

# The MTC Difference

BRADSHAW STATE JAIL—SEPTEMBER 2017 THROUGH AUGUST 2018

At midnight on September 1, 2017, MTC assumed operations of the Bradshaw State Jail in Texas. MTC has worked closely with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), facility staff, inmates, and local communities to ensure an orderly and efficient transition. On September 1, 2018, MTC celebrated its one-year anniversary as the operator of the Bradshaw facility.

During the first year of operations, MTC has invested in improvements to the conditions of the facility, expanded and improved programs offered, and quickly established a positive facility culture. This report highlights some of the successes at Bradshaw during the first year of transition to MTC operations, which include:



- MTC provided a secure environment to staff and incarcerated men
- MTC expanded opportunities to earn industry certifications and prepare for successful reentry
- MTC expanded opportunities to participate in life-changing programming
- MTC expanded opportunities to engage in positive ways with staff

Every MTC-operated correctional facility uses a similar approach in providing better opportunities for incarcerated people. The key components of the MTC approach used at the Bradshaw State Jail included:

- A BIONIC (believe it or not, I care) culture that fosters respectful interactions
- Success for Life®—an operational philosophy emphasizing effective programming and positive changes in the lives of incarcerated people
- Partnerships with volunteers and the community to prepare incarcerated people to successfully return to their communities

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## BIONIC—BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I CARE

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MTC has a unique history among companies providing correctional services. The family-run company began as an operator of federal Job Corps centers—residential education and career technical training schools for at-risk youth facing significant barriers to employment. MTC then took that passion for improving people’s lives through education and training to another at-risk population: incarcerated men and women.

MTC’s approach to improving the lives of people facing difficult challenges is embodied by the company’s philosophy—Believe it or not, I care (BIONIC). BIONIC is the belief and attitude among all MTC leaders, staff, and incarcerated individuals that we can affect positive change in our own lives and the lives of others. Since taking over operations of the Bradshaw State Jail, MTC has demonstrated the BIONIC approach by providing transformational leadership, ensuring a clean and well-maintained facility, treating incarcerated men with respect, and operating a safe and secure environment.

## Transformational leadership has set the tone for MTC's BIONIC culture

MTC's approach to corrections depends on transformational leaders at each facility to engage, motivate, and inspire both staff and incarcerated individuals to be BIONIC. The leadership at Bradshaw inspires staff and incarcerated men to be BIONIC through leading by example.

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*I have never experienced the positivity that I have since MTC has taken over the unit here at Bradshaw. I have never had a warden or major walk up to me and ask me if everything is alright. But here at MTC, Warden Driskell, Assistant Warden Wilson, and Major Rodriguez make it a point to show concern about the offenders and our well-being.*

*—Donta Clayton, Bradshaw State Jail*

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## MTC invested in facility improvements at Bradshaw State Jail

Part of MTC's BIONIC approach is creating a positive physical environment for staff and incarcerated men and women. Upon taking over operations of Bradshaw, MTC made several improvements to the facility (see figure 1). These changes have improved the safety and comfort of both the staff and those serving time at the facility. Before MTC took over operations of the Bradshaw facility, the officers dining room had not been usable in over seven years. MTC repaired the nonoperational HVAC system and cleaned the area so that staff could take much deserved breaks in a proper dining area. MTC also purchased an ice machines to improve the comfort of incarcerated men in the hot Texas weather.

Figure 1. MTC facility improvements at Bradshaw State Jail

- Replaced all mattresses, pillows, and bedding
- Purchased new clothing for incarcerated men
- Replaced all barber shop equipment
- Replaced all television sets in the housing area; increased television programming from 8 to 98 channels
- Replaced food trays, sporks, and cups
- Purchased new radios to enhance staff communication
- Added additional fans to improve air flow in kitchen and work areas
- Purchased new water coolers for the housing area
- Repaired the HVAC in the officer's dining room
- Repaired the HVAC in the kitchen commissary
- Replaced equipment for the weight room
- Replaced nine hot water heaters
- Constructed a cover for the commissary line, protecting incarcerated men from the elements
- Added an ice machine for the housing areas to provide ice to incarcerated men in the summer months

## Incarcerated men have noticed the MTC difference in staff interactions

MTC staff understand that being BIONIC means approaching every interaction with coworkers, incarcerated individuals, and community members with dignity and respect. It also means encouraging and supporting those in their care to make positive changes. Dustin Garcia was serving time at Bradshaw State Jail when MTC took over operations. At first, Mr. Garcia was skeptical that a change in management would make a positive impact on his time in prison. But MTC's BIONIC approach eventually won him over and gave him confidence that he could improve his life.

