



# COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

OCTOBER 2021

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## 2021 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE

### JUDGE STEPHEN S. GOSS AWARD



In memory of the late Judge Stephen S. Goss, the Council of Accountability Court Judges created an award to honor his life and legacy as a nationally recognized expert on mental health. In 2002, Judge Goss founded the Dougherty Superior Court Mental Health & Substance Abuse Treatment Program. It served as one of four learning sites for mental health courts as designated by the United States Bureau of Justice Assistance and was the first mental health court created in the state of Georgia. His contribution to the field of mental health courts is felt nationwide, as well as in Georgia.

Recognized for his outstanding contributions in the field of mental health courts, **Judge Winston Bethel** of the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit is the recipient of the 2021 Judge Stephen S. Goss Award.

Judge Bethel has worked with mental health courts over 20 years and is responsible for establishing the first mental health diversion court program of its kind in 2001. Known as the DeKalb Diversion Treatment Court, the program became the misdemeanor mental health court. He retired from the bench in 2010 but continues to serve as a Senior Judge to the misdemeanor mental health court and DeKalb Magistrate, State, and Superior Courts. At the

2019 Mental Health Court Refresher training, Judge Goss was facilitating. He paid homage to Judge Bethel's achievements in mental health and acknowledged his continuous work in the field. Congratulations, Judge Bethel!

### STAR AWARD WINNERS

Accountability court professionals from across the state were encouraged to nominate outstanding team members for the annual training conference STAR Awards presentation. Nominations were submitted by role, and each role was scored by members of the CACJ Nominations Committee. Congratulations to the 2021 STAR Award recipients!



**Judge** – Chief Judge Russell Smith,  
Mountain Mental Health Court

**Coordinator** – Anita Grainger,  
Douglas County State DUI/Drug Court





**Case Manager** – Sandra Moore,  
Athens-Clarke County Family Treatment Court



**Treatment Provider** – Cordele Golden,  
Savannah-Chatham County Mental Health Court



**Probation Officer** – Tommy Robertson,  
Cherokee Judicial Circuit Drug Court



**Law Enforcement Officer** – Deputy Lee Martin,  
Douglas County Family Treatment Court



**Defense Attorney** – Tanya Jeffords,  
Augusta Judicial Circuit Drug Court



**Special Assistant Attorney General** – Rachele Gibson,  
Athens-Clarke County Family Treatment Court



**Peer Support Specialist** – Walter Nunnally,  
Rockdale County Drug Court



**Veterans Mentor Coordinator** - Ernie Hines,  
Cobb County Veterans Treatment and Accountability  
Court



**CASA Advocate** – Christie Ledlow-Hodges,  
Hall County Family Treatment Court

## JUDGE TOMMY DAY WILCOX LEADERSHIP AWARD



Judge Tommy Day Wilcox was the first accountability court judge in Georgia, and he presided over the Macon Drug Court. In his honor, the Judge Tommy Day Wilcox Award goes to the STAR Award nominee that received the highest overall score. This year's winner is **Danny Stevens**, Coordinator of the Athens-Clarke County Family Treatment Court.

Serving the court program since its inception, Mr. Stevens accepted the FTC Coordinator position after retiring from DFCS. According to those who nominated him, "he holds hope for the clients he serves, even when they are facing multiple barriers, which attests to his belief that recovery is possible. He is a source of strength for individuals who are going through a difficult time in their lives and a source of support and encouragement for those who do not have anyone to lean on." Congratulations, Danny Stevens!

## DATA DRIVEN AWARD

CACJ's Metrics and Measures Subcommittee created the Data Driven Award to reward programs who fully utilize data and their case management systems to improve program and participant outcomes. Since data is instrumental to self-evaluation and for sharing program outcomes with community partners, stakeholders, and legislators, the Data Driven Award reinforces the importance of strong data collection. The Data Driven Award provides both recognition and up to \$15,000 of financial support for continued program evaluation.

