



# COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

MARCH 2022

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## ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

### CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

*Submitted by Lakisha Dixon, Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator*

The Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court with Judge Robert L. Mack held its 5th graduation on February 9, 2022. Graduate Markald Johnson completed the program successfully. Mr. Johnson served in the United States Army. As his graduation Community Service Project, Mr. Johnson partnered with the Calvary Refuge Center located in Forest Park to renovate their residential rooms for homeless individuals with children. He was able to get most of the materials donated from Home Depot. A lot of heart and sweat went into this project, and he did a wonderful job.



The keynote speaker for this occasion was Mr. Mike Sauls, also known as "Military Mike." During his 25 years of service, he accumulated skills in thought leadership, project management, personal readiness, and innovated success modeling techniques. Upon retirement, he became a veterans support advocate, assisting other veterans and military families. He advised the graduate, as well as other participants, to navigate life, you must identify the problem, analyze the facts, choose a course of action, and execute, execute, execute.

Mr. Johnson was overwhelmed with gratitude and grace as he thanked the many individuals that helped and guided them along the way. He plans on eventually moving back to South Carolina to be with his family.



## 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.

### Colquitt County Accountability Court

**Court type:** Substance Abuse & Mental Health Court

**Presiding judge:** Judge Brian A. McDaniel (Retired Judge Frank D. Horkan started the program in 2013, and Judge McDaniel became the drug court judge upon taking office on January 1, 2015.)

**Coordinator:** Jennifer S. Fabbri (since inception in January 2013)

**Inception date:** January 1, 2013

**Number of graduates to date:** 33 since staff began tracking data with CaseWorx

**Current program census:** 31

**Recidivism rate:** roughly 20-25% of graduates



**Innovative practices/unique programming:** "We partner with our local mental health hospital, Turning Point, and they provide us with scholarship beds that serve as a 'buffer' between jail release and the start of outpatient services. We received an enhancement grant to use for the employment of two peer support specialists, graduates who work with our team and current participants. We began a peer apprenticeship program where current participants are encouraged to start practicing their recovery skills with newer participants prior to graduation from CCAC. We utilize a Step 5 aftercare program which is mandatory, and participants in this phase are graduates of the program who remain connected to CCAC services for a minimum of three months after graduation. CCAC also has an active alumni group that hosts community events and provides group meetings aimed at our early phase participants. Our Case Manager also hosts monthly ladies' events where she connects female participants with strong female leaders/business owners in our community."

**Why do you choose to preside over the accountability court?**

**Judge McDaniel:** "I became the drug court judge in part because I was in the District Attorney's Office in Colquitt County and was involved in the organization of the program. I never really considered not taking over the program. The program was still in its infancy in January 2015 but showed such great potential to help people in our community; I couldn't say no."

**What do you hope to accomplish as a model court?**

**Judge McDaniel:** "As a model court, we hope to set an example of how a court, especially in a rural community, can succeed in turning lives around. I hope we lead by our successes. However, we are not too proud to share our mistakes so others can avoid doing the same thing."

**Ms. Fabbri:** "As a model court, I hope CCAC can help guide new courts and steer these programs away from some of the pitfalls Colquitt County has faced over the years...no need to reinvent the wheel."

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

**Ms. Fabbri:** "I am most proud of our successful graduates. These graduates speak to the true beauty of what accountability courts can do for people."

**What is something you wish you had known at program inception that you hope to impart to newer courts?**

**Judge McDaniel:** "Presiding over an accountability court can be very emotionally taxing. When you see and talk to participants every two weeks (or more) you can truly build a bond, almost like a parent, with them. When they succeed, we are so proud of them. When they have failings, you not only feel bad for them, but sometimes you feel you have failed, too. If you are truly invested in your program, it can have an effect on your life as well as the participants."

### Words of Advice...

**Ms. Fabbri:** "CACJ is an amazing resource for new courts...REACH OUT, ask questions, and above all else, learn from your mistakes because it will help make your program the best it can be."

