



NEWSLETTER

July | 2022



From the Executive Director

An Exciting Pilot Project Announcement – RED Assessment

The Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) was contacted by a team of experts at the American University (AU) who developed a [Racial and Ethnic Disparities \(RED\) Program Assessment Tool](#) to help accountability courts identify and examine areas where racial and ethnic disparities may exist in their court programs. AU, in partnership with the Center for Court Innovation (CCI), is working with accountability court judges and coordinators in conducting assessments of existing racial and ethnic disparities in their courts and developing concrete strategies for addressing such disparities. The RED assessment tool will help CACJ to achieve its vision of making accountability courts work to benefit all Georgians.

The assessment is a web-based tool designed to capture information about accountability courts' operations and procedures into a secure, confidential database. To this extent, AU also obtained an IRB approval from the university. The tool assesses accountability court programs through a series of open and closed-ended questions on court information, intake, assessments, demographics, team members, training, drug choices, treatment, support services, evaluation, and monitoring. The tool uses a scoring rubric to provide accountability court teams with an overall assessment score, scores for each section of the assessment, and recommendations for accountability courts to alleviate racial and ethnic disparities. In addition to providing best practices recommendations for teams to implement, the tool offers teams a valuable, important space to start the conversation about where they can improve.

CACJ is looking for courts interested in participating in this pilot project.

Accountability court pilot project eligibility: At this time adult felony drug courts, adult mental health courts (serving a co-occurring population), veterans' treatment courts, and DUI courts operating for at least one year will be able to participate in the pilot project.

Model Court Features

[Henry County Drug Court pg. 3](#)

[DeKalb County DUI Court pg. 4](#)

Projected timeline of events:

August 10, 2022 at 12:00 pm: AU and CCI will present on the RED assessment during the first portion of the FY23 data webinar. All interested and eligible courts should plan to attend to learn about the assessment and to ask questions.

August 10 - August 24, 2022: Eligible courts will be able to sign up to participate in the pilot project.

August 30 - September 30, 2022: Pilot courts will complete the RED assessment. Courts should anticipate the assessment taking approximately two hours total to complete. The assessment can be completed in parts over multiple sessions. Pilot courts will receive their report, findings, and recommendations upon completing the assessment.

October 2022: CACJ will receive an aggregate report with recommendations that can help drive future statewide training and technical assistance offerings.

AU and CCI are both national technical assistance providers and can provide this service to Georgia at no cost. Each court is encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

Please join us on August 10, 2022 at 12:00 pm to learn more!



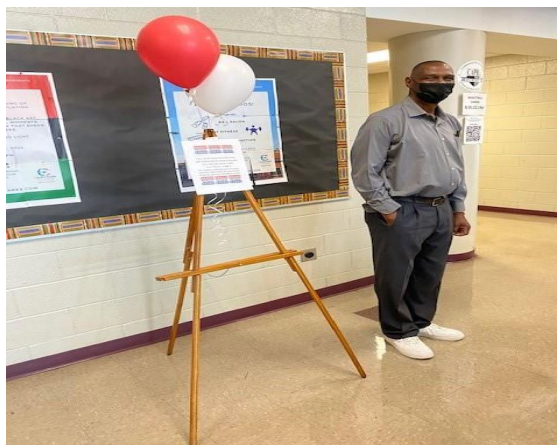
Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court Graduation

Submitted by Lakisha Dixon, Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator

The Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court with Presiding Judge Robert L. Mack held its 6th graduation ceremony on June 1, 2022. Graduate Paul D. Watson completed the program successfully. Mr. Watson served in the United States Marines and is affectionately known as “The Marine.” Prior to each participant’s graduation, a community service project must be completed. As his community service project, Mr. Watson organized a voter registration drive for voter hopefuls in his community. Mr. Watson was able to register several Clayton County residents. Mr. Watson was grateful for all the assistance he received from the VTC, Clayton County Voter Registrar, family, and friends. A lot of heart and sweat went into this project, and he did a wonderful job.

The keynote speaker for this occasion was Mr. Darrius Austin, Clayton County Senior Probation Officer, and currently a Petty Officer First Class in the United States Navy where he has served for over 21 years. He encouraged the graduate, as well the other participants, to use the bumps in the road to advance in life and their support system to move forward in life.

