



COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

NOVEMBER 2021

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2021 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE NEWS

CONFERENCE CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE

Certificates of attendance for the 2021 CACJ Annual Training Conference have been delivered via email to registered attendees by the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education. Please check your inbox (the email address used during conference registration) for a message delivered on November 1, 2021 from Casey Semple. Attendees will have to submit their certificate of attendance to their credentialing board to receive credit. The Council of Accountability Court Judges does not pay for continuing education unit fees.

If there is a correction to your certificate please contact, Ms. Casey Semple at csemple@uga.edu.

ACCOUNTABILITY COURT NEWS

LOWNDES COUNTY DUI AND DRUG ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS

Submitted by Elizabeth Peters, Lowndes County DUI Court Coordinator



In 2021, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) celebrated the 32nd anniversary of National Recovery Month while spreading the message that treatment is effective and people can and do recover—every day. On September 24, 2021, the Lowndes County DUI and Drug Accountability Courts held the 2nd Annual Recovery Walk at the historic Lowndes County Courthouse in downtown Valdosta to raise awareness about addiction, promote behavioral wellness, and show the community that recovery is possible.

Elizabeth Peters, DUI Court Coordinator, kicked off the event by stating, "Recovery Month reminds us that substance use disorders affect all of us and that we are all part of the solution."

She then introduced the Honorable Ellen Golden, Judge for Lowndes County State Court, who also presides over the Lowndes County DUI Court and who spoke about the history of the DUI Court and the mission and goals of the program. Since inception of the DUI Court in 2017, the Court has had 49 graduates successfully complete the strenuous program.

The Honorable Greg Voyles, Judge for the Lowndes County Superior Court, who also presides over the Lowndes County Drug Court, then spoke about the history of the Drug Court and seeing the effect accountability courts have on our community.

The crowd then heard from Mr. Aaron Winston, founder and CEO of R.E.A.C.H. Two, a non-profit organization in Lowndes County. Mr. Winston shared the troubles of his past and how he was able to overcome them. Mr. Winston also shared how recovery is for everyone, every person, every family, and every community.

The official proclamation signed by Chairman Bill Slaughter naming September National Recovery Month in Lowndes County was read by Vice Chairman Joyce Evans and then presented to Judge Golden and Judge Voyles.



The Recovery Walk involved many community resources at the event with tables from Greenleaf, Celebrate Recovery, Legacy Behavioral Health Services, South Georgia Rural Opioid Response Project, Lowndes County Drug Court, and Lowndes County DUI Court.

Families, activists, and addiction survivors then walked in recognition of National Recovery Month around the historic courthouse with each other with one thing in common – recovery.

FULTON COUNTY ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS

Submitted by John Collins, Fulton County Accountability Courts Director

On October 15, Ms. Nikita Franklin, Fulton County Drug Court Case Manager, lead a Breast Cancer Awareness Drive at Fulton County Accountability Courts to recognize Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The drive successfully brought awareness and donations to this important health initiative. The team also enjoyed the opportunity to wear pink and strike their best poses for a group photograph. Breast Cancer Awareness Month is organized by major breast cancer charities around the world including the National Breast Cancer Foundation (<https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/>).



HOUSTON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Submitted by Katie Barrs, Houston County Mental Health Court Coordinator



The Houston County Mental Health Court Team hosted a “party in the park” event on October 23, 2021. We had pizza, candy, chips, drinks, cards, cornhole, and music. All the items were donated by a local church. We had 12 participants come and some brought their families.

DEKALB COUNTY JUVENILE COURT MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Submitted by Constance Hawkins, DeKalb County Juvenile Program Administrator

The Journey Program is the DeKalb County Juvenile Court Mental Health Program for girls ages 13-16. The purpose of Journey is to create a network of support for those participants and their families through the coordination and facilitation of treatment services and prosocial activities. Our mission is to provide each participant with lifelong tools to understand and manage their mental illness.

