



COUNCIL OF ACCOUNTABILITY COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA

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ACCOUNTABILITY COURT NEWS & SPECIAL EVENTS

APPALACHIAN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Submitted by Chris Holt, Appalachian Judicial Circuit Veterans Court Coordinator

Accountability Court Staff Attend Training on Current Drug Trends

You can't stop what you don't know. That's is the motto of "Tall Cop Says Stop", Jermaine Galloway.

The Appalachian Judicial Circuit Accountability Court staff attended a training provided by Tall Cop to local law enforcement, probation, and accountability court staff on emerging drug trends. According to his website, since 2009, Officer Galloway has won four national awards and one international award for his work. In addition to his numerous talks at conferences and other events, he has personally trained more than 105,000 people nationwide. This training was hosted by Sheriff Donnie Craig and the Pickens County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Craig attended one of Jermaine's classes at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals conference last year in Washington D.C. and knew this information would be extremely beneficial to those combating the drug problem locally.

Among the topics covered were brands of clothing that promote drug use and have hidden "stash pockets", vaping, drugs being consumed that will not show up on drug screens, and how the legalization of marijuana in some states has led to THC content of up to 97 percent, which can be extremely dangerous.

As part of the training, a variety of clothing was on display that Jermaine easily purchased in stores in areas where he conducts his trainings. All of the clothing had at least one stash compartment. Also on display were items that substance abusers are using to get high that can be purchased in any pharmacy, including everyday common drugs that can potentiate the effects of other drugs.

For more information, please visit tallcopsaysstop.com.



Chief Superior Court Judge Brenda S. Weaver and her accountability court staff, along with "Tall Cop" Jermaine Galloway.

DeKalb County Welcomes Judges to Accountability Courts



The Honorable LaTisha Dear Jackson was elected Superior Judge of the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit on July 24, 2018. As a Superior Court Judge, she presides over a trial court of general jurisdiction for both civil and criminal actions with exclusive equity jurisdiction over all cases of divorce, title to land, and felonies involving jury trials, including death penalty cases.

Shortly after arriving to the DeKalb bench she became interested in the Accountability Courts, specifically Drug Court. She attended team staffings, court sessions, and various trainings including the Council of Accountability Court Judges Training Conference in the Fall of 2019. She wanted to ensure that she had a clear understanding of the accountability court model and how she would lead the team in her role of the judge. Judge Dear Jackson became the presiding judge over Track 1 of the

DeKalb County Drug Court (DCDC) in January 2020. Track 1 of DCDC serves high-risk, high-needs offenders in treatment who would otherwise face prison sentences rather than probation or other forms of alternative sentencing.

Prior to being elected to the DeKalb County Superior Court bench, Judge Dear Jackson was a Senior Associate with the oldest minority-owned law firm in the State of Georgia, Thomas Kennedy Sampson & Tompkins, LLP. There, she served in the litigation department defending corporate clients in medical malpractice, wrongful death, premises liability, and insurance matters. She also represented individuals in personal injury and wrongful death matters.

Judge Dear Jackson has also served as a full-time judge in the DeKalb County Recorder's Court, where she primarily presided over traffic offenses, misdemeanors, and county ordinances. From 2014-2018, Judge Dear Jackson sat by designation in both the Superior and State Courts of DeKalb County. For over a decade, Judge Dear Jackson served as a judge in local courts. In 2008, she made history by becoming both the first female and youngest judge to ever serve as a Municipal Court Judge in the City of Stone Mountain. In 2012, she again made history by becoming the first female Chief Municipal Court Judge in the City of Lithonia.

Judge Dear Jackson was also an attorney and counselor at law with her own law practice located in the historic City of Stone Mountain, where she specialized in all areas of juvenile law, criminal defense, and family law and where she handled several high-profile cases. She has further served as an Assistant Solicitor-General for DeKalb County's Office of the Solicitor-General, where she served as a trial attorney representing the State of Georgia on various misdemeanor crimes and habeas corpus proceedings.