The winner of the 2021 Data Driven Award is Cobb County Family Treatment Court (FTC). Judge Jeffrey Hamby presides over Family Treatment Court, and Coordinator Jennifer Tillery accepted the award on the program's behalf. CACJ recognized Cobb County Family Treatment Court for fully utilizing its case management system to enter data, meeting as a team twice a year to review program data and evaluate the efficacy of the program to make changes as needed, and for sharing the data with community partners and stakeholders that results in financial support for the program. According to Ms. Tillery, "The Cobb County FTC enjoys incredible support from the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, Court Administration, and the judiciary due to the impressive data that can be provided through these reports." She added that data is one of the most important reasons why Cobb FTC has a record of success both within the court and the community. Congratulations, Cobb County FTC!

## MODEL COURTS RECOGNITION

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. CACJ is proud to recognize the 2022-2025 Model Courts!

### Family Treatment Courts

- \*Chatham County Family Treatment Court, Judge Tom Cole
- \*Cobb County Family Treatment Court, Judge Jeffrey Hamby
- \*Enotah Family Treatment Court, Judge Jeremy Clough
- \*Hall County Family Treatment Court, Judge Alison Toller
- \*Muscookee County Family Treatment Court, Judge Andrew Dodgen
- \*Tallapoosa Family Treatment Court, Judge Laura Wheale

### Veterans Treatment Courts

- \*Appalachian Circuit Veterans Court, Chief Judge Brenda Weaver
- \*Atlantic Judicial Circuit Veterans Court, Judge Robert L. Russell, III
- \*Cobb County Veterans Accountability & Treatment Court, Judge LaTain Kell
- \*Coweta Veterans Treatment Court, Judge John Simpson



**FULTON COUNTY ACCOUNTABILITY COURT**

*Submitted by John Collins, Fulton County Accountability Court Director, and Bridget Ogundipe*



The excitement and revelry created in anticipation of Recovery Month was just the recipe needed for Accountability Court program participants after a tough 18 months. The month of activities was a wraparound offering of dynamic alumni speakers, eager to come back home to share stories of hope, commitment, faith, and found success in a "new way of living". Gender specific support groups were available to provide a safe space for those talks better had "just between us". The R2ISE community incorporated the national theme, "Recovery is for everyone; every person, every family, every community," in an education presentation on "Successful Money Management". The conversation introduced "smart money" thinking and attitudes that support sober living and enhances the process of "restarting" life. A strong and faithful partnership with the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse exposed treatment participants to CARES peers who taught them how to elevate their recovery message. New language, "don't say this, say that," was introduced in an effort to reduce stigma, expand the message audience, and create a new well of positive affirmations to grow from and be nurtured by.

Recovery Month in Fulton County Accountability Court was a cornucopia of fun, learning, inspiration, and good natured "feel goods." Ms. Rozell Green and our local RCO, Westside Wonders, closed out the month of activities with a talent show and trivia games where participants won the admiration of their peers and staff, as well as prizes, NA/AA book donations, and WEANA (West End Area of Narcotics Anonymous) new member packets. It was a grand time had by all and generated hope and anticipation of a Recovery Month, COVID-free, in 2022!

| September 2021                 |                          |     |   |   |                                 |     |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|---|---|---------------------------------|-----|
| Mon                            | Tue                      | Wed | Thu                                       | Fri                                       | Sat                             | Sun |
|                                |                          | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4                               | 5   |
| 6                              | HOLIDAY                  | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10                              | 11  |
|                                |                          |     | Truth & Recovery 9am<br>Women's Group 6pm |   | Vaccination Fair (10a-4p) @AARC | 12  |
| 13                             | 14                       | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18                              | 19  |
| Motivational Speaker 3am & 6pm | Men's Group 6pm          |     | Motivational Speaker 6pm                  |   |                                 |     |
| 20                             | 21                       | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25                              | 26  |
| Recovery Messaging 6pm         | Financial Management 6pm |     | Recovery Pathways 9am & 6pm               | Talent Show - 8am<br>Trivia contest - 6pm |                                 |     |
| 27                             | 28                       | 29  | 30  |   |                                 |     |
|                                |                          |     | Spring 2007 Alumni Panel 6pm              |   |                                 |     |

**WESTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT FELONY DRUG COURT**

*Submitted by Nicole Cavanagh, Western Judicial Circuit Felony Drug Court Coordinator*

**Drug Court Graduate Appeared on The First Step Radio Show**

I am so happy to share this radio interview with you! Laura is a graduate of our Felony Drug Court and now works with us doing Peer Support. Please take a moment to listen and to share it with others. We are so proud of her and humbled by her. She shares what led her to our accountability courts, her struggle to comply initially in the program, and how her life is today.

