



NEWSLETTER

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Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals
December 2007
1st Issue

Dear FADCP Members:

It is with great pleasure that I serve as Chair of the Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals. We are proud of our accomplishments this year. We led the coordination of the 2007 statewide training conference in April. And, we look forward to working side by side with the Office of the State Courts Administrator in planning and hosting the next statewide training forum scheduled for September 3-4, 2008 in Orlando at the Ritz Carlton. A training needs assessment will be sent to drug court team members to gain input on training topics and areas of interest for our programs. Save the Date—September 3-4, 2008!!!

Although the funding bill did not pass last year, we will continue our efforts to have this important legislation passed. In fact, those efforts are already underway. We wish to thank Senator Posey for his continued support of this bill.

Currently, we have 200 FADCP members from our 2007-2008 membership drive, which is down slightly from last year. Many of you joined last year to receive a discounted rate for the April training conference. We will again offer a discounted rate for members at our Fall training conference. So, be sure to sign up if you have not already done so. Through your support FADCP can pursue initiatives that help strengthen and enhance Florida's drug court programs.

The FADCP Board is focusing on four initiatives this year: 1) continuing to pursue legislative funding options; 2) determining the feasibility of a statewide drug testing contract; 3) holding the 2008 Florida Drug Court Training Conference; 4) developing a process to address treatment fidelity and accountability concerns.

I look forward to a great year and am excited about the enthusiasm and expertise of our new Board members.

Happy Holidays! At this time of year, I am thankful for all of the hard-working drug court professionals that do so much for so many. I am honored to know each and every one of you. May you have a wonderful holiday season!

2008 Legislative Session
By Judge Melanie May, Chair, FADCP

Legislation – OH NO!

As most of you are aware, this year our legislators have been extremely busy with the woes of our budget situation and their attempts to address personal injury protection insurance and our property taxes. Needless to say, that has taken up most of their time and getting through to them to discuss other issues has been extremely difficult. Nevertheless, some progress has been made.

Your Board of Directors has chosen four areas as priorities this year. The first priority on the list is the drug court funding bill, followed by a statewide drug testing contract initiative, establishing state-wide treatment fidelity and accountability guidelines, and our 2008 statewide conference. The legislation has been my project, while Judge Espinosa, Judge Pollack and Bill Janes have taken the lead on the other priorities.

I began our legislative work last Summer and am happy to report that Senator Posey will again be sponsoring the drug court funding bill this year. He has been a wonderful advocate for us. As you know our difficulty has been found in the House of Representatives.

We are currently attempting to gain the support of Representative Kravitz, who chairs the Safety & Security Council. At Representative Sandy Adams' suggestion, I am attempting to have this bill go forward as a council bill, rather than a single member bill. I have spoken frequently with his legislative assistant since September, and am hoping that I can get a commitment from the Representative in the near future. Alternatively, I have also spoken with Representative Nick Thompson, who is new this year, but sits on the Advisory Council to the Office of Drug Control. I am sending him information on our bill as well. He has expressed interest and is willing to put the bill into drafting, but has not committed to sponsor.

It has been extremely difficult to get any of the legislators to focus on substantive issues this year because of the budget issues that have occupied so much of their time. I am hopeful as we sail through the holidays and reach the start of the new year, things will change, but there is talk of more budget work yet to come. We will continue to keep you advised.

I wish I had better news, but tomorrow is a new day! Once again, Happy Holidays! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at maymg@flcourts.org or (561) 242-2028.

Melanie G. May

Florida Drug Courts “Live Long and Prosper”
By Judge Melanie G. May, Chair, FADCP

On April 26-27, 2007, the Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals, Florida Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA), and the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit coordinated Florida’s (7th) state-wide training conference at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando. Our theme: Drug Courts – The Next Generation -- emphasized the future of Florida’s drug court system. In doing so, Florida joins the efforts of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in taking drug courts to scale. Preceding the conference, a specialized training session was held for Florida’s drug court coordinators.

