



PRESS RELEASE

MS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS *723 N. PRESIDENT ST. *JACKSON, MS 39202 *(601)359-5600 *(FAX: 5624)

Date: February 1, 2003
Contact: Ken Jones
Phone: (601) 359-5608
Fax: (601) 359-5738

Michael A. Wilson Named New Superintendent at Mississippi State Penitentiary

Jackson—Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) Commissioner Christopher Epps announced, effective February 1, the appointment of Michael A. Wilson as the new Superintendent of the Mississippi State Penitentiary (MSP) at Parchman. Wilson replaces Emmitt Sparkman who was recently appointed Deputy Commissioner of Institutions for the state's prison system. MSP is the state's largest prison facility and has the capacity to house 5711 prisoners.

“Superintendent Wilson has an extensive background in corrections that will enhance the operation of MSP,” said Commissioner Epps. “I believe that his wealth of experience as a practitioner in corrections which spans over 30 years, coupled with his distinct knowledge of prison security management, will be a valuable asset to the continued smooth operation of MSP.”

Michael Wilson, age 48, is a 1977 graduate of Sam Houston University in Huntsville, Tex., and holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. He joined the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in September, 1972, as a correctional officer while continuing to work toward completion of his undergraduate degree. He was promoted to sergeant in October, 1977 and worked with “Operation Kick-It,” an educational program involving inmates who lectured to school and civic groups about the consequences of drug abuse. He also served as a field coordinator in TDCJ's Social Services Program developing general release plans of discharges and parolees. In March, 1981, he was promoted to the rank of captain and in 1984 he was elevated to the rank of major. During this period he was responsible for the general supervision of staff and for the custody and discipline of inmates.

Wilson worked at nine separate prison units throughout his 30-year career with TDCJ. He served as assistant warden of Ramsey II Unit, an 1176 bed facility. Later he served as warden of the 3190 bed Mark Michael Unit which houses maximum-security offenders and finally warden over the Jim Ferguson Unit, a 2400 bed facility at Midway, Tex., his last supervisory position prior to joining MDOC as Superintendent of the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

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Superintendent Wilson has completed a diverse curriculum of professional training throughout his career. Course study ranged from Manager of Managers and Hostage Negotiation to Legal Issues for Correctional Managers and Basics of Time Management/Case Management. He has also been active in professional and civic affairs.

“I’m very excited about assuming my new position at the Mississippi State Penitentiary,” said Superintendent Wilson. “Parchman is an extremely large institution with a proud history. I’m especially looking forward to the opportunity of working with the staff of the prison’s nearly 1800 dedicated employees in meeting the challenges in the daily operation of this great institution which was recently recommended for accreditation by the American Correctional Association.”