Judge Dear Jackson earned her Juris Doctorate from Georgia State University College of Law and obtained her undergraduate degree from the prestigious Spelman College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics (pre-law concentration) and a double minor in Management Organization and Writing. She is active in numerous professional organizations, including both the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers and Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys' Judicial Applicant Review Committees.

As a testament to her accomplishments, she has received several honors from Cambridge Executive's Who's Who Honor's Edition to being featured in local newspapers and magazines, as well as her sorority's international magazine. In 2016, she received the Council for Municipal Court Judges President's Award for her commitment to access and fairness in Georgia courts. In all that she does and has accomplished thus far, Judge Dear Jackson remains humbled, inspired and motivated to continue to seek justice because there are still so many lives left to be touched. Finally, but most importantly, she is the proud wife of Gari B. Jackson.



The Honorable Asha F. Jackson is the Chief Superior Court Judge in DeKalb County where she was appointed to the bench in 2012 by Governor Nathan Deal and twice elected in uncontested races. Judge Jackson has the distinct honor of having clerked for her predecessor on the bench, Judge Michael Hancock, just after graduating from law school. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a partner practicing commercial litigation out of the Atlanta office of Barnes and Thornburg, LLP, and prior to this, she was a partner practicing tort litigation and professional negligence out of the Atlanta office of Carlock, Copeland, and Stair, LLP. While practicing, she tried numerous cases to verdict including mass tort, personal injury, product liability, and professional negligence cases on behalf of corporate and individual defendants. Her more notable cases include the representation of NFL football great

Ray Lewis in a civil suit arising out of two murders after the Atlanta Super Bowl and the representation of a funeral home sued after the owner of a North Georgia crematory failed to cremate hundreds of bodies.

In her current position, the Honorable Judge Jackson presides over more than 1,000 civil, criminal, and domestic cases assigned to her division, and her responsibilities include presiding over various hearings, motions, and trials. Because of her passionate commitment to the community and her belief in young people, Judge Jackson created Project Pinnacle, a one-year mandatory in-court experience for non-violent offenders under the age of 25. The goal of Project Pinnacle is to discourage young people from committing further offenses by providing them with life-skills training, legal rights, responsibilities education, and career development opportunities. Project Pinnacle is a co-ed program in which she is dedicated to restoring young people to a respectful position in the community. 2020 will welcome the 10th cohort of participants of Project Pinnacle.

Judge Jackson is the founding and presiding Judge of the Felony Mental Health Court in DeKalb County. In this role, she is responsible for working with severe and persistently mentally-ill defendants with a focus on accountability, medication compliance, and long-term stabilization in efforts to decrease hospitalization and further contact with the criminal justice systems. Participants are referred from all divisions in the DeKalb Superior Court.

Judge Jackson is very active in the legal community. She has held various leadership positions in the Atlanta Bar Association, the Gate City Bar Association, and the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys. She was inducted into the Litigation Counsel of America, an invitation-only Trial Order for the top 1% of litigators in the country, and she has been consistently recognized by her peers for excellence in litigation, professionalism, and service including being named to the Georgia Trend Magazine Top Attorney's List, the Georgia Rising Stars List, The Atlanta Daily Report Lawyer on the Rise, and the NBA Trailblazer Under 40, just to name a few. In the community, she also volunteers with a number of groups and organizations including her service as a Board Member of the State Commission on Family Violence, the Atlanta Area Council of Girl Scouts where she serves annually as the Judge for Law Merit Badge Day, the Atlanta Area Council of Boy Scouts where she teaches the Law Merit Badge and served as a fundraising captain, and the National Advisory Board of Forever Family, a youth mentoring organization committed to servicing children of incarcerated parents.



The Honorable Shondeana Morris was recently appointed to the DeKalb County Superior Court by Governor Brian Kemp on June 17, 2019. Prior to Judge Morris' appointment, she served as a DeKalb County State Court Judge - Traffic Division. During her time on the State Court bench, Judge Morris would preside over Drug Court sessions to ensure the participants maintained the therapeutic interaction if the presiding judge was unavailable. In January 2020, she joined Chief Judge Asha F. Jackson as a presiding Judge of the DeKalb County Felony Mental Health Court program.