Mr. Watson was overwhelmed with gratitude when he was presented with a proclamation from Assistant District Attorney Smalls of the Clayton County District Attorney’s Office. He thanked the many individuals that helped and guided him along the way. Mr. Watson will continue to work on his dream of becoming a peer specialist to help others in need.



Model Courts Feature

The goal of Georgia's Accountability Court Model Court program is to recognize the great work of accountability courts across the state, as well as identify strong programs that may serve as mentors for other courts. Programs identified as Model Courts are those that have met and exceeded adherence to Georgia's Standards as dictated by strong performance on certification and peer review processes. To recognize the talent and expertise of the accountability court community, each month CACJ will recognize a model court or two and their work in the substance use and mental health fields.

Henry County Drug Court Model Adult Felony Drug Court (2020-2023)



Henry County Drug Court

Team Members

Judge: The Honorable Holly W. Veal

Director: Craig Ogilvie

Case Manager: Britni Stephens

Assistant District Attorney: Elicia Hargrove

Assistant Public Defenders: Rochelle Gordon and Agis Bray

Probation Officer: Kadarius Jessie

Treatment: Donna McDonald, Taylor Hageman, and Tabitha Espinosa

Community Supervision Officer: Sgt. Felicia Barner, Cpl. Marcus Warren, and Dep. Donald Gilmer

Court type: Adult Felony Drug Court

Presiding judge: The Honorable Holly W. Veal, presiding since December 2018

Coordinator: Craig Ogilvie, Director since December 2014; Started with program as a Probation Officer in June 2011

Inception date: October 2010

Number of graduates to date: 98

Current program census: 22

Recidivism rate: 13%

Innovative practices/unique programming:

Mr. Ogilvie: "In 2015, we developed the 'competencies' needed for a participant to phase up. In the initial days of the program, participants phased up based on days/months in the phase. I saw an issue with people moving through without gaining real competency in the groups and tools we provided. Our team developed what is now the model as presented in the CACJ website under Treatment Resources tab as the 'Criteria for Phase Changes Competency Checklist'."

What are you most proud of in terms of the program's success?

Mr. Ogilvie: "Two things: A judge that is intuitive and deeply cognizant of each participant's story and progress in the program and the fact that during a surge of overdoses stemming from the Pandemic (Cocaine: 26.5%; Meth: 34.8% increases YOY May 19- May 20), we did not lose one participant to overdose, suicide or termination!"

Why do you choose to preside over the accountability court?

Judge Veal: "Presiding over drug court allows me the opportunity to impact the lives of the people I share Henry County with. It allows me to spend more time understanding the 'why' behind the various criminal offenses the participant has committed and pouring resources and encouragement to resolve the root cause of the issue which is oftentimes childhood trauma. My guiding philosophy is that in addition to doing my part to keep my community safe from serious violent felons, I have an obligation to effect meaningful positive change in the lives of the people who come before me, where I can. I hope to continue to provide these services at a high level and to expand the reach of the program by forever solving the issue of transportation and housing which continues to be a limiting factor.

What is something you wish you knew at program inception that you hope to impart to newer courts?

Judge Veal: "That drug addiction and mental illness are so closely related; they can't be overlooked and must be addressed for best outcomes."

Anything else you would like to add?

Mr. Ogilvie: "After doing this for 11 years, I still love what I do, and it is most rewarding to see a life truly changed that impacts generations afterward."

**DeKalb County DUI Court
Model DUI Court (2021-2024)**



**DeKalb County DUI Court
Team Members**

Judges: The Honorable Alvin T. Wong, The Honorable Kimberly K. Anderson, and The Honorable Ana Maria Martinez

Director: Samantha Whaley

Case Manager: Nicole Munoz

Assistant Solicitor-General:
Laurel Spainhour

Assistant Public Defenders:
Samuel Welty and DeShon Jones

Probation Officer: Rashawn Robinson

Treatment: RaShanna Ratliff

Court type: DUI Court

Presiding judge: The Honorable Alvin T. Wong implemented the program in 2004 and will relinquish his DUI Court duties with the participants in July 2022 but will remain active with the administration of the program. The Honorable Kimberly K. Anderson stepped in when Judge Dax E. Lopez left the bench in September of 2021. The Honorable Ana Maria Martinez, who was just appointed to the State Court Bench, will take over a current caseload and the Latino Court Program in July 2022.

