



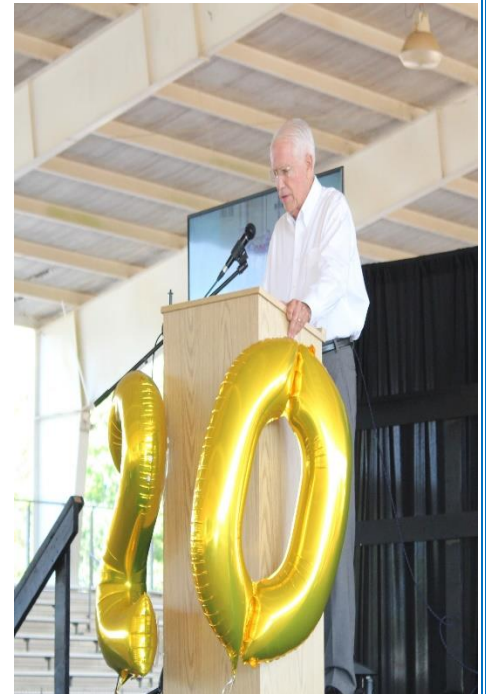
COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

AUGUST 2021

WWW.CACJ.GEORGIA.GOV

ACCOUNTABILITY COURT NEWS

NORTHEASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT CELEBRATES MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES FOR HALL & DAWSON COUNTIES



The Northeastern Judicial Circuit celebrated milestone anniversaries for several of their accountability court programs on July 2, 2021. Hall County Drug Court, the Circuit's first accountability court, marked 20 years in operation while Dawson County Treatment Court and Hall County Family Treatment Court celebrated 15 years and Hall County Parental Accountability Court celebrated 10 years. The joint celebration event brought together founding and current team members, program graduates, and community partners. Senator Butch Miller opened the ceremony by presenting the courts with official proclamations outlining numerous accomplishments over the past two decades. Senior Judge John Girardeau, who founded Hall County Drug Court in 2001, reflected on the progressive approach to criminal justice reform and treatment that the Circuit has prescribed to since the initial vision to start the programs 20 years ago. Senior Judge Cliff Jolliff, who first presided over Hall County Family Treatment Court, also spoke about the groundbreaking work of these programs and the immense effect they have on the community. Current presiding judges of the Circuit's programs, Honorable Kathlene F. Gosselin, Honorable Bonnie C. Oliver, Honorable Jason J. Deal, Honorable Clint G.

Bearden, and Honorable Alison W. Toller, also spoke during the ceremony and shared their passion for this work. Guests at the event viewed a short promotional video outlining the origins of the programs, the many successes including a significant economic impact to local taxpayers of approximately \$55 million, and testimonials from program graduates.



"The mission of our programs is to disrupt the cycle of criminal offenses whose origins are rooted in substance use or mental health issues," said Jessi Emmett, Treatment Services Director. "We strive to assist individuals in solving these issues and building productive and fulfilling lives while maintaining personal responsibility and providing a cost-savings to our

local communities. From the judges, attorneys, and law enforcement to the treatment staff, it is an honor to work alongside some of the greatest professionals in our fields who all share a passion for making a positive difference."

These programs, along with the H.E.L.P. Programs and DUI Court, collectively serve between 450-500 participants and fall under the umbrella agency, Treatment Services. Each program offers individual and group therapy, continuous drug testing and judicial oversight with the goal of bringing about a behavioral change that reduces criminal recidivism and provides the tools and resources necessary to address substance abuse and mental health issues. The accountability courts of the Northeastern Judicial Circuit continue to lead the state and serve as role models to other accountability court programs.

To view the video, please go to <https://vimeo.com/568984053/752f65d41d>.



TROUP COUNTY DUI/DRUG COURT

Submitted by Denise Smith, Troup County Accountability Courts Manager & Coweta Circuit Mental Health Court Coordinator



On July 22, 2021, Troup County DUI/Drug Court participants were treated to a very special presentation from Auburn University's Southeastern Raptor Center. The Southeastern Raptor Center is a regional rehabilitation and education facility which provides educational programming for those interested in learning about raptors and care to birds of prey in need. Three trainers, led by Assistant Director Andrew Hopkins, delivered a Birds of Prey lecture and demonstration featuring the Screech Owl, Red Tail Hawk, and Golden Eagle. The Golden Eagle, Aurea (Latin for Golden), is considered War Eagle VIII. She made her stadium debut at Auburn University in 2018 before becoming the main War Eagle in 2019. With a 6 ½ foot wingspan and the ability to take down a mountain goat, she is a very impressive bird.