A graduate of Lakeside High School in DeKalb County, Judge Morris earned a Bachelor's degree in Journalism from the University of Georgia and a Master's degree in Criminal Justice from Albany State University. She graduated from Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law in 1997 and was admitted to the Georgia Bar that same year.

After graduating law school, Judge Morris served as an Assistant Solicitor in Atlanta. In 1999, she joined the Fulton County Office of the District Attorney and was promoted to Deputy District Attorney. As Deputy District Attorney, Judge Morris provided leadership to the Public Integrity Unit, where she worked to ensure public trust in local government and law enforcement; the Crimes Against Women and Children Unit, where she worked to protect families and children; and the Community Prosecution Unit, where she worked with communities and criminal justice partners to provide safe neighborhoods. In recognition of her outstanding trial expertise, Judge Morris received the Association of Government Attorneys in Capital Litigation Trial Advocacy Award in 2009.

Judge Morris is involved with many professional, civic, and religious organizations. She is a member of the State Bar of Georgia, the American Bar Association, the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, the DeKalb Bar Association, the Atlanta Bar Association, the Gate City Bar Association, and the Lawyers Club of Georgia. She serves on the Board of Governors for the State Bar of Georgia, the Judicial Review Committee for the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, and the Chair of the Gate City Bar Association Judicial Section. Judge Morris serves as a proud member of the University of Georgia Alumni Board of Directors and Mercer University Law School Alumni BALSAs Council Vice President.

An alumna of Leadership DeKalb, Judge Morris is an Executive Board Member of the Day League (formerly DeKalb Rape Crisis Center), International Women's House, a non-profit domestic violence shelter, and a member of Atlanta Lions Club. Committed to the development of young people, she is a member of the Criminal Justice Advisory Board for Atlanta Technical College and frequently serves as a mentor and speaker on topics ranging from law and ethics to mental and physical wellness. Judge Morris is the State Bar of Georgia Suicide Awareness and Prevention committee chairperson. Judge Morris also serves as the chairperson of DeKalb County CASA.

In 2016, the Georgia House of Representatives passed House Resolution 1271, recognizing Judge Morris “for her tireless contributions to the State of Georgia,” and August 28, 2015 was designated “Shondeana Crews Morris Appreciation Day” by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners. Judge Morris also received the South Fulton Outstanding Citizenship Award (2014) and was acknowledged by Women Looking Ahead News Magazine as one of “Georgia’s Most Powerful and Influential Attorneys” (2011) and by the Daily Report legal news publication as “On the Rise – A Dozen Rising Stars” (2009). Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated honored Judge Morris in 2016 with both the Pota E. Coston Trailblazer Award and the Pinnacle Leadership Award for her dedication to public service given to the community.

Judge Morris is married to attorney Joe Morris, III. They are the proud parents of two young children and are foster parents under Georgia Division of Family and Children Services.

ACCOUNTABILITY COURT GRADUATIONS

CARROLL COUNTY FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Linsey Koda, Carroll County Family Treatment Court Coordinator

On February 6, Judge Tom Parmer and the Carroll County Family Treatment Court team celebrated its first graduation with two graduates. Each graduate spoke about how their substance abuse began, what helped them make the decision to get sober, what most helped them in their recovery journeys, and advice they had to offer to their phase one and two peers. Both of these ladies battled substance use for years and have worked extremely hard in this program. Both graduates completed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Abuse, Strengthening Families with their children, Moral Reconciliation Therapy, and the Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model Group. Many program participants also attend a residential facility as part of the program and may be assigned other types of treatment, as needed. These two women have been sober for over one year, have stable jobs, have stable homes, and have regained custody of their children. The keynote speaker was Ms. Deena Davis, Peer Support Specialist for Douglas County Family Treatment Court. Ms. Davis graduated from the Douglas County Family Treatment Court in 2010 and has been in recovery for 11 ½ years. Ms. Davis works hard to support and help people in recovery through her peer support work, by serving on the advisory board for the Maternal Substance Use workgroup for the statewide Georgia Multi-Stakeholder Opioid and Substance Use Response Plan, and by founding the non-profit Families in Transition. Ms. Davis shared her story as well as knowledge she has gained from working within the legal system while helping guide individuals toward recovery.



