

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**What:** “Thinking for a Change” Program Graduation

**When:** Thursday, June 29, 2017, 10:30-1:00 PM

**Where:** Sparkman Auditorium, Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Museum on Lakeland Drive, Jackson

JACKSON – Offenders who want to reduce their risk of returning to prison have completed a three-month program designed to help them do just that.

They will graduate the “Thinking for a Change” Program on Thursday. A total of 42 offenders from the Hinds County Probation and Parole Office and the Hinds County Restitution Center are expected to celebrate their accomplishment.

De’Keither Stamps, Ward 4 councilman in Jackson, will be the guest speaker.

“Programs like these are vitally important in helping the Mississippi Department of Corrections fulfill its mission to provide effective post-release supervision for offenders,” Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said. “I am committed to progressively moving MDOC forward by offering more programs like this. Having more cognitive behavioral therapy in our treatment and rehabilitation programs will help offenders to make better choices.”

Offenders were taught social skills and cognitive behavior skills in a classroom setting one to two hours per week. Lessons included active listening, responding to anger, apologizing, giving feedback, using new thinking, paying attention to your thinking, recognizing risks, making a plan and problem solving.

During the program, 85 percent of the participants have found jobs and enrolled in educational programs.