As we strive to maintain normalcy through this pandemic, our focus was aimed at making sure that we continue our mission. During this time, our participants continued to receive the services that were needed to keep them safe. We became a support system for our girls and their families. Our team consists of our presiding Judge, District Attorney, Public Offender, Probation Officer, Case Manager, Treatment Providers, Care Coordinator, School Representative, and Juvenile Program Administrator. We became more motivated and determined to make certain that our participants were receiving the necessary care and support during this unprecedented time. Our team felt like a family, and we relied on each other as we made ourselves available as needed. Scheduled group sessions and pro-social activities we made available virtually. We were able to provide our participants and their families with groceries, school supplies, and gift cards, all due to the support of our Board members.

The Journey program is proud to announce the following accomplishments:

- Four participants graduated successfully from the program, and we currently have four scheduled to complete the program in January 2022.
- Participants attended evidence-based group sessions.
- The Program continues to provide individual therapy, family counseling, parenting group meetings, and pro-social activities.

As the year comes to an end, we look forward to ways of celebrating the holidays and making it a joyous occasion for our participants.

DEKALB COUNTY FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Panya Dixon, DeKalb County Family Treatment Court Program Administrator

INSPIRE Family Treatment Court is celebrating their one-year anniversary! They began serving the families of DeKalb County on November 12, 2020 by providing intensive holistic substance abuse treatment to break the cycle of addiction. This includes allowing children to live safely in their home, reduce recidivism, empower parents to successfully address issues affecting their children’s well-being, and build a foundation for a sober and healthy family environment.

Due to the pandemic, our team continues to assist program participants virtually who have greatly benefited from the resources that are being provided to them. Prior to entering our program, current participants had extensive Department of Family and Children Services history and a combined 30+ year history of drug and alcohol use. Initially, they were reluctant to start our program but decided their sobriety and children

DeKalb County Juvenile Court

**INSPIRE
Family
Treatment
Court**

were very important to them. They wanted to improve their current situation and provide a better way of living for themselves and their children.

Some highlights of INSPIRE Family Treatment Program thus far:

- A participant successfully completed a 90-day inpatient treatment program with Mary Hall Freedom House
- A program participant regained custody of children who were in Family Preservation
- Program participants have maintained over 120 days of sobriety and compliant with random drug screens
- Program participants have attended and participated in over 120 community meetings
- Program participants have completed Phase I and successfully transitioned to Phase II
- Started unsupervised overnight visitations with children
- Maintained consistent weekly check-ins with the Juvenile Program Administrator/Coordinator

In addition to these highlights, our program provided families with food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Families were presented with computer tablets and internet service to participate in our virtual programming and backpacks for the children attending school.

Our team consistently seeks innovative ways to improve our program and provide quality care for our participants by attending conferences, educational webinars, and training sessions. We also conduct spring and fall retreats to gain knowledge and create a cohesive team environment. We are excited about the accomplishments of our program and look forward to assisting many more families. We will continue to work together to provide innovative programming that will INSPIRE healthy environments for the families of DeKalb County.

CARROLL COUNTY DRUG COURT

Submitted by Karen Van Blarcom, Carroll County Drug Court Coordinator

Carroll County Drug Court celebrates participant achievements by presenting various awards throughout the time in our program.

Sanction-Free Awards

Six, eight, and 10-week sanction-free incentives are presented to new participants. Thereafter, we celebrate 10-week sanction-free achievements for established participants. Along with a gift, 180 days and 365 days sanction-free awards are presented in court.

We try to get creative with other achievements, so we also give out "Outstanding Participant" awards. This award is given anytime throughout the year when a participant shows a significant achievement or makes significant progress throughout our program.

Quarterly, we present the following gifts:

Participant Fee Incentives: Participants are recognized in court that have shown consistency in paying their participant fees or are ahead on their fees.

Restored Award: This award is presented to those who had trouble in the beginning of the program but made a complete turn-around with their attitude and dedication towards treatment over time.

To assist us in collecting no-cost incentives, we also periodically go out into the community to local restaurants to share our programs' mission and purpose and to show our support to small local business owners. We also offer the opportunity to partner with us by providing discount voucher cards to present to our participants as additional incentives for doing well in our program. The business owners love to show their support in helping those in recovery by turning their lives around, reducing the recidivism rates, and getting drugs off the streets. In addition, they have more patrons that visit their restaurants, which gives them the opportunity to get their name out there and increase their exposure in the community.

