

Prison honors officers for saving inmate's life | [View Clip](#)
10/12/2009
Cumberland Times-News

Man attempted to hang self

CRESAPTOWN — Three correctional officers from North Branch Correctional Institution were honored Wednesday for saving the life of an inmate who was attempting to commit suicide.

The officers received commendation ribbons and certificates during a ceremony held in the roll call room.

Correctional Officer I Randy Adkins, Correctional Officer II Brian Barrett and Correctional Officer II Melvin Lewis were on duty just before midnight on Aug. 13 when a maximum-security inmate on the segregation unit who has a history of mental health issues and violence attempted to hang himself.

The officers removed the noose from the unconscious inmate and performed CPR while other officers called for medical assistance. Medical personnel eventually tended to the inmate, who survived thanks to the officers' valiant efforts.

“Correctional officers seldom get the credit they deserve,” said North Branch Warden Bobby Shearin. “And here’s a case where their efforts actually saved a man’s life. People don’t realize that even in difficult conditions — sometimes with inmates who are combative and violent against them — officers act not only professionally, but heroically.”

Lewis is a four-year veteran; Barrett has been in the Division of Correction for two years; and Adkins began his correctional career in 2008. The inmate whose life they saved is serving a life sentence for first-degree murder.