Coordinator: Samantha Whaley, Program Director and Coordinator, was part of the implementation team in 2004 and worked for 4-5 years as a Co-Coordinator and returned as a full-time Coordinator/Program Director in March of 2015.

Inception date: October 2004

Number of graduates to date: 1,039

Current program census: 32

Recidivism rate: 14%

Innovative practices/unique programming:

Judge Wong: “We recently developed a program where the municipal courts in DeKalb County will refer cases appropriate for DUI Court to the DeKalb County State Court’s DUI Court Program. If a defendant chooses to enter treatment, the defendant will be referred to complete the DUI Court Program as a condition of his or her probation after the sentence is entered in the municipal court. This will provide treatment alternatives to all the municipalities and will increase the number of participants in the DUI Court Program.

Ms. Whaley: “I believe DeKalb County DUI Court has the only Latino Program in Georgia and has had over 130 Latino graduates to date. Since 2019, we have implemented a Risk/Needs multiple track program and a Veterans track. We also focus on the individuals needs and build a treatment plan around the participant. Currently, we are partnering with the DeKalb County municipalities to receive DUI Court referrals.”

What do you hope to accomplish as a model court?

Judge Wong: “It is an honor to be selected and recognized as a model court. The goal, whether a model court or not, is to improve services in treating addiction to alcohol and drugs.”

Ms. Whaley: “Model courts shouldn’t strive for perfection because, as we all know, accountability courts are forever changing, and perfection just isn’t obtainable. As a model court, we want to be a resource for other programs and the community, to always promote public safety and program integrity.”

What are you most proud of in terms of the program’s success?

Ms. Whaley: “The success of the program is dependent upon the ‘Team’ and their ability to work together. By working together, we are able show our participants that they are not just a number, but they are truly seen and heard. As a Team, we build them up, support them, and push them to be better members of the community while still holding them accountable for their actions.”

What is something you wish you knew at program inception that you hope to impart to newer courts?

Judge Wong: “It is difficult at times to remember the participant, even though a defendant in a criminal case, in a DUI Court Program, is dealing with a disease. The judge must learn to adjust and understand his or her role is more than the traditional approach of adjudication and punishment.”

Ms. Whaley: “You’re not always going to get it right but keep trying because along the way lives will be changed and you will get to be a part of it.”

Council of Accountability Court Judges News

CACJ Annual Meeting

The Council of Accountability Court Judges held elections at the June 24, 2022 Annual Council meeting to vote for FY23 Executive Committee members. The Council of Accountability Court Judges would like to announce Judge Charles Auslander, III as the new Council Executive Chair. Judge Auslander presides over the Athens-Clarke County DUI Treatment Court. Judge Auslander received the Executive Chair torch from Chief Judge D. Scott Smith who served as Executive Chair in FY22 and as Training Committee Chair from FY17-FY21. Judge Smith will continue to serve as the Immediate Past Chair for the Council. Judge Lawton Stephens, Western Judicial Circuit Felony Drug Court, was elected to serve as the FY23 Vice Chair. The Council also thanked inaugural Executive Committee member Chief Judge Kathy Gosselin, Northeastern Judicial Circuit, and Judge Asha Jackson, Judge Alison Toller, and Judge Russel Smith for their dedicated service to the CACJ Executive Committee. The Council welcomes Judge Cynthia Adams, Douglas Judicial Circuit, Judge Robert McBurney, Atlanta Judicial Circuit, Judge Maureen Gottfried, Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, and Judge Jeremy Clough, Enotah Judicial Circuit, as new Executive Committee members.

Georgia's Accountability Courts Are Expanding!



The Council of Accountability Court Judges welcomes 11 new implementation programs in FY23: Barrow County Family Treatment Court, Cherokee Circuit Mental Health Court, Columbia Judicial Circuit Accountability Courts, Cherokee County Family Treatment Court, Douglas County Juvenile CHANCE Court, Dublin Circuit Adult Felony Drug Court, Macon Judicial Circuit Family Treatment Court, Tallapoosa Circuit Juvenile Mental Health Treatment Court, Thomas County Mental Health Court, Towaliga Accountability Courts - Mental Health Court, and Towaliga Accountability Courts - Veterans Treatment Court. The total number of CACJ certified accountability court programs in Georgia has increased to 183 as of July 1, 2022.