The conference focused on meaningful educational programs that directly enhance and support the duties and responsibilities of Florida’s drug court teams. National experts like Dr. Timothy Condon, Carolyn Hardin, Dr. Doug Marlowe, Paul Cary, Gloria Cronin, and Dr. Susan Yeres were on hand to cover topics of neuroscience of brain addiction, funding, the 10 key components, sanctions and incentives, drug testing, dependency drug court principles, and juvenile drug court best practices. Our Florida experts presented critical topics identified by drug court teams such as co-occurring disorders, evidence-based treatment practices, and emerging trends in drug abuse. Over 350 drug court professionals attended, our largest conference ever. Florida is targeting October 2008 for the next statewide training forum.

Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals Meetings—April 26th and June 15th

FADCP members held a short luncheon meeting during the statewide conference on April 26th with general business matters discussed. The luncheon meeting’s special honoree was Ms. Gail Holly, who chaired the conference. Ms. Holly has been the drug court coordinator for Tampa, Florida since 1996, and was a founding member of FADCP. Her contributions to Florida’s drug court system over the past decade are too numerous to mention, but have helped to shape our future. Gail retired in August and we wish her all the best!

Our annual membership meeting was held in conjunction with NADCP’s conference on June 15th. FADCP’s Vice-Chair, Judge Gisele Pollack, presided. She recognized the new Board of Directors, and discussed initiatives for next year. The number one goal for FADCP will be to secure a dedicated funding stream. Other initiatives include a state-wide drug testing program, planning the 2008 conference and other educational initiatives, establishing state-wide treatment fidelity and accountability guidelines, and the integration of problem-solving techniques in mainstream justice processing.



11th Circuit Team



17th Circuit Team



Carolyn Hardin and Chet Bell

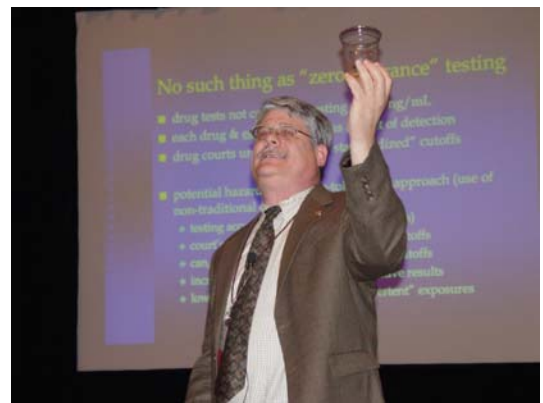
More Photos from the 2007 Florida Drug Court Conference held in Orlando in April.



Judge Melanie May, Justice Peggy Quince,
Carolyn Hardin, Director Bill Janes, Stephenie Colston,
Dr. Timothy P. Condon



Eve Janocko, Jennifer Grandal, Anna Dayle Milton,
John Couch, Mike Jewell, and Jim Santangelo



Paul L. Cary



Jennifer Pritt, FDLE



Jennifer Grandal and Gail Holly

Miami-Dade County Drug Court Program
Drug Court Family Picnic
By Vandilla McClendon, Case Manager

On August 9, 2007, the Miami-Dade County Drug Court held its first Drug Court Picnic with drug court clients, as well as the treatment provider's residential clients. In attendance were: Judge Jeffrey Rosinek, Akilah Bain, Assistant State Attorney, Audra Cohen, Assistant Public Defender, Diana Diaz, Drug Court Coordinator and all of the drug court case workers. Many parents, and siblings, of our youthful clients also attended. The Drug Court special event was an overwhelming success. This day brought everyone closer. It was an incredibly positive experience.

The Drug Court Team played softball against the participants of the residential programs. The softball game, and the touch football which followed, gave our clients an opportunity to feel a part of an organization of people who care about others. The day gave many a feel of confidence and most of all, it made many of them realize that all of us are there for each other as well as to understand that "DRUG COURT WORKS" because the people of Drug Court really care.



20th Judicial Circuit Family Drug Court Graduate
By Sheree Beau-Wells, Prevention Director, Southwest Florida Addiction Services

This is one of the first graduates for our Family Drug Court Judge. A case that he accepted and saw the process work from beginning to end. The other interesting twist is that this participant was in both Family and Felony Drug Court and successfully completed them both with the two courts working together to reduce duplication of services such as random urine screens, substance abuse treatment services and wrap around services. She entered the program unemployed and left with meaningful employment with benefits. Please read the inspiring letter she presented at her graduation on September 10, 2007.