<https://fb.watch/7CsBILAenS/>

## ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

### ROME CIRCUIT MENTAL HEALTH COURT

*Submitted by Karen Tovey, Rome Circuit Mental Health Court Coordinator*



*Pictured from left: Thomas Williams, Brie Windom, Courtney Tincher, Montana Floyd*

The Rome Circuit Mental Health Court celebrated the GED graduation of four participants on September 7, 2021. Congratulations!

## COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES NEWS

### FIRST GRADUATES OF THE COORDINATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

CACJ and the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) recognized the first graduates of the Accountability Court Coordinator Certification Program at the annual training conference's closing session on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

CACJ partnered with CVIOG to offer an extensive training program to accountability court coordinators and program directors throughout the state of Georgia. Employing a combination of online and in-person training sessions, the Coordinator Certification Program includes eight courses for a total of 45 hours of instruction, and the curriculum covers topics central to successful accountability court administration: accountability & advocacy, communication, conflict resolution, financial concepts, grant administration, procurement & contract management, succession planning & delegation, and team & group dynamics.

As the number of accountability courts has grown rapidly over the past few years, the objectives of the Coordinator Certification Program are to increase the knowledge of the primary administrative functions of accountability court coordinators, develop the skills necessary to carry out the administrative functions as an accountability court coordinator, develop and maintain the high standards for the functioning of the accountability courts, and increase the professionalism of accountability court coordinators.

The following court professionals make up the first cohort of graduates:

- \*Angela Anderson, Conasauga Mental Health Court
- \*Richard Bosten, Jackson County Drug Court
- \*Janice Cartwright, Dodge County Drug Court
- \*Kristen Daniel, Western Mental Health Court
- \*Marlow Dix, Coweta County Family Treatment Court
- \*Robert Fox, Newton County & Walton County Resource Court
- \*Steven Giglio, Towaliga Accountability Courts
- \*Anita Grainger, Douglas County DUI/Drug Court
- \*Latrell Gulotta, Chatham County Family Treatment Court
- \*Glenda Harriman, Atlantic Judicial Circuit Drug Court/Liberty County DUI Court
- \*Jennifer Barnett, Coweta County Drug Court
- \*Stephen Brown, Savannah-Chatham Mental Health Court
- \*Georgee Corley, Fulton County Misd. Mental Health Court
- \*Priscilla Daniels, Gwinnett County Judicial Circuit
- \*Lakisha Dixon, Clayton County Veterans Treatment Court
- \*Shawonna Gaither, Rockdale County DUI Court
- \*Leslie Grabensteder, Coweta County DUI Court
- \*Scharita Greene, Newton Juvenile Behavioral Health Court
- \*Kristy Hardin, Gwinnett County Judicial Circuit

- \*Melissa Johnson, Cherokee Circuit Drug Court
- \*Jennifer King, Douglas County Family Treatment Court
- \*Karen McClain, Ogeechee Judicial Circuit Mental Health Court & Drug Court
- \*Lauren Ortiz, Paulding Judicial Circuit Mental Health Court
- \*Patricia Pinkney, Savannah-Chatham County Drug Court
- \*Terry Sosebee, Conasauga Drug Court
- \*Danny Stevens, Athens-Clarke County Family Treatment Court
- \*Lynda Tobias, Burke County Accountability Courts
- \*Kelsey Topolski, Lookout Mountain Mental Health Court
- \*Jonathan Tucker, Clayton Judicial Circuit Behavioral Health Accountability Court
- \*Melanie Valentine, Cobb County Mental Health Court
- \*Jennifer Williams, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit Drug Court
- \*Darcy Kamau, Cobb County DUI Court
- \*Beau Leyse, Pataula Drug Court
- \*Katelyn Parker, Cobb County Veterans Treatment Court
- \*Dayna Solomon, Muscogee County Drug Court
- \*Jennifer Tillery, Cobb County Family Treatment Court
- \*Monyato Tolbert, Henry County Juv. Mental Health Court
- \*Karen Tovey, Rome Circuit Mental Health Court
- \*Samantha Whaley, DeKalb County DUI Court
- \*Erin Young, Rome/Floyd County Drug Court

## **CACJ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SERVE ON NEW COUNCIL TO EXPAND EDUCATION, TRAINING FOR NATION'S TREATMENT COURTS**

*Press release by the National Center for State Courts*

State court leaders have created the Council of State Treatment Court Coordinators, a group focused on improving the performance of treatment courts nationwide.