The Raptor Center presentation was arranged by Judge Wesley Leonard in celebration of the DUI/Drug Court's summer Bird Watching project. This project, designed and spearheaded by Case Manager Debra Trapp, provided program participants with a bird watching field guide, educational materials, and a log for documenting identified birds. The rationale behind the project is to encourage a healthy, pro-social summertime activity. This project also serves as a contest to see who can earn the most points (each bird has a designated point value). There is a cash prize that will be awarded to the participant with the most points at our first DUI/Drug Court Status Hearing in September.

A special thanks to Judge Leonard, Ms. Debi, our 501(c)3, Accountability Troup, and the Southeastern Raptor Center for this riveting and educational event. It was tremendously enjoyed by all!



ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

FULTON COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

Submitted by Tiffany Barclay, Fulton County Juvenile Court Accountability Courts Administrator

Juvenile Drug Court Program - CHOICES (Choosing Healthy Options Increases Confidence, Excellence and Success) celebrated its most recent program graduate on June 22, 2021. Semaj entered the CHOICES program in November 2019. He had struggles with being a juvenile offender, years of challenges in school, and challenges with substance abuse. Since entering the CHOICES program, Semaj has not received any additional criminal charges, is enrolled in a GED program at Atlanta Area Technical College and has made significant progress with his substance abuse issues.



The Family Treatment Court Program – HOPE (Helping Our Parents Excel) celebrated its most recent program graduate on June 16, 2021. Natalie entered the FTC program on May 15, 2019. Although extremely shy, Natalie was always open and honest about her substance use history. After receiving evidenced-based treatment, she became more insightful regarding how to break the cycles of addiction, began using coping skills, and eventually became a mentor to other program participants. At the time of graduation, Natalie had regained custody of her children, obtained stable employment, and secured permanent housing.

JACKSON COUNTY TREATMENT COURT

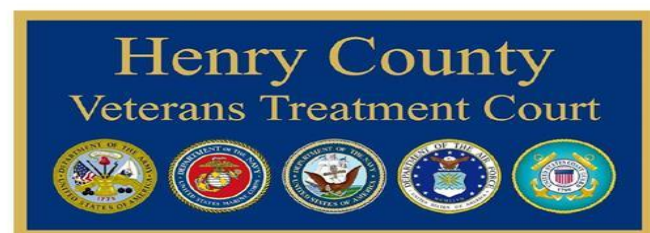
Article appeared in Georgia Courts Journal; Written by Alice Culpepper

Jackson County Celebrates Treatment Court Graduate and 21 Drug-Free Babies

Jackson County recently honored another Treatment Court graduate in the Piedmont Judicial Circuit. On June 29th, Judge Currie Mingledorff presented the graduate with his certificate of completion and praised him for his amazing accomplishments of not only graduating but also finding employment and stability for both him and his growing family. Jackson County also celebrated another great milestone during this graduation. The Piedmont Circuit Accountability Courts keep track of one of the most rewarding parts of the program: how many drug-free babies that have been born to those who have reached sobriety through their treatment. With this graduate and his newborn twins, the Piedmont Circuit Accountability Courts mark 21 drug-free babies! Every drug-free baby born not only saves money for the State of Georgia, but it further emphasizes how beneficial these treatment programs are by promoting both happy and healthy individuals and families.

To see the article and accompanying photos, please go to <https://georgiacourtsjournal.org/2021/07/12/jackson-county-celebrates-treatment-court-graduate-and-21-drug-free-babies/>.

SAVE THE DATE!



The Honorable Judge Pandora Palmer

cordially invites you to attend the

3rd Commencement Ceremony

Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Veterans Memorial Wall at Heritage Park

99 Lake Dow Rd McDonough GA 30252

*If inclement weather, ceremony will be held in Jason Harper Arena

CACJ PROMOTIONS AND STAFFING UPDATES

As of June 1, 2021, **Kimberly Howard** is now serving as the Operations and Training Manager, and **Rachel Gage** is serving as the Data Programs Manager and Certification Officer II. Effective August 1, 2021, **Tara Zellous** began a new role with the Council, as she will now serve as the Treatment Services Program Manager.



