

ODCAP Update

Special points of interest:

- The 6th Circuit Adult Treatment Court graduated seven participants at a ceremony in the Commissioner's Auditorium on April 23, 2008
- OPTIONS, the 6th Circuit Juvenile Drug Court, graduated four participants on April 1, 2008
- SAVE THE DATE! The next ODCAP seminar is scheduled for October 10, 2008. It will be a morning seminar hosted by the Rochester Sobriety Court

Inside this issue:

Alumni Group	1-3
Who is This Person?	3
Excuses	3
Only Online	4
About ODCAP	5
Goodbye Thy Drink	5
Treatment Providers	5

Volume 3, Issue 2

May 1, 2008

Alumni Group Evolves Into Something Special

**By Jack Holmes
Defense Advisor
for the 6th Circuit
Adult Treatment Court**

The vitality and strength of Alumni Groups have grown in recent years as sobriety and treatment courts have flourished and expanded. As the number of successful participants increased, the purpose and benefits of Alumni Groups became easier to identify and accomplish. One very obvious element of the equation was that we needed enough successful alumni to participate in the groups.

In the Adult Treatment Court (ATC) the Alumni Group has evolved into a thriving and vibrant organization. It was not always like that, however. Like a garden of perennial flowers, it has taken time and cultivation to create the shape it now holds.

In the ATC, the Alumni Group is led by Shea Pounder and Greg Huizar, two of our most successful participants. Ellen Zehnder, our Coordinator, keeps track of scheduling, activities, attendance and other matters involving the group. She

is the primary contact for group activities. For the past 3 years, I have attended the meetings in my capacity as Defense Advisor for the ATC. The group meets monthly at 11:15 Sunday morning.

A Brief History

The beginning group numbered three participants. The Honorable David Breck presided over ATC then and he graciously opened his home to the meetings. Eventually, all recognized that the group needed an identity that was somewhat more independent. For a time, the meetings were held at Community Corrections in Waterford. Attendance increased as eligible participants increased. Although grateful for the facility for the meetings, we recognized that location was important and it was best to look for a place that was not so directly associated with other activities of the court.

For the past several years, the Alumni Group has met at Serenity Club on Tilden in Waterford. That location has worked well. There is ample room for the group and the Serenity Club is fairly convenient for most of our par-

ticipants. In addition, it is consistent with the notion that the Alumni Group does follow the pattern of a 12-Step meeting.

What We Do

Originally, the group was for Alumni only. The intent was to continue a link to ATC for those who had completed our program. Many of our participants remained on probation after completing ATC and this was a way to maintain some contact over and above routine probation. Another purpose was for the participants to be available to those still in ATC as a resource for support and guidance. That contact took two forms - one involved specific matching of individuals; a second developed as both alumni and participants encountered one another at AA/NA meetings.

(continued on page 2)



Alumni Group Evolves Into Something Special (continued)

“My message to the participants is that what is revealed at the Alumni Meeting stays there unless someone is at risk.”

We have made an effort to create a mentoring program through the Alumni Group. Most Alumni are willing to share their experience, strength and hope with others and we have witnessed some significant miracles with that program.

The group is an opportunity to stay in touch with others – mostly to share in the joy of continued successes; sometimes to note trouble and failure and offer support when we can.

Not everyone is happy to attend the Alumni Group Meetings. In fact, some look at it as just another onerous requirement added to an already burdened life. As with other requirements of ATC, most of those reluctant warriors eventually come to understand the value of the group and most even begin to enjoy attending.

In early 2007, ATC began to require participants entering Stage 3 to attend the Alumni Group. When pre-

sent to the Group, the reaction to this plan was very telling. First, the Group strongly discouraged attendance by those in Stage 1 or 2, believing that those participants had more than enough to do in those stages. In addition, there was a thought that those in earlier stages had not yet “earned” a place in the group. Those in Stage 3 and 4 have been welcomed warmly. Having close contact with successful alumni encourages those in the latter stages of ATC that there can be a good life after ATC. Hearing the words of those who have traveled the same road with success is of priceless value.

Our Alumni Group not only supports one another, we engage in community service as well. We have collected money for Lighthouse of Oakland County and collected and distributed holiday gifts through Lighthouse.

Current Events (The Las Vegas Rule)

About three years ago, I began to attend the Alumni Meetings in my role as Defense Advisor to the ATC. Initially, I planned to simply listen, watch and learn as Shea and Greg continued their successful roles as leaders. My primary concern was that the group would see me as a spy, for want of a better term. I must admit that I was a bit uneasy as well since this explored uncharted terri-

tory for the group and ATC. The true purpose of my attendance was to strengthen the connection of the Group to the ATC and to express how much we believe in the value and importance of the Group. Happily, that appears to be the result.

