



Collaborative Courts Newsletter



Winter 2015

Visiting Teams Learn the Ropes at Harbor DUI Court

November 18 was a busy day for the DUI Court at the Harbor Justice Center in Newport Beach. In the morning, a team of court and partnering agency representatives from Spokane, WA, arrived for the day, during which they met with the Orange County DUI Court team to learn about establishing their own DUI Court program.

In the afternoon, they were joined by three other teams, from Missouri, Montana, and Monterey County, who were making the site visit as part of a three-day training arranged by the National Center for DWI Courts (NCDC).

All of the guests were able to sit in on the team meeting, in which the cases on calendar for that day were discussed, and the court session, in which the participants appeared for their progress reviews.

The HJC DUI Court has been designated by the NCDC as an Academy Court, one of only four in the country, at which evidence-based best practices are shared.

Community Court Hosts State and Federal Observers

The Orange County Community Court received visits recently from court staff and justice partner personnel at both the state and federal levels.

On October 7, a treatment court team from Great Falls, Montana observed the team meeting and court session of the Veterans Treatment Court. Two days later, the Senior US Pretrial Services Officer from the federal court in Los Angeles observed Drug Court; and during the week of November 3-7, a representative from the US Probation Office, Eastern District of Missouri, observed all of the programs convened at the Community Court.

The Community Court, located at 909 N. Main St. in Santa Ana, offers a variety of therapeutic alternatives to incarceration, including Drug Court, DUI Court, Veterans Treatment Court, Homeless Outreach Court, and several mental health courts. In addition, a wide range of supportive services are co-located onsite.

The Community Court has been designated a mentor site by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Center for Court Innovation.

Treatment Courts Still Standing After Proposition 47

Proposition 47, a controversial ballot measure which took effect immediately upon its passage in November, has so far had only a modest effect on Orange County's Drug Court, and there is cautious optimism that partici-



Drug Court participants
choose to continue treatment

pation in all of the County's life-changing therapeutic court programs will continue to be strong.

The initiative reduced many felony drug offenses to misdemeanors, minimizing the defendant's exposure to jail time and diminishing the leverage of the court and its criminal justice partners to encourage participation in lengthy but highly effective treatment programs.

Although nearly 200 petitions to revise charges and sentences have been granted in the two months since the election in November, the number of participants who have thereafter chosen to opt out of either Drug Court or any of the mental health court programs has been quite low — with fewer than 10% of those re-sentenced choosing to leave their treatment.

It is apparent that most of the people who are in the programs understand that simply changing the legal classification of their offense does not change either the gravity or the tragic consequences of their addiction — and that, even though many months of hard work still lie ahead, most are willing to continue on the path to achieving lasting sobriety and a new start in life.

Number of Active Participants as of December 31, 2014

Adult Drug Court (four Justice Centers)	344
Juvenile Drug Court	37
Truancy Court	70
Girls Court	39
Boys Court	42
DUI Court (four Justice Centers)	182
Mental Health Courts	
Opportunity (Co-Occurring Disorders) Court	38
WIT ("Whatever It Takes") Court	87
Recovery Court	35
Assisted Intervention Court	24
Veterans Treatment Court	39
Homeless Outreach Court	498
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Total number of OC residents served:	1,435

Humanitarian of the Year Award Honors Coordinator

In a ceremony held on November 19 at the Community Court, Collaborative Court Coordinator Kathi Chapman was honored as the Humanitarian of the Year in recognition of her commitment to improving the lives of the participants in the County's Homeless Outreach Court.

Through this innovative outreach program, homeless offenders are able to resolve their infractions and low-level misdemeanors while accessing the resources and services that can help them become self-sufficient.

Ms. Chapman assists the participants in making these connections, working in conjunction with the office of the Public Defender, which manages the cases. She also helped to facilitate the recent expansion of the Homeless Outreach Court to a site in the northern part of Orange County.

2014 Annual Report Available Soon

The 2014 Annual Report of the Collaborative Courts, including descriptions of each of the programs as well as the results and benefits they achieved during the past year, will be published in early 2015. In the meantime, the 2013 Annual Report is available online at www.occourts.org/directory/collaborative-courts.

Truancy Court Role Reduced After Restructuring

Following evidence-based practices, the Truancy Court program has been re-structured to reduce the involvement of the judicial system. Starting on December 1, the cases of youth identified as chronic truants, which had all previously been heard in a single courtroom, were dispersed among five delinquency courtrooms.

Pursuant to the statewide Keeping Kids in School and Out of the Courts initiative, the Juvenile Court will work with participating school districts to identify the students who are in need of intervention, and will support the work of the partnering stakeholders as they provide these youth with appropriate trauma-informed care at the earliest possible time.

Current Grant Funding

California Judicial Council **\$33,674**

Substance Abuse Focus Grant
funding cycle: 7/1/14 – 6/30/15

This grant benefits the adult and Juvenile Drug Courts, as well as the DUI Court and the Veterans Treatment Court, with the Orange County Superior Court as the lead agency.

Bureau of Justice Assistance **\$200,000**

Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant
funding cycle: 10/1/12 – 12/31/14

This grant benefits the mental health courts, with the Orange County Superior Court as the lead agency.

CA Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation **\$1,243,618**

Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act grant
funding cycle: 7/1/14 – 6/30/15

This grant benefits the Juvenile Drug Court and the Truancy Response Program, with the Orange County Probation Department as the lead agency.

US Social Security Administration **\$18,378**

Title IV E funds
funding cycle: 10/1/14 – 9/30/15

This grant benefits Juvenile Drug Court, with the Orange County Probation Department as the lead agency.

Total Grant Funding: **\$ 1,495,670**

Additional funding for the treatment court programs is received from the **State of California**. Previously distributed as annual grants through the Drug Court Partnership, the Comprehensive Drug Court Initiative, and the Dependency Drug Court program, the funding for this purpose is now a direct appropriation from the State to the County, administered by the Health Care Agency.