Pictured above are Juvenile Court Judge Tom Parmer standing with graduates Stephanie Sharp and Shelly Eaves (left of Judge Parmer), keynote speaker Deena Davis (right of Judge Parmer), and Coordinator Linsey Koda (far left).

COBB COUNTY VETERANS ACCOUNTABILITY AND TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Katelyn Parker, Cobb County Veterans Accountability and Treatment Court Coordinator

The Cobb County Veterans Accountability and Treatment Court (VATC) graduated three veteran participants during a 9:00 a.m. ceremony on Friday, February 14 at the Cobb County Superior Court Building. Special remarks were made by Governor Brian P. Kemp and Congressman Barry Loudermilk. This was the 11th graduating class of successful veterans, bringing a total of 39 local participants who have completed the 18-month intensive treatment program. The Cobb County VTC began June 13, 2014, joining a nationwide surge of accountability courts specifically tailored for veterans, addressing issues of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, and other mental health issues via counseling, job training, and additional needed services to achieve success.

The Veterans Treatment Court mission is to increase public safety by reducing recidivism; alleviate the tax burden of incarcerating law-breaking veterans by assisting participants to become productive taxpayers versus inmates; to provide intensive case

management to address mental health issues, and offer the familiarity of structure and accountability, similar to what they encountered during military service.



Together with the Atlanta VA, Cobb County VATC participants receive alcohol and drug treatment in Decatur and are given additional treatment locally via a private provider. When a participant is stable in their recovery and treatment, the assigned VATC team addresses other issues which hinder an enrollee's success, such as unemployment, lack of stable housing, the need for continuing education, or the benefits of family counseling.

One of the most unique aspects of the VATC is the Mentor Program. Each VATC participant is paired with a veteran who understands the challenges encountered by their assigned veteran to succeed in the program and graduate. VATC mentors must be honorably discharged from military service, have no prior criminal record, and willing to commit to the duration of assisting a minimum of one veteran for the entirety of their 18-month VATC program.

With their mentors by their sides, the three veterans who graduated will turn what once seemed like a dismal path, into a very bright future for themselves, and also their families.

OCMULGEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

Submitted by Beth Smith, Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Family Treatment Court Coordinator



On February 17, the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit Family Treatment Court held its quarterly commencement ceremonies to honor participants who have successfully completed the 18-month program. Judge Phillip Spivey, Juvenile Court Judge for the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit, presides over all eight counties in the Circuit and leads all FTC sessions. Judge Spivey recognized six graduates. Each graduate spoke about their life before FTC, struggles, successes, and goals for the future. Graduates credited the FTC program with providing positive coping skills.

All of the participants that graduated were reunited with their children. Participants have also agreed to continue with aftercare services to strengthen their sobriety and family.



The guest speaker was TaTa-Nisha Fraizer, Certified Peer Specialist in Mental Health (CPS-MH) and Addiction (CPS-AD). Ms. Fraizer entered treatment in DeKalb County. Ms. Fraizer's story of recovery demonstrates that long-term successful sobriety and family reunification are in fact realistic, achievable goals FTC participants.



March Graduations – Save the Date!

- **Dawson County Treatment Court – March 4**
- **Dawson County H.E.L.P. Program – March 12**

TREATMENT CORNER – THE IMPORTANCE OF CLIENT REFERRALS

Written by Lasheika Kassa, CACJ Treatment Fidelity Program Manager

Accountability courts in the state of Georgia deal with an array of clients, including varying issues that come along with substance-use disorders and potential mental illness. Clients are assessed upon entry to determine a continuum of care which should encompass a treatment plan as well as the number of treatment hours to be received weekly. Treatment providers are skilled to deal with a variety of issues related to the participant; however, sometimes problems arise that the provider is not equipped or skilled to treat.

