

## Memorandum

**TO:** Professors Andrea Armstrong and Nishi Kumar

**FROM:** Shayne Kearney

**RE:** “Better Know a Jail” Memo

**DATE:** November 29, 2022

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### DeSoto Parish Detention Center

#### I. Introduction

DeSoto Parish is located south of the Shreveport-Bossier City metropolitan area.<sup>1</sup> It is comprised of 895 square miles and, as of 2021, has a population of 26,919.<sup>2</sup> The parish consists of three towns: Keachi, Logansport, and Stonewall, four villages: Grand Cane, Longstreet, South Mansfield, and Stanley; and two unincorporated communities, Frierson and Kingston.<sup>3</sup> Divided into farm, dairy, and timber land, DeSoto Parish’s economy previously was primarily agricultural.<sup>4</sup> While beef cattle production and the dairy industry are still significant contributors to the economy, industrial development is growing at a rapid pace with the paper mill, lignite mining, and oil and gas activity.<sup>5</sup>

The DeSoto Parish Detention Center was built in 1970 in Mansfield, Louisiana.<sup>6</sup> It is a part of the DeSoto Parish Sheriff’s Office (DPSO) and belongs to their corrections division.<sup>7</sup> The facility is operated and maintained by the Louisiana Department of Corrections along with the DeSoto Parish Detention Center Administrator and Assistant Jail Administrator.<sup>8</sup> It is also under the leadership of the DeSoto Parish Sheriff’s Office and supervised by Warden Billy Cotton.<sup>9</sup> More information about the DeSoto Parish, Sheriff’s Office, and the DeSoto Parish Detention Center can be found at <https://www.dpsso.org>.

#### II. Number of Deaths and Trends

From 2014 to 2019, the DeSoto Parish Detention Center reported zero deaths at the facility.<sup>10</sup> In 2020, one death occurred. Brandon Binning, a thirty-six-year-old male,

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<sup>1</sup> “DeSoto Parish Profile .” DeSoto Parish - The official website of Louisiana. Accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.louisiana.gov/local-louisiana/desoto-parish>.

<sup>2</sup> “U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts: De Soto Parish, Louisiana; Louisiana ...” United States Census Bureau . Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/desotoparishlouisiana,LA,US/PST045221>.

<sup>3</sup> DeSoto Parish Profile .” DeSoto Parish - The official website of Louisiana. Accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.louisiana.gov/local-louisiana/desoto-parish>.

<sup>4</sup> Lsuagcenter. “About DeSoto Parish.” LSU AgCenter, January 12, 2016. [https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our\\_offices/parishes/desoto/features/about\\_the\\_parish/about-desoto-parish](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our_offices/parishes/desoto/features/about_the_parish/about-desoto-parish).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> “DeSoto Parish Detention Center.” thecityofnewbrunswick.org, August 27, 2022. <https://thecityofnewbrunswick.org/louisiana/county-jail/desoto-parish-detention-center/>.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> “DeSoto Parish.” Incarceration Transparency. Accessed November 26, 2022. [https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/?page\\_id=181](https://www.incarcerationtransparency.org/?page_id=181).

committed suicide on May 22, 2020. <sup>11</sup>The facility did not have any deaths in 2021 and 2022 so far. <sup>12</sup>

### III. Jail Characteristics

Located at 205 Franklin Street, Mansfield, LA 71052, and arranged on four sections of land in metropolitan Mansfield, the DeSoto Parish Detention Center is a minimum-security county jail.<sup>13</sup> The Center is a 124-bed office designed to accommodate 130 inmates; however, it received a special exception from the state fire marshal's office to hold 150 inmates in case of emergency.<sup>14</sup> It houses pre-trial detainees (persons currently being detained and awaiting trial), and The Louisiana Department of Corrections also utilizes the facility to hold those who have violated probation in Mansfield City.<sup>15</sup> All inmates at the facility are males and females over eighteen, most of whom are held for a short term.<sup>16</sup>

As of November 26, 2022, at 11 PM (CST), Detention Center has 108 people in custody, ninety-eight males and ten females.<sup>17</sup> Of the ninety-eight men in custody, thirty-five are white, sixty-one are black, and two of their races are unknown.<sup>18</sup> Of the ten women in custody, five are white, four are black, and one of their races is unknown.<sup>19</sup>