Ms. Kimberly Howard joined the Council of Accountability Judges in 2017. Prior to joining the Council of Accountability Court Judges, she held the position of Pretrial Release Officer II with the Fulton County Superior Court Pretrial Services Division from 2012-2016 and served in the private sector as a Field Services Manager for nine years. She is a graduate of Albany State University and Michigan State University and holds a Master of Science Degree in Judicial Administration. Ms. Howard, an advocate of continuing education, recently completed the National Center for State Courts' Institute of Court Management (ICM) professional development Certified Court Manager (CCM) program. She also is a member of the Georgia Council of Court Administrators and National Association of Court Management.

"In my new role as the Training & Operations Manager, I want to continue serving our courts and improve the Council's processes and procedures," said Ms. Howard. "I am most excited to develop strategies and enhance access to quality education for all accountability court team members regardless of their role or level of experience. Developing the annual training conference and training calendar is a huge lift and I am confident working with the CACJ team and Council leadership, CACJ will continue to serve the courts effectively and help improve participant outcomes by providing innovative education."



Ms. Rachel Gage joined CACJ in November 2017. Prior to joining CACJ staff, she worked with juvenile offenders and accountability courts both at the state and local level. She earned her Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology from Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. She is also a part-time instructor at GSU and teaches classes on community corrections, juvenile offending, crime and the media, and internship and field placement.

Ms. Gage serves CACJ as the Data Programs Manager & Certification Officer II where she manages data resources and serves as the primary liaison with research partnerships. She provides technical assistance in data collection practices and analysis and employs subject matter expertise to drive policy and enhance accountability court program outcomes. As a Certification Officer, Ms. Gage conducts peer reviews and provides technical assistance to local programs, court professionals, and judges in addressing certification requirements.

"I love working with CACJ because I have the honor of working alongside passionate, interdisciplinary people who work hard every single day to change lives, improve communities, and reunite families," said Ms. Gage. "In my new role, I hope to continue to advocate for data driven decisions that will ultimately lead to better participant and program outcomes. My goal is to debunk the intimidation of data and help accountability court professionals embrace the power of research. My hope is for programs to fully optimize data collection and use these data to determine what works, and what does not work, for their participants and program at large."



Ms. Tara Zellous holds a B.S. in Psychology/Human Services from Clayton State University and an M.A. in Community Counseling from Argosy University. She is a licensed professional counselor (LPC), a national certified counselor (NCC), a certified professional counselor supervisor (CPCS), and a certified alcohol and drug counselor-II (CADC-II). Her clinical experience includes work in lead counselor roles at both McIntosh Trail and Advantage Behavioral Health Systems Community Service Boards and as clinical assessor at Dekalb Medical Center and Ridgeview Institute.

Ms. Zellous gained accountability court experience while providing direct treatment as an accountability court liaison for participants in the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit substance abuse and mental health courts. She then transitioned to the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and

Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) where she worked to build collaborations among accountability courts and community service boards. Prior to becoming Treatment Services Manager at the Council of Accountability Courts Judges, Ms. Zellous served the Council as Treatment Fidelity Program Monitor and then as Statewide Medication Assisted Treatment Coordinator.

"What I enjoy most about working at CACJ is knowing that I am an integral part of a group of professionals dedicated to providing training, support, and technical assistance to all of Georgia's accountability courts," said Ms. Zellous. "In my new role as Treatment Services Manager, I hope to build upon existing efforts by advancing comprehensive treatment support and services to all accountability court staff."

CACJ ANNUAL CONFERENCE – COMING IN SEPTEMBER!

Logistics: The CACJ 2021 Annual Training Conference will be a hybrid event with a combination of onsite and virtual participants, speakers, and vendors. Onsite attendance is limited to 600 attendees.

Due to the onsite attendance limitations at the Classic Center, in-person participation is limited to three (3) team members per accountability court. State-funded accountability courts received funding in the program's FY22 Operating Grant Award to support only 3 in-person attendees. Accountability courts can register ten (10) additional virtual (online) attendees. An online platform is being designed for virtual attendees that will offer an enhanced live-streaming experience.

Registration: Registration for the 2021 Annual Training Conference opened in July. Accountability Court Coordinators are the point of contact to register team members for the conference. Registration will end August 20, 2021. **Please register early!**

For a full view of conference content, please view the 2021 Annual Training Conference agenda [here](#).

SEPTEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Please send submissions for the September 2021 newsletter to Debbie Mott (Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov) by Wednesday, August 25. If you plan to include a photo where participants can be identified, please be sure to send a signed photo consent with your submission.

GEORGIA ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS JOB POSTINGS

Please see the Career Opportunities tab (under About Us) on the CACJ website for information about these job postings:

*Forsyth County Contract Counselors

*Rockdale County Behavioral Health Clinician – Team Lead

*Recovery Court Clinician – Hamilton County, TN

*Rockdale County Juvenile Drug Court Case Manager

*Counselor – Cartersville, GA

*Recovery Court Counselor – Hamilton County, TN

RESOURCES



Opioid Response Network

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)-funded Opioid Response Network (ORN), led by the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (AAAP), has just released a comprehensive, educational resource guide for judges and other justice-system stakeholders. The Law and Medicine Guide can be found here: <https://cacj.georgia.gov/resources/published-guidelines>.



Research Grants Available from the Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network

The Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN) [Rapid Innovation Grant \(J-RIG\) program](#) is a rapid funding mechanism to support small research grants to study newly emerging policies, practices, or interventions that address prevention and treatment of addiction among justice-involved populations.

J-RIG welcomes both applicants who work in research environments and those who do not work in research environments but could benefit from funding to study local initiatives, policy changes, or practice improvement efforts. J-RIG projects also are appropriate for developmental pilots, feasibility studies, or other research broadly defined as foundational work for further research and practice.

The J-RIG call for proposals will be released up to three (3) times per year. Funding will be provided for up to 24 months and may not exceed \$110,000 in total costs.

Interested applicants will need to register for a free JCOIN account to view the [funding opportunity](#) and [request for proposals](#). Don't wait! Applications are due by August 16, 2021.

TRAINING

CACJ is pleased to release the FY22 training calendar. This calendar includes trainings sponsored by CACJ July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. Please note the specific training dates, events, and locations are subject to change. Specific details (who is eligible to attend, registration dates, prerequisites, and required documents) for each training are in the downloadable version of training calendar on the [CACJ website](#).



New Training opportunities:

- [Georgia and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Webinar](#)
- [Cognitive Behavioral Interventions – Core Youth](#) (4-day training)
- [New Provider Orientation for Accountability Courts](#) (2 – day training)
- [Prime Solutions Refresher](#) (2-day training)
- [DUI Court Operational Tune Up](#) (2-day training)

Previously announced training opportunities:

- [Interactive Journaling](#)
- [START Assessment](#)
- LS/CMI Refresher Training
- ASAM Criteria E-Learning Training

Council of Accountability Court Judges On-Demand Webinars Now Available!

Did you miss one of the live webinars? Below is a list of webinars hosted by the Council of Accountability Court Judges. To access the recorded sessions as your schedule allows, select the title. You will be prompted to complete a form to view the recording. Please note that Continuing Education (CE) credits and certificates of attendance are not available for viewing these recordings.

Recorded Webinars:

- Title: [Coping and Understanding Participant Overdose](#)
 - Original date: April 7, 2021
- Title: [Medication Assisted Treatment Webinar Series: Focus on Suboxone](#)
 - Original date: May 20, 2021
- Title: [Stimulants 2021: Epidemiology, Effects, and Treatments](#)
 - Original date: June 9, 2021

Past Annual Training Conference Archives

Also, a hub of CACJ conference presentations is now available in the Past Conferences Archives on the CACJ website [here](#).

Stay tuned! All recorded content from the virtual 2020 annual training conference will be posted no later than September 1, 2021.



Ask the Expert: Understanding Addiction Related Implicit Bias

August 4, 2021 | 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM CDT

Presented by the National Criminal Justice Training Center, a previous webinar discussed implicit bias as a key factor contributing to racial and ethnic health disparities, and the level of which this is experienced in the treatment of alcohol and substance abuse. Join this ask the expert session for a facilitated discussion and open forum with subject matter experts who will answer your practical questions regarding working with our implicit biases.



2021 Annual Training Conference



September 26 - 29, 2021

Accountability Court Teams Paving New Roads to
Recovery and Continuing to Shine Bright !



The 6th Annual Training Conference will be held at the
Classic Center in Athens, Georgia.

Details for conference registration will be available in Spring 2021. Please continue to monitor the
CACJ website at www.cacj.georgia.gov for the most up to date information.