Referrals are defined as the process of facilitating the client's use of available support systems and community resources to meet needs identified in clinical evaluation or treatment planning. It is imperative to identify the need for referrals upon entry into the accountability court programs. Treatment providers should note that sometimes issues arise months or even a year after the client's intake. However, the need to refer is equally as important even at this stage as it relates to treatment. Treatment plans should be updated continuously until the participant has reached the final phase of the court program.

When referrals are made, there is an opportunity to address the client's unmet needs. Collaboration with community resources is crucial in preventing clients from "falling through the cracks" among independent and autonomous agencies. Effective collaboration is also the key to serving the client in the broadest possible context, beyond the boundaries of the substance use treatment agency and the provider.

Accountability courts should employ treatment providers that can effectively provide the services outlined in their county contracts or memorandum of understanding. As a part of the treatment contract, treatment providers should also be asked to provide the courts with a list of community resources in the event they are unable to provide specific services to clients. This list should include any and all collaborations available for client referral and holistic treatment. Treatment providers should only ethically treat clients that they are certified and/or licensed to treat. This is considered morally ethical as opposed to a provider treating clients beyond their scope of practice, which goes against their code of ethics.

Additionally, accountability courts must assume that it is not feasible or effective to provide everything that clients need within their court programs. Courts with limited resources must consider limiting their intake process if they cannot successfully meet client needs. The process of accepting clients without effective treatment would cause more harm than good and possibly increase recidivism rates across the state. Newly-hired treatment providers should be informed that their responsibilities should be geared towards enhancing client outcomes as well as being proficient in a network of referrals to and from other agencies with which collaborations have been formed.

References:

SAMHSA/CSAT Treatment Improvement Protocols (TIP) Series, No. 38; 2000

DATA TIP – EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME LEVEL

Written by Rachel Gage, CACJ Certification and Special Projects Officer

Employment Status

In effort to highlight the progress of participants in your program(s), please update, as needed, participants' employment status. Employment status is especially important at **both entry and exit**. It is **best practice** to update employment statuses and dates as they occur.

Employment status is the current employment status (i.e. employed full-time, employed part-time, unemployed, etc.). Options include: Unemployed, Part-time less than 20 hours, Part-time more than 20 hours, Full time, Student/training, Disability, Vocational rehab.

The *employment status date* is the date of the most recent change in employment status. This data point is a singular event.

*Please note: for juveniles who are in school, please update employment statuses to student/training.

Income Level

Programs should also update income level as changes occur. Like employment, income level is especially important at **both entry and exit**. It is **best practice** to update employment statuses and dates as they occur.

Income level: Income level is the dollar amount of annual income in the past year. Options include: No income, Under \$999, \$1000-\$4999, \$5000-\$9999, \$10000-\$14999, \$15000-\$19999, \$20000-\$24999, \$25000-\$34999, \$35000-\$44999, \$45000-\$54999, \$55000-\$64999, \$65000-\$74999, \$75000 or higher.

Income level date: The income level date is the date of the most recent income level determination

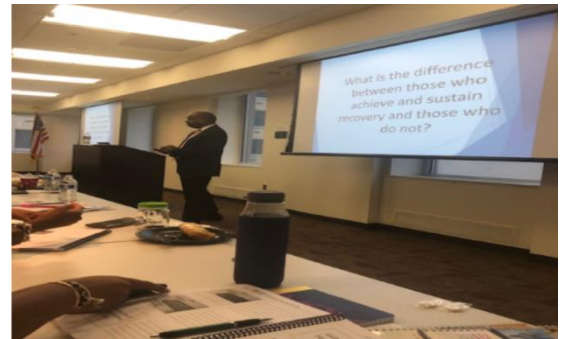
Please contact Rachel Gage at Rachel.Gage@georgiacourts.gov with any data-related questions.

CACJ HOSTS NDCI'S REGIONAL SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT PROVIDER TRAINING

Written by Tara Zellous, CACJ Treatment Fidelity Program Monitor

The Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ) hosted a two-day Regional Substance Use Disorder Treatment Provider Training on January 30 and 31, presented by the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI).

