

Pelican Bay counselor named officer of the year

September 30, 2019



Thomas Hutzell of Crescent City, a correctional counselor II at Pelican Bay State Prison, was named this year's Correctional Officer of the Year by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR.)

Hutzell was among 231 CDCR staff honored statewide.

In his job, Hutzell facilitates inmate groups focused on restorative justice. Inmates have recognized Hutzell at their graduations for leading them down a path of change, including apologies to their victims, said state officials

This year, the statewide honorees included two officers receiving the Medal of Valor – the highest award for heroism – as well as 83 staff members who provided counseling for first-responders of the devastating Camp Fire, which resulted in the deaths of 86 people.

CDCR also awarded Distinguished Service medals, Unit Citation medals and Employee Recognition Awards, such as Correctional Officer of the Year. Hutzell was among those honorees.

For a complete list of 2019 award winners, go to www.cdcr.ca.gov/news.