FY24 Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding

CACJ will release the fiscal year 2024 (FY24) Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for state funds form to existing and potentially new accountability courts on June 13, 2022. It will remain open until July 29, 2022. **Please note this SIGNIFICANT CHANGE.** Previously, the annual NOI was released in November of each year. This new NOI timeline will allow CACJ to best communicate funding requests to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

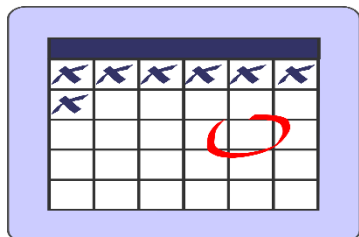


The NOI is MANDATORY for existing courts, existing courts with proposed expansions, and proposed new accountability courts that seek to submit a grant application to CACJ for FY24 state funds. **Each proposed new accountability court must first work with an existing accountability court within its circuit or county to determine if an existing court can be expanded. CACJ wants to invest in sustainable courts that share personnel and other resources.** Please do NOT complete this form without determining if an existing accountability court can be expanded. Additionally, please complete a separate NOI for each accountability court, regardless of intentions to complete a combined grant application.

All received submissions for proposed new accountability courts will be reviewed by the Funding Committee. The NOI point of contact will receive written notice of the Funding Committee's decision on or before September 15, 2022.

The court types included within the NOI are adult felony drug courts, mental health courts, veterans' treatment courts, DUI courts, family treatment courts, juvenile drug courts, and juvenile mental health courts.

FY23 CACJ Training Calendar



CACJ is pleased to release the FY23 training calendar. This calendar includes trainings sponsored by CACJ July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. 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](#) at the bottom right of the webpage.

CACJ Seeks Experienced Trainers to Participate in Level of Service/Case Management (LS/CMI) Trainer Training Program for Accountability Courts

Application deadline: August 12, 2022

CACJ is now soliciting applications from experienced trainers (individuals) who are interested in developing their skills to train new users to administer the LS/CMI tool. The program aims to assist CACJ in becoming self-sufficient in the administration of the tool and the onboarding of new accountability court staff. Selected applicants will learn to facilitate the training via a virtual Train-for-Trainer (T4T) event and subsequently deliver the training program in their local jurisdictions. The CACJ is offering this event at no cost to experienced trainers who successfully complete the application process. Interested team members should contact Ms. Kimberly Howard (Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov) with questions.

Virtual Office Hours

Wondering about something? We are here to help Wednesday! Join CACJ Staff for virtual office hours!

Who: CACJ Teams – Data, Executive Director/Legal/Grants, Standards & Certification, Training, and Treatment

When: Every first Wednesday of the month from 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm (times changed as of February 23, 2022)

Where: Zoom – We are pleased to offer this new form of technical assistance!

Why: Virtual office hours give you the opportunity to ask your questions and receive support in a streamlined fashion. You can meet with CACJ Staff on a regular basis to stay informed and get the answers you need.



Meeting Schedule

July 6, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm **CANCELLED!**

- Standards & Certification
- Data

August 3, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

September 7, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data

October 5, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

November 2, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data

December 7, 2022 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

August 2022 Newsletter Submissions

Please send submissions for the August 2022 newsletter to Debbie Mott (Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov) by Wednesday, July 27. 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 Career Opportunities

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

- *CACJ Treatment Fidelity Program Monitor
- *Griffin Judicial Circuit Contract Counselors
- *Towaliga Judicial Circuit Treatment Coordinator
- *Henry County Case Manager
- *Columbia Judicial Circuit Accountability Courts Coordinator
- *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Drug Court Coordinator
- *Columbus Family Treatment Court Coordinator
- *Glynn County Lead Clinical Director
- *North Enotah Judicial Circuit Accountability Courts Coordinator
- *DeKalb County Misdemeanor Mental Health Court Social Worker
- *Gwinnett County Behavioral Health Court Coordinator (Juvenile Court)
- *CACJ Operations & Communications Coordinator
- *Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician II
- *Towaliga Judicial Circuit MH & VTC Coordinator
- *Henry County Behavioral Health Clinician
- *Cherokee Judicial Circuit Mental Health Counselor
- *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Case Manager
- *Forsyth County Contract Counselors
- *Cherokee County Case Manager

