



COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

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ACCOUNTABILITY COURT PROGRAM NEWS

CONASAUGA ADULT FELONY DRUG COURT CELEBRATES 73RD DRUG COURT GRADUATION

- ❖ Feature submitted by Coordinator, Todd Breitmann.

Dalton, Georgia, February 21st —The Conasauga Circuit Drug Court, which serves both the Whitfield and Murray counties, held a graduation ceremony on Thursday, Feb. 21 at the Whitfield County, Georgia Courthouse. The ceremony was open to the public and invited by The Honorable Jim Wilbanks, who delivered the keynote address.



This is the court's 73rd ceremony, since its founding in 2002. The ceremony marks the completion of an intensive 24-month program of comprehensive substance use disorder treatment, close supervision and accountability.



Treatment courts are this nation's most effective strategy to reduce drug use and recidivism among substance-addicted, nonviolent offenders with criminal histories. In the State of Georgia, these courts save up to \$5,000 for every individual they serve and each graduate returns as much as \$22,125 back in economic benefit. Nationally, treatment courts return as much as \$27 for every \$1 invested.

The uplifting graduation ceremony is evidence of the tremendous impact the Conasauga Drug court has had on our community and will send a powerful message that these programs reduce addiction, crime and recidivism, while saving lives, families and valuable resources for our communities. Treatment courts continue to show that treatment courts work better than jail, prison or probation.

Learn more, on-line, about Conasauga Drug Court and other treatment courts at <http://www.whitfieldcountyga.com/sc/treatmentcourt.htm>.

TALLAPOOSA CIRCUIT DRUG COURT CELEBRATES GRADUATION

- ❖ Featured in the Standard Journal

The Tallapoosa Circuit Drug Court recently celebrated its 30th graduation on January 28, 2019 for six program graduates. The ceremony was captured by the local news outlet, The Polk County Standard Journal.

http://www.northwestgeorgianews.com/polk_standard_journal/news/local/drug-court-graduates-as-january-ends/article_5fb3a6b8-2960-11e9-aa56-9f4f0925be7f.html

- ❖ Judge Currie Mingledorff, Piedmont Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge and a presiding judge for the Jackson and Barrow County Adult Felony Drug Court programs, shared the following story about a recent peer review.

We are fortunate to live in a State where accountability courts are not only available but are thriving. The main reason for that is Georgia's commitment to quality. That commitment is evident in the existence of State-wide uniform standards. The fact that those standards are linked to a certification process that includes peer review is uncommon.

So, we peer review each other. In effect, we look over each other's shoulders and offer constructive criticism. It is remarkable enough that accountability courts bring together highly trained and licensed professionals from various disciplines who work together to achieve common goals to benefit the community. It is even more remarkable that some of those roles are traditionally adversarial. It may be most remarkable of all that presiding over these teams of professionals is a judge that is steeped in the constitutional mandates and traditions associated with judicial independence.

Yet, these judges and their teams work to build consensus based on best practices incorporated within standards. The judge continues to exercise his or her independence, but the exercise of that authority is ultimately so much better-informed due to the existence of the team. So it's all held together in some great balancing act influenced not only by those standards but also by the culture of the respective communities each team serves. It is truly remarkable.

Then the peer reviewing team shows up. How is it that this extra layer of accountability for accountability courts isn't delivering a final crushing blow to the collective which holds together all of the varied interests represented around the table? The answer, I believe, has to do with the commitment of everyone involved to the ultimate goals of making our communities safer and bringing the blessings of recovery to individual participants and their families. In short, we all put our egos aside and choose to become teachable. (Isn't that what we ask our participants to do?) We then become willing to attempt course corrections based on competent advice grounded upon best practices and sound science.

So in practice, how is it working out? Having been peer reviewed and also having conducted peer reviews, I walk away from the experiences feeling a little humbled and grateful. Humbled because when our courts are peer reviewed we invariably discover ways we can improve; grateful, because someone took the time to guide us and help us. When I am part of a peer reviewing team I am humbled and grateful because I get to see all of the great things that other courts are doing that I can then take back home and copy!