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*"Within a couple of months MTC was proving me wrong. They started establishing a variety of programs that have literally helped not only my time, but my outlook on life... So far MTC, has lived up to their motto "BIONIC" [Believe It or Not I Care]." – Dustin Garcia, Bradshaw State Jail*

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## MTC has maintained safety and security at Bradshaw State Jail

Incarcerated individuals can't make positive changes if they aren't safe and secure. MTC provides a safe and a secure environment at Bradshaw by providing intensive training and oversight to staff, setting clear standards of behavior for staff and incarcerated men, and holding all accountable for adhering to those standards. During the first year of operating Bradshaw, MTC had no escapes, no homicides, no suicides and no inmate on staff assaults resulting in serious injury.<sup>1</sup>

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## SUCCESS FOR LIFE®—PREPARING INCARCERATED MEN FOR REENTRY

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As part of its BIONIC culture, MTC uses an approach called Success for Life® – a case management model that prioritizes successful reintegration of each incarcerated individual into their communities upon release. Success for Life® incorporates evidence-based practices from over 40 years of correctional research to remediate the behaviors and outcomes of criminal conduct. MTC's model begins by assessing each individual's risks, needs, and drivers of criminal behavior and creating a Success for Life® plan. Staff work together with the individual to match the plan with specific interventions and to develop improvement goals.

MTC offers a wide range of programs, interventions, and activities to the men incarcerated at Bradshaw, all with the purpose of helping them successfully reintegrate into society after prison by:

- Addressing cognitive-behavioral needs
- Strengthening positive relationships with family, peers, and community
- Providing educational and vocational opportunities
- Improving emotional regulation skills
- Addressing substance misuse and recovery
- Providing alternative activities, including faith-based and health-promoting activities

All facility leaders and staff are accountable for making the Success for Life® model work. A continuous quality improvement system is in place to measure staff efficiency, engagement with incarcerated men, and program effectiveness. This means that staff are expected to maximize the time spent in direct, meaningful engagement with incarcerated men; incarcerated men are expected to maximize the time they spend in positive activities and programming; and the programs and activities offered are effective in helping them successfully reintegrate into their communities after prison.

### Improvements in staff efficiency: Increasing positive interactions with incarcerated men



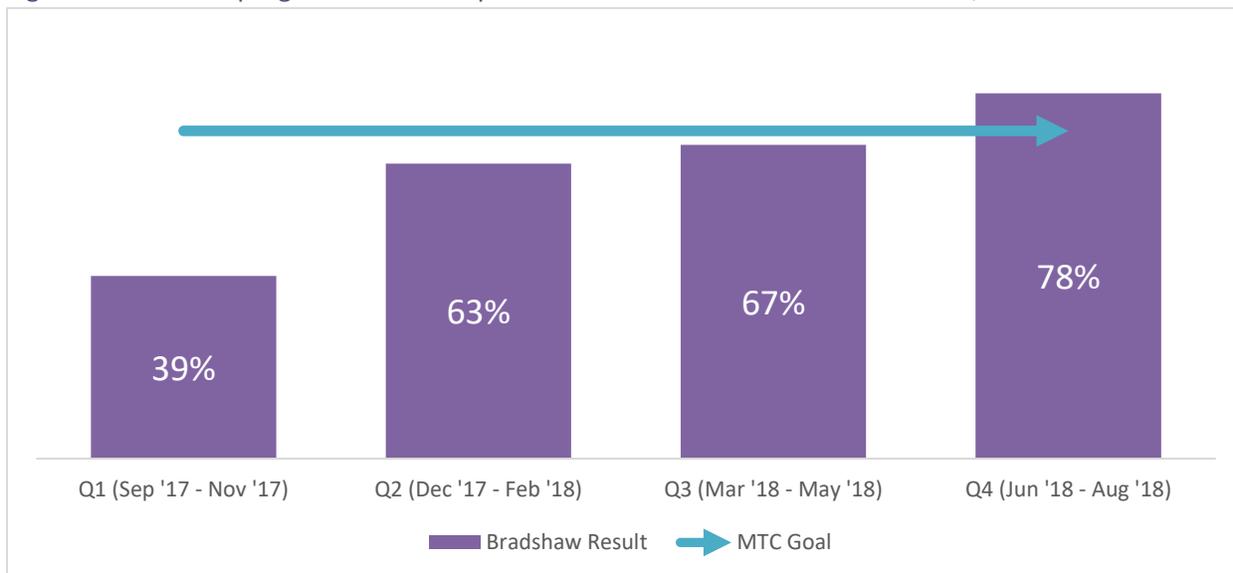
*Larry Ranson (left) interviews Officer Barragan (right) about the benefits of Bradshaw's new CrossFit program. Positive interactions between incarcerated men and staff are a critical part of MTC's BIONIC approach to corrections.*

