



KOOTENAI COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Leanne Whittenburg Control Room Operator

What do you love most about working in the jail?

Since I have started working at the jail, I have gained a second family. Working in the towers can be hard from time to time but at the end of the day, I work with people that make me laugh and are there for me. We are a tight knit group, not just the Control Room Operators (CROs), but also the jail staff as a whole.

What career accomplishments are you most proud of since you joined the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office?

There have been a couple of times when deputies have had to restrain inmates. One ended with the inmate on top of a deputy. I was able to get a call out on the radio for assistance before anything serious could happen. It may not sound like much but the deputies rely on the CRO's to keep an eye on them and make sure they are safe. I've had deputies tell me they feel safe when I'm working in their housing area and I'd say that is something to be proud of.

What do you think are the most important attributes of a Control Room Operator?

Multi-tasking is a crucial part of the job. I have days when I will be doing 3-4 things at once. When I get one thing done another rolls in. Along with that, you have to be able to work well under pressure. You also need a sharp eye when working the cameras and you have to be able to work well within a team. What one CRO does in their first couple of hours in a tower is going to affect the rest of the CROs and the deputies. So it's important to keep them in mind while you are working. Aside from that, a good sense of humor goes a long way.

What is your favorite part of the job?

I love the challenge. It's a balancing act of knowing what needs to be done now while you are anticipating how it's going to affect everything later. While I'm thinking about all of that I am also keeping track of inmate movement, watching my deputies, doing my day to day tasks and handling anything new that gets called in. It gets busy sometimes. It can be overwhelming but I love the challenges of my job.



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