### Colquitt County Accountability Court Team Members

**Judge:** Honorable Brian A. McDaniel

**Coordinator:** Jennifer S. Fabbri

**Prosecutor:** April S. Hancock

**Defense Attorney:** Guy Terry

**Probation Officer:** Detrich Clark (In January 2022, the local Rotary Club recognized him as one of the top law enforcement officers in the County for 2021.)

**Treatment Provider:** Karen Charles

**Case Manager:** Heather King

**Surveillance Officer:** Jeff Faircloth



### Model Adult Felony Drug Court (2020-2023)

### Rome Circuit Mental Health Court

**Court type:** Mental Health Court

**Presiding judge:** Judge Jack Niedrach

**Coordinator:** Karen Tovey

**Inception date:** October 2015

**Number of graduates to date:** 29

**Current program census:** 9





**Recidivism rate:** 31%

**Innovative practices/unique programming:** "In addition to the State required/recommended courses, we offer extra living skills classes to include finance and budgeting, domestic violence awareness, symptom recognition, and women's and men's self-esteem groups. One of the best classes we have available to us through our local NAMI chapter is 'Peer-To-Peer' and our participants love it."

**Why do you choose to preside over the accountability court?**

**Judge Niedrach:** "I have come to realize that many, if not most, crimes are caused by one or more of three conditions: addiction, mental health, and poverty. I believe that it best serves the defendant and the public to treat the conditions rather than just react to the crime. That is why I choose to preside over the Rome Circuit Mental Health Court."

**What do you hope to accomplish as a model court?**

**Judge Niedrach:** "I am pleased that we have been named a model court so that we can assist and share our experiences – successes and failures – with other courts and so that they can share theirs with us."

**Ms. Tovey:** "I hope, as a model court, we can serve as an example of what has worked for us and what hasn't to avoid wasted time and resources. We have clearly learned from so many others."

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

**Ms. Tovey:** "I am extremely proud of the fact that we have had seven participants receive their GEDs while in our program, five within the past year. Several have continued to further their education."

**What is something you wish you had known at program inception that you hope to impart to newer courts?**

**Judge Niedrach:** "I wish I had known that I would become personally attached to and invested in the participants. I revel in their compliance and advancement, and it hurts me to impose sanctions. I always try to keep in mind that the system of sanctions and incentives works and that we are an 'accountability' court."

**Ms. Tovey:** "I don't think I fully realized the depth our involvement would truly be in our participants' lives."

#### **Rome Circuit Mental Health Court Team Members**

**Judge:** Honorable Jack Niedrach

**Coordinator:** Karen Tovey

**Case Manager:** Amy Bergstrom

**Assistant District Attorney:** Brandon Crandell

**Public Defender:** Sean Lowe

**Treatment Provider:** David Burris

**Probation Officer:** Cecil Crank

**Surveillance Officer:** Barry McElroy



**Model Mental Health Court (2021-2024)**

## COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES NEWS

### COORDINATOR QUARTERLY CALL

The next quarterly coordinator call is scheduled for March 7, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. Attendees who submitted their RSVP will receive the meeting agenda by March 4.

### NEW JUDGES ORIENTATION

The CACJ New Judges Orientation dates for FY23 are August 23-24, 2022. Registration will open March 21, 2022. For additional information about the training or to inquire about attendance requirements/eligibility, please email Kimberly Howard at [Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov).

### CACJ 2022 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE



**CACJ 2022 Annual Training Conference**  
**October 9-12, 2022**  
**"Back to the Future of Accountability Courts"**

The Council of Accountability Court Judges will host its 7th Annual Training Conference October 9-12, 2022. The conference is expected to host more than 900+ attendees from Georgia's accountability courts. Registration and hotel room block information will become available as the information is finalized. Registration is expected to open in July 2022. Coordinators are the primary point of contact for attendee registration. Please continue to monitor the CACJ website for the most up-to-date information about the conference. The webpage is [here](#).

### APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Please send submissions for the April 2022 newsletter to Debbie Mott ([Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov](mailto:Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov)) by Friday, March 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:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| *Carroll County Family Treatment Court Case Manager          | *Gwinnett County Case Manager                              |
| *Mountain Judicial Circuit Clinical Coordinator              | *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Mental Health Court Coordinator |
| *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Group Facilitator                 | *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Case Manager                    |
| *Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Drug Testing Technician           | *Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician I               |
| *Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician II                | *Forsyth County Contract Counselors                        |
| *DeKalb County Misdemeanor Mental Health Court Social Worker |  |

### 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

**March 2, 2022** (Register in advance: [Here](#)) 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data

**April 6, 2022** (Register in advance: [Here](#)) 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Executive Director/Legal/Grants
- Treatment
- Training

**May 4, 2022** (Register in advance: [Here](#)) 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

- Standards & Certification
- Data

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022  
1-2:30 PM (ET) | [REGISTER NOW](#)

 ADDICTION  
POLICY FORUM



Dr. Jennifer J. Carroll, PhD, MPH,  
Medical Anthropologist and  
Public Health Researcher



Michelle Putnam, MPH,  
Division of Overdose  
Prevention, CDC

# Evidence-Based Strategies for Preventing Opioid Overdose

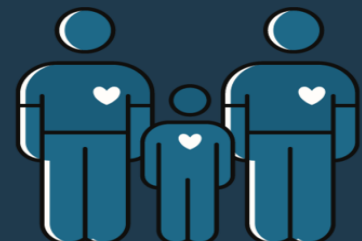
*A Conversation with CDC Experts*



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

**EQUITY FOR ALL FAMILIES:**  
**PRACTICE INTERVENTIONS TO  
PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND  
PREVENT DISPARATE OUTCOMES IN  
FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS**

**MARCH 22, 2022, 12:00–1:30 P.M. ET**





## **New Training Series to Advance Equity and Inclusion in Treatment Courts**

NADCP is thrilled to launch a [new series of cutting-edge training programs](#) designed to equip treatment courts with the tools you need to lead the way in equity and inclusion.

Don't wait to register for these important trainings; space is limited! All webinars are free for attendees, will provide an opportunity for questions and answers as time allows, and will be recorded for future use.

### **Session 1: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Questioning Participants in Treatment Court**

Treatment courts will learn to understand the specific needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning (LGBQ) participants to remove access barriers and individualize treatment plans. This module will address cultural competency by developing health literacy skills in speaking about sexual orientation and issues of cultural humility such as identifying and stopping microaggressions and collecting accurate data.

**Date:** March 10, 2022 | 2:00 p.m. ET

**Presenter:** Kim Monique-Johnson, Inner Visions Consulting, LLC

### **Session 2: Gender Identity and the Participant of Transgender Experience in Treatment Court**

Transgender adults have a prevalence of substance use disorder (SUD) almost four times that of cisgender adults. They face challenges that include dealing with extremely high rates of childhood trauma, high Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) scores, widespread discrimination, violence, practitioner lack of cultural competency, stigma due to their gender identity and expression, and multiple minority stressors. This module will address cultural competency by developing health literacy skills specific to data collection, gender-affirming and inclusive communication, and self-assessment for bias and microaggressions.

**Date:** June 9, 2022 | 2:00 p.m. ET

**Presenter:** Kim Monique-Johnson, Inner Visions Consulting, LLC

### **Session 3: How to Organize and Conduct a Focus Group**

The NADCP [Equity and Inclusion Toolkit](#) recommends treatment courts conduct focus groups to better understand the experiences of staff, participants, and community members. In this webinar, participants will learn how to prepare, organize, and conduct a focus group.

**Date:** September 8, 2022 | 2:00 p.m. ET

**Presenter:** Dr. Anne Janku, Research Associate Professor, University of Missouri-Columbia

### **Session 4: How to Identify and Host an Advisory Board**

Advisory boards can assist treatment courts in better understanding the experiences of participants and community members. They can also assist in the change process for effective engagement of minority communities. This session will help participants develop an effective advisory board that helps their treatment court team assess resources, risks, and consequences of program changes on their communities.

**Date:** December 8, 2022 | 2:00 p.m. ET

**Presenter:** Carolyn Hardin, Chief of Training and Research, NADCP