Visitation is available Monday through Friday from 1:00 PM to 3:40 PM.<sup>20</sup> All visits require advanced notice at least twenty-four hours before the scheduled visit and must end by 4:00 PM.<sup>21</sup> Appointments for visitation may be scheduled Monday through Friday from 1:00 PM to 3:40 PM.<sup>22</sup> Visits or sessions are limited to fifteen minutes.<sup>23</sup> You can only visit an inmate if your name appears on the inmate's visitation list, filled out when the inmate is booked and processed at the Center.<sup>24</sup> Although, inmates are allowed to adjust their list once a month. The DeSoto Parish Detention Center also allows video visitation via Zoom.<sup>25</sup> To set up a video visitation, the person must contact the DeSoto Parish Detention Center at 318-872-2295 between the hours of 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.<sup>26</sup>

On a day-to-day basis, the Center is supervised by eighty-four staff members, including the warden, one commander, a jail program assistant, three line staff supervisors, three sergeants, six officers, twenty correctional officers, and transport personnel.<sup>27</sup> The

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<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> Email from Nichole Buckle

<sup>13</sup> "DeSoto Parish Detention Center." Madison County TN Sheriff's Office - Madison County Jail, August 7, 2022. <https://madisoncounty-sheriff.com/louisiana/county-jail/desoto-parish-detention-center/>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> "Platinum Webjail." Platinum Webjail-Current Inmate Roster. Accessed November 28, 2022. <http://inmates.dpso.org/>.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> Bell, Donnie. "Corrections." DeSoto Parish Sheriff. Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.dpso.org/divisions-corrections>.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> "DeSoto Parish Detention Center." christiancountysheriffsoffice.com, August 23, 2022. <https://christiancountysheriffsoffice.com/louisiana/county-jail/desoto-parish-detention-center/>.

DeSoto Parish Detention Center staff also oversees and works at the DeSoto Parish County Work Leave Center (WFC), a traffic light away from the detention center.<sup>28</sup>

### **A. Current Leadership**

The current sheriff at the DeSoto Parish Detention Center is Sheriff Jayson Richardson, who first took office in 2018 at the age of forty.<sup>29</sup> Currently, he is the youngest sheriff in the state of Louisiana.<sup>30</sup> His term ends in July 2024, and he has plans to run again.<sup>31</sup> Sheriff Richardson was born and raised in Logansport, Louisiana, and began his law enforcement career by attending the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Training Academy and the FBI LEEDA Trilogy.<sup>32</sup>

Before becoming sheriff, Sheriff Richardson served the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office for eighteen years in the following capacity:<sup>33</sup>

- Directed Patrol Unit
- S.W.A.T. Operator
- Sergeant of Technology
- Lieutenant of Administration
- Captain of Patrol
- Chief Criminal Deputy

During his tenure at the DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Richardson has:<sup>34</sup>

- Initiated the Cyber/Hi-Tech Crime Unit
- Researched and implemented new Forensic Investigative capabilities
- Established a Technology Forensics Program
- Was assigned to both the State and FBI Internet Clients Against Children Task Force
- Founded the Bringing Joye Program for children with special needs
- Played an active role in other community programs such as Senior Citizens, Domestic Violence, and Crime Prevention, and worked alongside the DeSoto Parish School System to ensure child safety.

Sheriff Richardson's vision for the future is to lead his team by example by continually finding ways to be more active in serving and proactive in protecting all citizens of DeSoto Parish.<sup>35</sup> He aims to maintain DeSoto Parish as a place where all people can live, work together, and visit safely without fear.<sup>36</sup>

## **IV. Evidence of Oversight**

### **A. Accessibility to the Public**

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<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> Bell, Donnie. "About Us." DeSoto Parish Sheriff. Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.dpso.org/about-us>.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

The Sheriff's Office puts out press releases when arrests are made in the parish and when serious misconduct or events connected to the DeSoto Parish Center or DeSoto Parish occur.<sup>37</sup> This information is published in the News and Events section on the website.<sup>38</sup>

The DeSoto Parish public website has a program called Crime Stoppers.<sup>39</sup> The program posts wanted suspects either in the DeSoto Parish area or from the DeSoto Parish Detention Center, asking for the public's assistance in identifying or locating these suspects.<sup>40</sup> The wanted person's name, height, weight, address, charges, and pictures are posted on the Crime Stoppers section of the website.<sup>41</sup> A reward of up to \$1000 for any information that results in the suspect's arrest is available.<sup>42</sup>