The council formalizes efforts to advise state court leaders and funders on initiatives related to “problem-solving” treatment courts, which address specific issues or populations like mental health, substance abuse, and veterans.

The council, which met for the first time at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference, was created by the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA). It will make recommendations to CCJ/COSCA's Behavioral Health Committee, and its status as a chartered group will be to inform and make recommendations to the Behavioral Health Committee on criminal justice policy and promote best practices in treatment courts nationwide.

The council's inaugural executive board includes members from nine states and is led by Chair Noreen Plumage, South Dakota's director of Problem-Solving Courts and Vice Chair Dennis Reilly, New York's statewide drug court coordinator.

The other members include:

- Richard “Gray” Barton, director, Office of Problem-Solving Courts, Maryland
- Taylor Jones, executive director, Council of Accountability Court Judges, Georgia
- Alicia Johnson, court supervised treatment program manager, Wyoming
- Kyle Gustafson, statewide problem-solving court coordinator, Colorado
- Robert Mitchell, senior statewide program manager, New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts
- Scott Ronan, state treatment court coordinator, Idaho
- Tammy Westcott, senior program manager, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse

*The National Center for State Courts, headquartered in Williamsburg, Va., is a nonprofit court organization dedicated to improving the administration of justice by providing leadership and service to the state courts. Founded in 1971 by the Conference of Chief Justices and Chief Justice of the United States Warren E. Burger, NCSC provides education, training, technology, management, and research services to the nation's state courts.*

## **GEORGIA ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS JOB POSTINGS**

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

- \*Cobb County Accountability Courts Director
- \*9<sup>th</sup> Judicial Administrative District, District Court Administrator
- \*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
- \*Newton County Behavioral Health Court Coordinator
- \*Clayton County Clinical Coordinator
- \*DeKalb County Misdemeanor MHC Social Worker
- \*Fulton County Behavioral Health Clinician II
- \*Forsyth County Contract Counselors

## NOVEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Please send submissions for the November 2021 newsletter to Debbie Mott ([Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov](mailto:Debbie.Mott@GeorgiaCourts.gov)) by Wednesday, October 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.

## RESOURCES



### New Publications Now Available

Download for free!



### The Use of Urine Creatinine Concentrations for Abstinence Monitoring in Treatment Courts

This new publication from NADCP provides answers to a series of frequently asked questions about creatinine as it relates to drug and alcohol screening in treatment courts.

### The Department of Defense's inTransition Program

Justice For Vets' new Dispatch From the Front Lines provides an overview of the DoD's inTransition Program. Created in 2010, this program is designed to help connect service members and veterans, regardless of discharge status, to behavioral healthcare and ensure that any service member or veteran who wants a provider for behavioral health services can be connected.

### Expansion of VA Caregiver Support Program

Veterans treatment courts across the country may serve veterans who have serious disabling conditions requiring intensive support from a caregiver so that they can live at home. In October

2020, the VA Caregiver Support Program was substantially expanded, providing new opportunities for caregivers of veterans who are severely ill or injured.

## TRAINING



### **Registration Is Now Open for Justice For Vets' 2021 Virtual Mentor Boot Camp**

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS OCTOBER 17**

NADCP's [Justice For Vets National Mentor Corps](#) builds on the undeniable truth that there is no bond as strong as the one that exists between those who have served their country. Veterans treatment courts thrive, in part, because they facilitate veterans in the community to be of service to their fellow veterans in need.

**Join us on Tuesday, October 19 for a virtual [Veteran Mentor Boot Camp](#).**

This one-day curriculum is designed to provide veteran mentors working with mentee participants the knowledge and skills to support them throughout the program. Our expert team will help you strategically identify community resources to allow veteran mentors to accomplish their mission of engaging, encouraging, and empowering their veterans treatment court participants and court teams.

Check out the [agenda](#) and [register](#) today! The deadline to register is Sunday, October 17.