Drug Court Graduate Letter

Thank you all for being here today.

I have been very fortunate to have such a great support system. I could not have accomplished this without the help of my sponsor, my home group, the Drug Court Team, my counselors, my family and friends, who have driven me wherever I needed to go without a complaint.

During the course of being in Drug Court, I heard a lot of times participants say this was a mistake, they should not have agreed to enter this program or, "Can I get out?" I never really felt that way. What I had when I entered Drug Court was the gift of desperation. I wanted my life back, badly. I was told if I completed the program, I would have a much greater chance of staying sober for life. It is probably the hardest thing I have ever done. I would not be where I am today had I not entered Drug Court 15 months ago.

Today, I have a stable life with my daughter that is beyond anything I could have imagined. We have a beautiful apartment and a life that I would not have had without this program. I especially saw these results this weekend when we went to the circus and bought a new computer together.

I have learned a lot since the beginning, about responsibility, accountability, and relapse prevention, about balance lifestyle, grandiosity and humility. I have learned that you can not stay sober by keeping one foot in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. You stay sober by staying in the center of the program, working the steps, having a sponsor, doing service work, and being a part of the Fellowship.

Would I do this again, if I had to do it over? ... Yes, definitely!!!

What advice would I give to my Drug Court sisters? Only that this is the harder path... the easier, softer way will not always teach you the lessons that you need to learn in life and the knowledge or wisdom to persevere. Stay on this path and the promises of the twelve steps will come true for you while you trudge the road to happy destiny.

I would like to thank Judge Seals for your fairness and compassion. Thank you all on the Drug Court Team and thank you all for coming today and for all of your help and support.

National Association of Drug Court Professionals

NADCP 2008 Annual Conference

Registration Deadline: April 25, 2008

NADCP's 14th Annual Drug Court Training Conference

Location: The Americas Center
 St. Louis, Missouri

Dates: May 28-31, 2008

NADCP's Annual Drug Court Training Conference is the largest conference in the nation focusing on substance abuse and criminality. Its principal objectives are to receive training from peers and experts alike on the current practices and trends in the treatment of addiction, to connect with policy makers on the direction of funding and relevant legislation, to network with fellow practitioners and to interface with providers of products and services developed to meet the needs of the field.

http://www.nadcp.org/conference_brochure_14.pdf



2008 Florida Drug Court Training Conference

The next statewide drug court training conference will be held on September 3-4, 2008 in Orlando at the Ritz Carlton. The drug court conference will be held prior to the family court conference at the same hotel site. We hope to convene a joint plenary session for participants of both conferences. The OSCA will send out a training needs assessment to garner feedback from our drug courts to determine the focus of training efforts. We are having a contest to determine the theme of the conference. Winners will get a gift or free registration for the conference. Look inside the training needs assessment for specifics and watch your e-mail FADCP members. We will offer a discounted conference registration rate for FADCP members!!

“Statewide Drug Court Graduation & National Drug Court Month Celebration”

The Statewide Drug Court Graduation will be hosted by the 18th Circuit, tentatively on May 15, 2008. National Drug Court Month will be celebrated in May this year. Think of ways we can celebrate and showcase our drug court programs. Any suggestions for a statewide event to celebrate “National Drug Court Month” should be submitted to Jennifer Grandal at grandalj@flcourts.org or 850-922-5101.

2007-2008 FADCP Membership Drive

The 2007-2008 FADCP Membership Drive is underway. It is through volunteers that we are able to accomplish initiatives that support Florida’s drug court programs. We will offer a discounted 2008 conference registration rate for FADCP members. If you wish to join or get involved with FADCP initiatives, please submit your membership application. For questions, please E-mail Eve Janocko, FADCP Executive Administrator at evejanocko@aol.com.

Future FADCP Newsletters

Do you have an article you would like to write for the next newsletter or topics you wish covered? Help me make the newsletter more informative with cutting edge topics, events, accomplishments and recognitions highlighting our drug courts. Please e-mail information to Eve Janocko, FADCP Executive Administrator at evejanocko@aol.com or contact her at 904-280-4143.