I want to give a shout out our Courts' (Piedmont Circuit) specialty courts director, Vickie Bowman. We had the opportunity to travel to a distant court last fall for a peer review. The experience was fairly typical of other peer reviews in which I have participated. The program we were reviewing is a great court with a great team of dedicated professionals working with limited local resources. The program's coordinator was employed only part-time and had no other staff. This coordinator worked hard to incorporate all of the suggestions which came out of the peer review. But some of those suggestions were new, given that the program itself is relatively young. So what did Vickie Bowman do? She got back into her car a few weeks later and made the nearly 2 ½ hour drive alone to meet with and help out a fellow coordinator. No one asked her to do it. She just did it!

It would never be possible to quantify the value of a team member's dedication to the purposes of accountability courts. Yet, the State of Georgia is full of just such dedicated individuals.

You cannot put a price on that!

ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS



- ★ *Douglas County DUI/Drug Court*
- ★ *Rockdale County Adult Felony Drug Court*
- ★ *Macon Judicial Circuit Mental Health Court*
- ★ *South Enotah Felony Drug Court*
- ★ *Conasauga Circuit Drug Court*
- ★ *Walton County Resource Court*

COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES NEWS

CACJ FY20 ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRANT SOLICITATION

The Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) are accepting competitive applications for FY20 Accountability Court Funds.

Applications will be accepted Monday, February 18, 2019 through Friday, March 22, 2019.

Please note that the application submission process has changed for FY20. EXISTING and NEW accountability courts that completed the FY20 Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for funds process have received a SharePoint submission link directly from CJCC. Please contact Ms. Aimee Outlett with submission related questions (aimee.ouellet@cjcc.ga.gov).

Please visit the CACJ website to view the FY20 application and additional details:

<https://www.gaaccountabilitycourts.org/grant-opportunities>

Application information is also available on the CJCC website: <https://cjcc.georgia.gov/funding-opportunities-0>

THINKING FOR CHANGE TRAINING



The Council of Accountability Court Judges recently hosted two Thinking for a Change training classes during the month of February. The training classes were facilitated by Dr. Angela Dash and Co-facilitator Coretha McCall of the Pace Institute. Forty treatment providers attended the four-day training and successfully completed all requirements to receive certification to teach the curriculum to accountability court program participants. Photographed below are the happy attendees!



REENTRY PARTNERSHIP HOUSING

CACJ staff has created a survey to identify potential Reentry Partnership Housing (RPH) providers to serve accountability court program participants. This information will be shared with the Department of Community Affairs and Department of Community Supervision who have staff to assist all potential housing providers interested in becoming a RPH provider in each judicial circuit. To recommend a housing provider, please complete the survey by COB on Friday, March 15, 2019. To receive a link to the survey, please email Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov.

2019 CACJ ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE



The 2019 Annual Accountability Court Training Conference dates are confirmed.

The 2019 Conference has been extended by a half day. The conference will begin on Sunday, September 15, 2019 and will end Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at Noon.

Training registration and the CACJ conference room block will open on Wednesday, July 17, 2019.

As in past years, the accountability court program coordinator will be responsible for registering their team members.

Please check the CACJ website for conference updates!

2019 TRAINING CONFERENCE CALL FOR PRESENTERS

The CACJ Training Committee and staff invite you to submit a proposal to present a breakout session at the 2019 Annual Training Conference.

CACJ seeks proposals that present best practices in service delivery, collaboration, and justice programming that enhance outcomes for participants in our adult drug, mental health, DUI/drug, juvenile drug, juvenile mental health, family treatment, and veterans treatment programs.

Proposals will only be accepted via the online submission portal.

For the complete Call for Presenters announcement and instructions to submit a proposal, please visit the CACJ website's Training Conference webpage. <https://www.gaaccountabilitycourts.org/2019-training-conference>

We look forward to receiving your submissions.

To include a court program in the CACJ Newsletter or share an idea for a future submission, please email: Kimberly.Howard@georgiacourts.gov.