JOB OPENING

FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS

Resource submitted by Tara Zellous, CACJ Treatment Services Manager



Did you Know:

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) are community-based health care providers that receive funds from the HRSA Health Center Program to provide primary care services in underserved areas. They must meet a stringent set of requirements, including providing care on a sliding fee scale based on ability to pay and operating under a governing board that includes patients.

Health centers provide care to millions of patients, in every U.S. state, U.S. territory, and the District of Columbia, regardless of ability to pay. Health centers leverage a variety of other related programs. All health centers, including look-alikes, gain access to:

- Federally Qualified Health Center Prospective Payment System reimbursement for services to [Medicare](#) and [Medicaid](#) beneficiaries

- [340B Drug Pricing Program](#) discounts for pharmaceutical products

- Free vaccines for uninsured and underinsured children through the [Vaccines for Children Program](#)

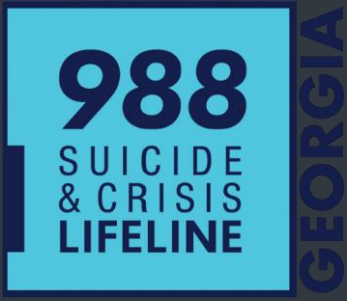
- Assistance in the recruitment and retention of primary care providers through the [National Health Service Corps](#)

Visit for more information:

[https://www.hrsa.gov/opa/eligibility-and-](https://www.hrsa.gov/opa/eligibility-and-registration/health-centers/fqhc/index.html)

[registration/health-centers/fqhc/index.html](https://www.hrsa.gov/opa/eligibility-and-registration/health-centers/fqhc/index.html)

Georgia Primary Care Association serves as an FQHC for the state of Georgia. Select 'Find a Health Center' to locate providers near you. <https://georgiapca.org/>



There is hope.



What is 98-8?

9-8-8 is emerging as the 9-1-1 of behavioral health, and like the rollout of 9-1-1 will take many years to reach full capacity. It is one of the largest federally mandated crisis response transformations in decades designed to meet the rising needs of mental health, substance abuse disorders and suicide interventions.

Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities is leading the planning process and implementation of 9-8-8 in Georgia.

Moving to a 3-digit dialing code is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to strengthen and expand the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Establishing 9-8-8 for suicide prevention and behavioral health crises will make it easier for Georgians in crisis to access the help they need and decrease the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health.



Georgia's Rollout

The 9-8-8 dialing code will be available for call, text, or chat on July 16, 2022. Callers will be connected to a trained staff member who can help address immediate needs and connect the callers to care resources., 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

We know that eventually 9-8-8 will become as commonly used as 9-1-1, providing appropriate mental health crisis responses for all Georgians. While 9-1-1 began in the 1960's, it took thirty years to have 93% of the U.S. population covered by 9-1-1 and it continues to evolve. We will take lessons learned from 9-1-1 implementation: build capacity and staffing over time, with a focus on technology and infrastructure.

We expect call volumes to be higher than ever before and we are working hard to prepare to meet this demand. We are working to build capacity to serve this increased demand at a time of workforce shortages and other unprecedented challenges.

DBHDD's planning committee has been meeting since April of 2021 to prepare for the July 16, 2022, rollout. The committee is made up of healthcare professionals and providers, law enforcement, 9-1-1 officials, policy makers, individuals with lived experience and behavioral health advocates.

Funding

Georgia's General Assembly has already approved some funding for 9-8-8 support. However, just like 9-1-1, more funding is needed to help build out a system that ensures a robust mental health response. The federal legislation not only put 9-8-8 into law, but it also allows states to implement monthly fees on telecommunications bills. While other states have rushed to pass fees, Georgia will continue to assess actual call volume to determine how best to approach funding this long-term transformation of Georgia's crisis infrastructure.