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Positive interactions with staff have been shown to motivate incarcerated people to participate in rehabilitative programs and promote positive behavioral changes.<sup>2</sup> As part of MTC's Success for Life®, program staff at all MTC correctional facilities are expected to spend at least 70 percent of their time in direct, positive interactions with the incarcerated people in their care.

When MTC took over operations of Bradshaw, staff adapted quickly to the expectation to maximize time spend in positive interactions with the inmate population(see figure 2).<sup>3</sup>

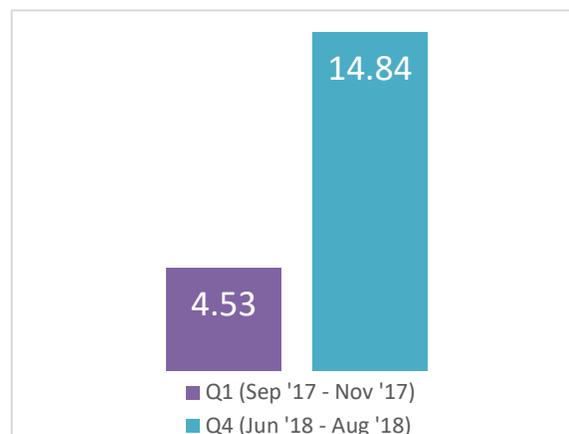
Figure 2 Percent of program staff time spent in interaction with incarcerated men, Bradshaw State Jail



### Improvements in program engagement: Increasing time spent in meaningful programs

Incarcerated men and women who participate in meaningful programs, classes, and activities are less likely to be engaged in disruptive behavior in prison and more likely to successfully reenter society upon release from prison.<sup>4</sup> Each individual incarcerated at Bradshaw State Jail is screened upon admission to determine their individualized needs for educational, vocational, life skills, and pre-release programs. MTC leaders and staff at Bradshaw have developed strategies for increasing the opportunities available for all incarcerated men to participate in a wide range of activities and programs, beyond those required by MTC’s contract. The institution has expanded evening programs, identified additional space to hold activities, and implemented new programs. They have also increased opportunities to participate in tournaments, art classes, service opportunities, and other activities. Security staff were well trained to encourage men to participate in programs and praise them for their successes.

Figure 3. Engagement hours per incarcerated person, per week, at Bradshaw State Jail



As a result of concerted effort from leadership and staff, the average number of hours spent by the men at Bradshaw in programs and activities (engagement hours) has steadily risen since MTC took over operations (see figure 3).<sup>5</sup> In August of 2018, engagement hours reached a high of 18 hours per inmate, per week.

*“There’s just so much I can say about MTC here at Bradshaw State Jail. Not only has it improved me, but it also helped so many other offenders here. With all the education, vocation, and extra events, MTC requires it, which gives us better opportunities for re-entry into society. Even with any addictions, MTC has classes to help overcome those habits. It also helps veterans and provides [assistance] even after release. With all the help from staff and teachers, I can see why they stand by [the] saying “BIONIC”, Believe It or Not I Care. To MTC, Warden Driskell, Assistant Warden Wilson, and Major Rodriguez—thank you for caring.” – Ramon Ortiz, Bradshaw State Jail*

### Improvements in program effectiveness: Enhancing programs to reduce recidivism

A critical component of Success for Life® is offering incarcerated people the programs and opportunities they need to improve their chances of success after prison. A lack of education, vocational skills training, and steady work experience affects peoples’ ability to find meaningful employment after prison, putting them at greater risk of reoffending.<sup>6</sup> MTC is addressing this important issue at Bradshaw by enhancing participation in programs that provide the opportunity to earn a GED, learn valuable life skills, and earn industry-recognized credentials in high-demand occupations.

