



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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Springfield Prison Named in Honor of Mike Durfee September 13, 1999

(Pierre) – The medium-security state prison in Springfield, SD has a new name. Governor Bill Janklow helped dedicate the prison in Springfield in honor of Department of Corrections Deputy Secretary Mike Durfee September 10th.



The facility is now known as the Mike Durfee State Prison.

"Mike is a very special South Dakotan," Janklow said. "He has put his heart into everything he does, and especially the community of Springfield. I know it was a difficult period when the school closed and the prison opened, but Mike is the type of person who saw the opportunity to make an important difference in the lives of people

there, no matter if they were college students or inmates. He still takes that approach, and we're lucky that he shares it with all of our prisons."

Durfee attended Southern State College in Springfield, where he was a standout athlete. After graduating from the college with honors in 1968, he joined the faculty of the school and was head wrestling coach, posting a 100-8-4 win-loss record during his coaching tenure. When the college was closed and converted to a prison in 1984, Durfee became Assistant Warden and Director of Education for the prison, establishing the prison's vocational training program.

In 1989 he joined the staff of the Mitchell Vocational Technical Institute as Assistant Director. In 1992, Durfee was named Deputy Secretary of the Department of Corrections, where he oversees the state's adult prisons and prison industries.

Mike and his wife Chere' (pronounced "Sherry") have two grown children and four grandchildren.

Mike Durfee was born in Pierre in 1944, and grew up on the family farm south of Highmore, South Dakota.

After graduating from Highmore High School, he attended Southern State College in Springfield (In 1971, Southern State College became the University of South Dakota / Springfield.), where he was a standout athlete in both football and wrestling. He was named to All-District and All-American teams in football and won three conference wrestling titles.

Durfee graduated from the Southern State College with honors in 1968 with a degree in Vocational Technical Teacher Education. Later that year, he joined the faculty of the school and was named head wrestling coach and assistant football coach.

During his ten-year career as head wrestling coach, his teams posted a 100-8-4 dual meet won-loss record, including an undefeated season in 1975-76. He was named South Dakota College coach of the year in 1976.

In 1978, Durfee became a partner in a Ford/Mercury car dealership in Springfield, and remained there for six years.

When the University of South Dakota/Springfield was closed and converted to a prison in 1984, Durfee was named Assistant Warden and Director of Education for the prison. He established the vocational training programs and incorporated the original prison policies along with assisting with the initial recruitment of prison staff.

He has also served as acting warden of the Springfield prison and the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. In 1992, he became the Deputy Secretary of Corrections, overseeing the adult prison system and prison industries.

While in Springfield, Durfee also served on the Bon Homme School District School Board, Springfield Chamber of Commerce, and Springfield Development Corporation and was active in the Springfield Fire Department and St. Vincent Catholic Church.

Durfee has received numerous honors, including University of South Dakota/Springfield Outstanding Alumnus; South Dakota Intercollegiate Conference Hall of Fame; South Dakota Wrestling Hall of Fame; Southern State College Pointer Hall of Fame; and South Dakota Vocational Association Outstanding Service Award.