In partnership with the American Society of Addiction Medicine and with support from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, NDCI brought world-class training to 62 substance use disorder treatment professionals from across the state who work directly with clients involved in our accountability courts.



The training included both foundational information and advanced material intended for professionals with three or more years of treatment experience. Additional content delivered in this training included trauma-competent treatment, strategies for supervising the delivery of treatment services, strategies for working with physicians, and approaches for reaching young adults and difficult-to-treat individuals.

Special thanks to our treatment providers and trainers who made the trip to Atlanta:

Helen Harberts, M.A., J.D., Prosecutor and Chief Probation Office, Butte County, CA; **Ken Robinson**, EdD., Co-developer of Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT); **Lipi Roy**, MD, MPH, FASAM, Clinical Assistant Professor, New York University Langone Health; **Radha Sadacharan**, MD, Clinical Instructor, Department of Family Medicine, Brown University; **Terrence Walton**, Chief Operation Officer, National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP); **Charlotte Watts**, PhD, Clinical Psychologist; **Meghan Wheeler**, MA, Director of Standards, National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), and **Michael Clark**, MSW, Center for Strength-Based Strategies in Michigan.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

INTERACTIVE JOURNALING

Registration is now open to Adult Felony Drug Court Treatment Providers through March 13 for the Interactive Journaling Training scheduled for May 4-5 in Atlanta. Visit the CACJ website Training page to register.

Interactive Journaling is a structured and experiential writing process that motivates and guides participants toward positive life change. Interactive Journaling encompasses elements from the Transtheoretical Model of Change (TMC) and Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET). During the two-day training, participants identify evidence-based features of Interactive Journaling and prepare to implement the curricula in their service delivery, including case planning, documentation, individual and group sessions.

SEEKING SAFETY

Seeking Safety is a present-focused, evidence-based coping skills approach developed as an integrated treatment for co-morbid issues regarding trauma (PTSD) and substance use disorders (SUD). It does not require the client to dwell on the past, although it can be combined with trauma-processing methods. The primary goal of Seeking Safety is to promote recovery by assisting the individual in developing strategies to keep them safe from the effects of trauma and the painful impact of substance use.

CJCC and CACJ are offering nine Seeking Safety training opportunities across the state throughout 2020. The first will take place March 24-25 in Albany for District 2. Because there are limited spots available at each training location, we ask that priority be given to treatment staff, coordinators, case managers, or judges (optional). The training does not require any licensure in order to become certified. Courts are allowed to send up to three team members on a first-come, first-served basis. You may include two alternate team members in case space opens up. Attendees should only be from the courts who are within the district to which they have selected.

To learn more about the training calendar, reimbursement, and how to register, please visit

<https://www.gaaccountabilitycourts.org/seeking-safety>.

COORDINATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) and CACJ proudly announce the Accountability Court Coordinator Certification Program. This program is organized into eight courses for a total of 45 hours of instruction and will consist of a mixture of face-to-face classroom and online learning. Coordinators and program directors will be allowed a maximum of three years to complete the program.

Because the number of accountability courts has grown rapidly over the past few years, the objectives of the Coordinator Certificate 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. Coordinators and program directors will receive instruction through the following courses:

- ❖ Accountability and Advocacy
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Conflict Resolution
- ❖ Financial Concepts
- ❖ Grant Administration
- ❖ Procurement and Contract Management
- ❖ Succession Planning and Delegation
- ❖ Team and Group Dynamics

The first online course is expected to be released in the Spring, and the first classroom course will be delivered in August 2020.

GRANT WRITING

Courses on grant writing are available in person at the Georgia Center for Nonprofits in Atlanta and online from GrantSpace (formerly the Foundation Center) in Atlanta and the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- The FY21 Accountability Court Grant Application is due March 20.
- Due to the AOC malware attack in June 2019, there is currently no coordinator intranet available. However, if RPH housing is needed, or HUD 8.11 housing, please contact CACJ staff for assistance.
- Please submit any items for the April newsletter to Debbie Mott (Debbie.Mott@georgiacourts.gov) by March 25.