Our treatment provider is also starting a Participant Mentor Program in January in which seasoned participants that have shown readiness to graduate our program work with new participants guiding them along the way through their recovery as an additional support system for accountability! Medallions are presented by the treatment provider to each mentor as they achieve a milestone of mentorship. The milestones are for Community, Courage, Wellbeing, and Discipline. Once the mentor has achieved all milestones, they turn in their medallions at the next Drug Court hearing and are presented with an engraved "Drug Court Mentor" medallion with their name engraved on the other side. Much like a rite of passage, this is presented as an achievement in their own recovery for giving back to those in need, just as they once were in need.





ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

COBB COUNTY DRUG TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Porsha Middlebrook, Cobb County Drug Treatment Court Coordinator



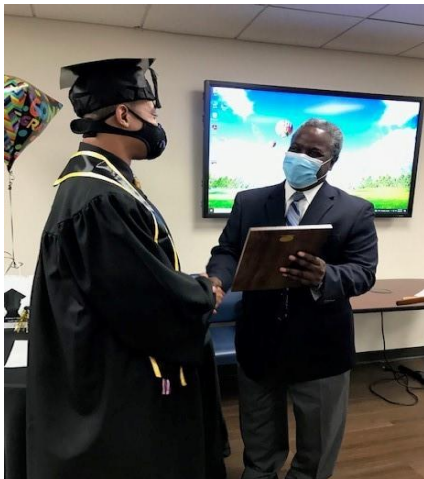
Five men graduate from Cobb County Drug Treatment Court on October 4, 2021.

Pictured is Judge Mary Staley Clark with three of the graduates (from the left, Jason, John, and Joel).

Judge Staley Clark recently took over as presiding judge of this accountability court program. More than 650 people have graduated from Cobb's Drug Treatment Court since program inception.

CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Lakisha Dixon, Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator



The Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court with presiding Judge Robert L. Mack held its third graduation on October 6, 2021. Graduate Anthony Plunkett served in the United States Army as a Petroleum Supply Specialist. Mr. Plunkett started out in Clayton County's DUI Program but felt his needs would be better served in Veterans Treatment Court. He completed the program successfully without complaint. Prior to his graduation, Mr. Plunkett also completed his required Community Service Project by donating hygiene items to the Rainbow House, a shelter that provides service to abused, neglected, and exploited children.

Captain Brian Settles, retired airline captain and author, was the speaker for this joyous occasion. Captain Settles' story begins as an orphan who was given

away at seven days old. He is a distinguished military graduate of the Air Force ROTC program, and he completed pilot training. Captain Settles earned a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education and Spanish in 1966 and went on to realize many accomplishments to include writing. He is the author of *No Reason for Dying: A Reluctant Combat Pilot's Confession of Hypocrisy, Infidelity, and War*.

Mr. Plunkett was overwhelmed but mostly relieved to have successfully completed the Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court. Mr. Plunkett stated he plans to rest and reflect on how far he's come in life and encouraged other participants to stay the course.



PAULDING JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DRUG COURT

Submitted by Michele Palmer, Paulding Judicial Circuit Drug Court Coordinator



The Paulding County Judicial Circuit Drug Court hosted its 11th graduation ceremony on October 22, 2021. Congratulations, graduates!



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER IN PREPARATION FOR THE FY23 FUNDING SEASON



FY23 Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding

The CACJ FY23 Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for funding submission window will open **Monday, November 8, 2021**. Each program currently funded by CACJ is required to complete the Notice of Intent. In addition, if a Circuit or County has planned to implement a new certified accountability court program during FY23, a NOI is required for the planned program. **The submission is due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 3, 2021.**

Court Operating Profile Report and Webinar Date

CACJ, with the support and partnership of CJCC, will open the Court Operating Profile on Monday, January 10, 2022. The COP is a survey used to collect accountability court program information. Accountability court coordinators will receive by email instructions to complete the survey, and each CACJ funded accountability court is required to submit a Court Operating Profile. The final report is due no later than Friday, January 28, 2022. A webinar to provide coordinators help with completing the survey will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2022. Please complete registration for the webinar [here](#).