9-8-8 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE IN GEORGIA | 988GA.ORG

9-8-8 Matters



The gradual rollout of 9-8-8 can eventually become a critical tool to address our state's mental health crisis needs. Georgia ranks 31st in suicide deaths in the United States. In Georgia, from 2019-2020, there was a slight decline in suicides in urban areas, but an 8.3% rise in rural suicides. During the COVID-19 pandemic, from April 2020 to April 2021, Georgia has seen a 36% increase in overdose deaths.

Current projections suggest that the implementation of 9-8-8 will increase call center volumes by as much as 100% by the end of the first year.

Georgians now have access to GCAL (1-800-715-4225) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year to help anyone in crisis. This will not change with the implementation of 9-8-8.

GCAL Professionals Provide:

+ Crisis Intervention Services over the phone



+ The ability to dispatch mobile crisis teams

+ Assistance to individuals in finding an open crisis or detox bed across Georgia + A way to link individuals with urgent appointment services

9-8-8 vs. 9-1-1

9-8-8 was established to improve access to mental health crisis services. 9-8-8 will provide easier access, distinct from 9-1-1, which focuses on dispatching Emergency Medical Services, fire and police as needed.

Re-imagining Crisis Response with 9-8-8



The time is now for policymakers, healthcare providers, law enforcement and behavioral health advocates to re-imagine how Georgia responds to people in mental health, substance use, and suicide crisis.

+ 9-8-8 will help to connect a person in a mental health crisis to a trained professional responder, who can address their immediate needs and help connect them to ongoing care.



+ 9-8-8 will help to reduce healthcare spending with more cost-effective early intervention.

+ 9-8-8 will reduce the use of la

Blue

Many blue

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE



After two years of hosting events as completely virtual or hybrid, CACJ is excited gather with the accountability court community and return to Athens for the 2022 Annual Training Conference!

Overview

The CACJ 2022 Annual Training Conference will feature over 45 training sessions in different subject tracks presented by nationally recognized speakers, partner agencies, and accountability court professionals. CACJ anticipates a full line-up of vendors offering services to your accountability court that attendees can connect with.

Logistics

The CACJ 2022 Annual Training Conference will be an in-person only event. Participation is limited to 8 team members per adult and juvenile accountability court; however, family treatment courts can register 10 team members. State-funded accountability courts received funding in the program's FY23 Operating Grant Award to support conference attendance.

Registration

Registration for the conference will open on Monday, July 11, 2022. **Accountability Court Coordinators are the point of contact to register team members for the conference. Only coordinators (person listed on the CACJ directory as the point of contact) will receive an email from ICJE Event Coordinator, Ms. Laura Kathryn Hogan, with instructions to register team members and a link to the hotel room blocks for overnight lodging in Athens.** Registration for conference attendance will end on September 16, 2022. **Early registration is encouraged as classes and hotels are booked on a first come, first served basis, and can fill up quickly.**

To help attendees plan and make the most of their conference experience, the conference planning team has released the 2022 conference session agenda and catalog early! Breakout sessions are organized by track and content level. Visit the CACJ website conference webpage [here](#) to view the session line-up. Also, attendees will notice a new look for conference registration! The registration system will allow registrants to filter course selections according to track, keyword, and content level.

Award Nominations

Nominations open on July 11, 2022!

As in years past, CACJ wants to recognize team members across the state for their hard work and dedication to accountability courts. Start thinking about the people who you work closely with on your court team and consider nominating them for an award. CACJ will recognize one person from various team roles for the STAR Award. One outstanding individual from a mental health court will be recognized for their contributions in the field for the Judge Stephen S. Goss Award, and one outstanding individual will be recognized for their contributions in the accountability court community for the Tommy Day Wilcox Award. CACJ created the Data Driven Award to reward programs who fully utilize data and their case management systems to improve program and participant outcomes. The Data Driven Award provides both recognition and financial support (up to \$15,000!) for continued program evaluation. Information on prior inaugural award recipients can be found [here](#).

Updates

Continue to monitor your inboxes for conference updates from the CACJ. There are many exciting activities and details pending confirmation – please don't miss out! The most up to date information is found on the CACJ website [here](#). CACJ anticipates sending bi-weekly updates about **What's New in 2022** regarding continuing education hours, team building & wellness activities, and the mobile app in the months ahead.