MTC added new vocational programs at Bradshaw that give participants the chance to earn industry-recognized credentials in high-wage fields. At Bradshaw, MTC implemented three vocational programs through the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER): carpentry, electrical, and painting & facility care. Interest in these NCCER programs has been high with 166 men enrolling in the first year.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout MTC’s first year of operating Bradshaw, the number of incarcerated men completing certificate programs to address their cognitive behavioral, educational, and vocational needs has steadily increased (see figure 4). During the first 12 months, MTC awarded 370 certificates, including GEDs, NCCER vocational certifications, parenting, anger management, and pre-release preparation.

Figure 4. Educational, vocational, and life skills certificates awarded at Bradshaw State Jail

Quarter 1 09/17 – 11/17	Quarter 2 12/17 – 02/18	Quarter 3 03/18 – 05/18	Quarter 4 06/18 – 08/18	Total 09/17 – 08/18
54	91	93	132	<b>370</b>

Source: MTC Offender Data System, Certificate Counts

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH VOLUNTEERS AND THE COMMUNITY

MTC understands the important roles that volunteers and the community have in preparing incarcerated men and women for successful lives after prison. Since assuming operations of the Bradshaw State Jail, MTC has established a community relations council (CRC), comprised of community leaders and city officials. Facility leaders and CRC members meet regularly to share positive updates,



address concerns, and collaborate on issues important to the community. MTC opens its doors to the community, inviting all to see firsthand how the facility operates. The community of Henderson contributes greatly to the success of Bradshaw State Jail. The men incarcerated at the facility also have the opportunity to contribute in positive ways to the community. Volunteer work crews from both the

Bradshaw State Jail and the MTC-operated East Texas Treatment Facility take care of the grounds at the Henderson Sport Complex and the Rusk County Youth Expo Center. The community appreciates the good work they do and the inmates who participate relish the opportunity to give back to their community in a productive way.

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*Twice a month, hundreds of men at Bradshaw attend Celebrating Recovery, a volunteer-led event aimed to help men overcome their addictions and celebrate the joy of living. Volunteer Marian Collins values the partnership with the facility leaders and staff. “We have had nothing but open arms and rolled out carpets for us as we enter the front door,” she says.*

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Figure 5. Community Relations Council Members at Bradshaw State Jail

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John “Buzz” Fullen, <i>Henderson City Mayor</i></li> <li>• Joel Hale, <i>Rusk County Judge</i></li> <li>• Jeff Price, <i>Rusk County Sheriff</i></li> <li>• Chad Taylor, <i>Henderson Police Chief</i></li> <li>• Rusty Chote, <i>Henderson Fire Chief</i></li> <li>• Dr. David Higgs, <i>First Baptist Church Pastor</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Raylene Conner, <i>Henderson Independent School District</i></li> <li>• Bonnie Geddie, <i>Henderson Chamber of Commerce</i></li> <li>• Sue Henderson, <i>Henderson Economic Development Corporation</i></li> <li>• Les Linebarger, <i>Henderson Daily News</i></li> </ul>
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## MTC IS COMMITTED TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AT BRADSHAW

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Since assuming operations of the Bradshaw State Jail in September of 2017, MTC has established a BIONIC culture among staff and incarcerated men, implemented an operational philosophy emphasizing effective programming and positive change, and developed strong relationships with community partners and volunteers. MTC will continue to build on the successes of the first year and make further improvements to safety, security, and effective interventions to help prepare incarcerated men for successful reintegration into their communities.

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<sup>1</sup> MTC Offender Data System, Performance Management Report

<sup>2</sup> Urban Institute. (January 2016). *Transforming Prisons, Restoring Lives: Final Recommendations of the Charles Colson Task Force on Federal Corrections* (pp. 36-37). Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/77101/2000589-Transforming-Prisons-Restoring-Lives.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> MTC Offender Data Management System, Performance Management Report

<sup>4</sup> The Correctional Association of New York. (January 2009). *Education from the Inside, Out: The Multiple Benefits of College Programs in Prison*. Retrieved from [http://www.correctionalassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Higher\\_Education\\_Full\\_Report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.correctionalassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Higher_Education_Full_Report_2009.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> MTC Offender Data Management System, Performance Management Report

<sup>6</sup> Davis, Lois M., Robert Bozick, Jennifer L. Steele, Jessica Saunders and Jeremy N. V. Miles. (2013). *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (p. 3). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR266.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html)

<sup>7</sup> MTC Offender Data System, Inmate Program Participation Report