

## **Perry CI Celebrates Sixth Anniversary of its Character Based Unit**

**By Rita Crapps, Programs and Services**

On Thursday, April 21, 2016, the Character Based Unit (CBU) at Perry Correctional Institution celebrated its sixth year anniversary. Perry CI was the first prison in the South Carolina Department of Corrections to adopt the Character Based concept.

The CBU's foundation lies in the peer-to-peer process of rehabilitation and personal development. This unique environment is rich in education and pro-social programs enabling the offender to reenter society avoiding the criminal behaviors and attitudes that brought him to SCDC.

The CBU is a residential, 24-hour rehabilitative and educational environment that nurtures personal development, pro-social values, personal responsibility, and social accountability, while promoting the reinforcement of a respect-based culture. The CBU is designed to help inmates who genuinely seek rehabilitation through positive and moral living in a supportive atmosphere. The peer support provides encouragement that is important in achieving redemptive goals. This is a respect-based culture that is necessary for educational, rehabilitative, morally driven, pro-social programming that reinforces a healthy and balanced standard for living.



Warden Scott Lewis encourages and praises inmates for choosing the model CBU way of life at Perry CI

The CBU requires participants to learn life skills, develop positive attitudes, and model behavior through the peer-to-peer accountability process. Offenders must earn the right to apply, be accepted into, and participate in the Perry CBU way of life.

Since the start of the Character Based program at Perry CI in 2010, several other institutions in the Department of Corrections' system have successfully established Character dorms with Allendale CI becoming the first fully Character Based Institution.



Perry CI CBU residents gather "on the rock" to celebrate their anniversary