due to this program and the countless individuals that help support it. Attending the I am Worthy Gala recently reminded me how truly life changing this program is. MRT has not only helped me in my recovery but it has also given me and countless others the tools we need to help rebuild our lives with purpose, accountability, and hope.

A few years ago, I was in a very different place. Today, I am proud to say I've been in recovery for almost three years and very much of that credit is due to Mr. Cook and the MRT Program. After attending the Gala, I felt deeply moved to share how MRT gave me a second chance at life and helped me believe in myself again. Today I have a full-time job where I reside in Nashville, Tennessee at Lee Company. I also live and work at TPOM (Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministries) and attend Nashville State Community College. Meeting at the I am Worthy Gala with all the ladies and seeing our progress since incarceration and how we have grown and are making something of ourselves is something to behold.

Facilitator of the year Continued

By Cecilia Rodriguez

Continuation of Appreciation for Lt. Cook

Trina Leonard (Class 5): I respect everything Lt. Cook has done for me and the jail. I'm very lucky to know an awesome man that believes in us.

Cecilia Rodriguez (Class 6): Lt. Cook is definitely one of a kind. He has shown us what it means to truly know what we want and who we want to be. Congrats Lt. Cook on being the best facilitator in the state.

Amanda Myers-Rodia: (Class 9): Lt. Cook definitely deserves this award plus more. He's a great man that gives his all to those he believes in. Congratulations Mr. Cook you're the best.

Jami Dutton (Class 6): Congratulations Mr. Cook. Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself.

Betina Major (Class 7): He gave me the tools to live a clean life. Congrats Mr. Cook