

# ACA Has a Place To Call Home

By Susan L. Clayton

After nearly 136 years of tremendous changes in corrections, the American Correctional Association has its own home at 206 N. Washington Street in Alexandria, Va. On June 9, ACA welcomed association members, leaders and staff, as well as local dignitaries to celebrate the purchase of ACA's new headquarters at its official dedication and open house.

James A. Gondles Jr., ACA's executive director, began the program by welcoming everyone to Virginia. The Alexandria Sheriff's Office Honor Guard then presented the colors and led the attendees in singing the National Anthem. Imam Abdelwahab Hassan, Rabbi Jack Moline and Chaplain John Poffenberger offered the invocation.

ACA's president, Gwendolyn C. Chunn, then greeted everyone: "I am so very proud to welcome all of you on behalf of the 18,000 members of the American Correctional Association [and] also those people who are friends and supporters who make sure we do the work that needs to be done." Chunn discussed what it means to own a home and compared the purchase of ACA's new headquarters to the feeling one gets when purchasing his or her first home. She noted that home is a place to reflect, recreate and reconnect. Chunn said she hoped that ACA's new home will provide that for its members. "Our vocation is so important," Chunn said, adding, "I want you to think of this as home — your professional home," Chunn said.

Virginia Congressman James P. Moran, who is serving his eighth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, also addressed the group. Moran represents the eighth congressional district, which includes the cities of Alexandria and

Falls Church, as well as Arlington County and parts of Fairfax County. Moran expressed his appreciation to ACA for all that the organization does, particularly giving people the opportunity to transform their lives while they are incarcerated. "You are a facilitator of change and transformation and a model of professionalism," Moran said.

Following Moran's remarks, William D. Euille, the mayor of Alexandria, welcomed ACA to the city. "This is a new home in a very historic city," Euille said. "It's a city of transformation and transition." He noted that there are now more than 400 associations headquartered in Alexandria and that the city provides 96,000 jobs to individuals throughout the region. "We want to welcome you to this business-friendly city." He added, "I want you to enjoy your new home here in Alexandria."

At the end of the ceremony, Gondles presented gifts to Moran and Euille for their participation in the dedication and open house. He also presented plaques of appreciation to Chunn and Past President Charles J. Kehoe for their contributions during the process of acquiring the building. ACA staff were recognized as well for their help both before and after the move. Finally, Euille, Chunn and Gondles cut the ribbon, making the dedication of ACA's new headquarters official.

*Susan L. Clayton is managing editor of Corrections Today.*



ACA's new headquarters, located in the Old Town section of Alexandria, Va.

Photos by Dana M. McCoy