## **V. Evidence of Transparency**

### **A. Availability of Data on People Inside**

The DeSoto Parish Detention Center provides a daily updated Inmate Roster on the facility's official public website.<sup>43</sup> The Inmate Roster offers the following information: full name of the inmate, date of birth, eye color, height, weight, gender, race, charges or list of offenses, date of arrest, booking date, front mugshot if available, booking ID, bond status, and bond amount.<sup>44</sup> People can also contact the administration directly to find out if a particular inmate they know is at the detention center by calling 318-872-3952.<sup>45</sup>

### **B. Filing and Receiving PRAs**

Filing and receiving PRAs from this facility was fairly easy. The website has a Contact Us that allows people to send the sheriff's office a message through the email address attached to the page [info@dpsso.org](mailto:info@dpsso.org). I sent a PRA request through this page. I received a direct email response from Nichole Buckle, Counsel for DeSoto Parish, requesting an extension until September 16 to gather the information needed for the PRA. I received a formal letter via email stating that the DeSoto Parish Detention Center had zero deaths for the years 2021 and 2022 so far.<sup>46</sup>

## **VI. Cases or Complaints on Prison/Jail Characteristics**

The most prominent scandal attached to the DeSoto Parish Detention Center is former DeSoto Parish Sheriff's Office deputy, thirty-nine-year-old Joseph Procell, being convicted of malfeasance for having sexual intercourse with a female inmate during transport to the detention

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<sup>37</sup> Bell, Donnie. "DeSoto Parish Sheriff." DeSoto Parish Sheriff. Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.dpsso.org/>.

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> Bell, Donnie. "Crime Stoppers." DeSoto Parish Sheriff. Accessed November 26, 2022. <https://www.dpsso.org/crime-stoppers>.

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> "Platinum Webjail." Platinum Webjail-Current Inmate Roster. Accessed November 28, 2022. <http://inmates.dpsso.org/>.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

<sup>46</sup> Email from Nichole Buckle

center.<sup>47</sup> In June 2019, Procell was arrested after Sheriff Richardson received a complaint that Procell arrested a woman on an out-of-state warrant, stopped while en route to the detention center, turned off his patrol unit's camera, and proceeded to coerce the woman to perform a sexual act in exchange for leniency.<sup>48</sup> Procell pled guilty to the offense in exchange for dismissing the second charge of third-degree rape. He received an eighteen-month suspended sentence, was placed on eighteen months of active supervised probation, and was ordered to attend sex offender counseling. He also agreed to give up his police officer certification permanently.<sup>49</sup> Procell had to pay \$25,000 in a separate civil settlement with the victim and an additional \$500 fine plus court costs and \$2000 for the costs of prosecution.<sup>50</sup>

Lastly, on January 11, 2022, Latellas Moore filed a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 prisoner petition against the DeSoto Parish Detention Center, including Warden Billy Cotton, Woodley Miller, and former Sheriff Rodney Arbuckle, in the prisoner civil rights and prison conditions case *Moore v. DeSoto Parish Detention Center*.<sup>51</sup> No other details were provided on the details of the complaint. However, on January 11, 2022, Moore's complaint against the DeSoto Parish Detention Center was ruled deficient.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Welborn, Vickie. "Former DPSO Deputy Convicted of Malfeasance; 2 Others Await Trial." KTBS, May 5, 2021. [https://www.ktbs.com/news/former-dpso-deputy-convicted-of-malfeasance-2-others-await-trial/article\\_ccdda876-addc-11eb-aa63-739691bbf96e.html](https://www.ktbs.com/news/former-dpso-deputy-convicted-of-malfeasance-2-others-await-trial/article_ccdda876-addc-11eb-aa63-739691bbf96e.html).

<sup>48</sup> *Id.*

<sup>49</sup> *Id.*

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

<sup>51</sup> "*Moore v. DeSoto Parish Detention Center*." Accessed November 26, 2022. [https://www.docketbird.com/cases?case\\_id=lawd-5:2022-cv-00112](https://www.docketbird.com/cases?case_id=lawd-5:2022-cv-00112).

<sup>52</sup> *Id.*