FY22 Grant Solicitation and Grant Webinar Date

The FY22 Fiscal Year Operating Grant will be released on Tuesday, February 1, 2022. The completed grant application is due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 4, 2022. Please note, the FY23 Notice of Intent to Apply for Funding is mandatory for all certified accountability court programs applying for state grant funds. Details about the NOI can be found in the paragraphs above. A webinar to provide coordinators help with navigating the grant application is planned, and the date is Thursday, February 10, 2022. Please complete registration for the webinar [here](#).

MENTOR PROGRAMS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Council of Accountability Court Judges is pleased to re-open applications on Monday, November 8, 2021 for the Coordinator Mentor Program. Details about the program and applications are now available on the CACJ website for coordinators who are interested in being mentored or serving as a mentor. Applications are due Friday, December 10, 2021. Pairings will be announced by email in January 2022.



The Council of Accountability Court Judges is pleased to announce a new technical assistance resource for accountability courts. **The Case Manager Mentor Program** will begin accepting applications on Monday, November 8, 2021. Details about the program and applications are now available on the CACJ website for case managers who are interested in being mentored or serving as a mentor. The program will provide technical assistance for administrative case managers. Applications are due Friday, December 10, 2021. Pairings will be announced by email in January 2022.

2022 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE CALL FOR PRESENTERS IS OPEN

CACJ is excited to launch a call for presenters for the 2022 Annual Training Conference. As a member of the accountability court community, we need your help on ideas for workshops and presenters! CACJ is seeking proposals for breakout session speakers. Proposal instructions and additional details are available on the CACJ website 2022 conference call for presenters' page: <https://cacj.georgia.gov/training/call-presenters>. The deadline for submissions is Friday, December 31, 2021.

DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Please send submissions for the December 2021 newsletter to Debbie Mott (Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov) by Monday, November 29. 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:

- *Douglas County DUI/Drug Court Coordinator
- *Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit Drug Court Case Manager
- *Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician I
- *Rockdale County Behavioral Health Clinician Team Lead
- *Rockdale County Juvenile Drug Court Case Manager
- *Clayton County Clinical Coordinator
- *DeKalb County Misdemeanor MHC Social Worker
- *Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician II
- *Forsyth County Contract Counselors

RESOURCES

RISE21 Post-Conference Update National Drug Court Resource Center

The National Drug Court Resource Center thanks you for attending RISE21!

Thank you for attending RISE21! Whether you had a chance to stop by the NDCRC booth, attended our Co-Directors Dr. Kristen DeVall's and Dr. Christina Lanier's presentations, or met one of our staff members at a session, we hope that you had a chance to interact with the NDCRC. If you didn't, we invite you to:

- Follow our social media accounts,
- Listen to our podcast, "Justice to Healing"
- Visit our website and our Interactive Treatment Court Map
- Sign up for our monthly newsletter, and
- Post to the "Do Better" Commitment Board.

Do Better Commitment Board

The NDCRC has created a Do Better Commitment board using the Padlet platform. Padlet is an easy-to-use application that allows you to share text, video, photos, and more on a virtual bulletin board. We encourage you to create a post that describes how you might commit to Do Better and how the NDCRC can support you in your role. Visit <https://ndcrc.org/do-better/> and follow the directions to create your post.

Continue the Conversation

The NDCRC looks forward to continuing the conversation about how we can assist you with resources, training, and research that will help you in your role as a drug and treatment court professional!

TRAINING

Check out the CACJ website for the following training opportunities:

- *Overview of Accountability Court Certification – November 17, 2021
- *ASAM Criteria Skill Building Training – January 11-12, 2022
- *Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills Training – February 1-2, 2022
- *CACJ Winter Forum – February 8, 2022
- *Cognitive Behavioral Interventions – Substance Abuse (CBI-SUA) Training – February 15-18, 2022
- *Cognitive Behavioral Interventions – Core Adult (CBI-CA) Training – February 28-March 3, 2022
- *Operational Tune-Ups – March 8-9, 2022 (Adult Felony Drug Courts) and March 10-11, 2022 (FTCs and VTCs)