The meetings usually follow the procedure of AA/NA. For the most part, I do just listen during the meetings and offer only short comments. We choose a word for the day for discussion at the meeting and I am often asked to supply that word, if Ellen has not already chosen a theme.

Inevitably, ATC issues arise and we discuss them. At times there is speculation that requires clarification. Not infrequently, a group member will share a very strong opinion about an event or circumstance in ATC. On occasion, I hear criticism about an ATC policy or decision. Those thoughts can be more readily and safely expressed in that place rather than elsewhere. I do my best to listen and comment if necessary, even if the barbs come my way. We also are fortunate to hear of many good things as well and that is always a joy. We take care to celebrate the successes.

As happens in every AA/NA meeting, people share what they need to share and that is what goes on in our meeting. My message to the



Alumni Group Evolves Into Something Special (continued)

participants is that what is revealed at the Alumni Meeting stays there unless someone is at risk. In that event, I will do what is necessary to respond to the situation and that will involve the rest of the ATC team. Only twice have I needed to breach the "Las Vegas Rule."

Today

The group has continued to grow as more successful

participants complete our program. Our Stage 3 and 4 participants add to the population. Attendance at our last two meetings numbered 26 and 25 members, our largest groups yet. The tone and atmosphere of the meetings is much more positive and upbeat. More people share and the comments are often more meaningful and significant. Alumni of a few years ago are often surprised to learn

that people they have seen at other AA/NA meetings are in ATC. That promotes the true goal of the Alumni Group – to encourage, support and nurture the participants so that success in ATC may translate to continuing success in living a good and positive life of recovery and progress and joy.

More Excuses We Have Heard:

One youth tested positive for marijuana but continued to deny use. He eventually declared that even though he did take a hit and tested positive, it didn't count because he didn't get high. Needless to say, he received a sanction.

~ 6th Circuit Juvenile Drug Court

"Who is This Person Living in My Home?"

By Corene Munro
6th Circuit Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator

On Tuesday, April 8, 2008, OPTIONS, the Oakland County Juvenile Drug Court (JDC), held a presentation for all JDC parents in place of the standard Tuesday evening status review hearing. The title of the event was "Who Is This Person Living in My Home?" Programs were distributed and light refreshments were served.

The first speaker was Delynn M., a JDC volunteer and Drug Court Community Action Committee (DCCAC) member. She told her story of how she started drinking at 13 years of age and how she was able to manipulate her parents so that they never recognized her use. She described her family history of alcoholism and how this predis-

posed to her to the same. It was not until she was in jail for the umpteenth time and facing prison that she came to terms with her addiction. Her story generated an amazing number of questions from our parents. (Delynn celebrated 10 years of sobriety on April 16th. She is now vice-president of a local marketing and advertising agency.)

The second presenter was James Windell. Mr. Windell is a court clinical psychologist with the Oakland County Circuit Court's Psychological Clinic who conducts group therapy with delinquent adolescents and runs a high-conflict divorce group. For 20 years Mr. Windell has written the "Coping With Kids" column for The Oakland Press and is also the author of several books on parenting. He discussed the development of the adolescent and the

fact that adolescents are not just young or little adults. Mr. Windell offered parents a clear picture of what their children are experiencing throughout puberty and why at times they appear to be such strangers.

The consensus from parents is that the evening was a total success and many have offered other topics they would like see addressed at future parent events.



Only Online . . . Will you find the following words of wisdom

The following question and answer session was posted in a chat room on *Yahoo! Answers*.^{*} A few of the respondents had some sage advise, but others, well judge for yourself . . .

Question: What is the best way to pass a breathalyzer when you have been drinking alcohol?

Answer: Don't drink and drive, smoke a joint instead. It won't show up on any breathalyzer.

Answer: Do not put yourself in a situation where you'd actually have to pass a breathalyzer test. Seriously, you're putting other people at risk if you get behind the wheel drunk.

Answer: One myth I've heard of but haven't tried is to carry a packet of mustard with you and squirt it in your mouth when the lights first come on . . .

Answer: I heard you just drink way over the limit so they can't even tell how much you drank. They'd have to do a different test. You don't pass but you beat the "mutha."

Answer: Don't drink and drive, pretty simple, Huh!

Answer: The one I heard is that you gargle some mouthwash and explain that your wife goes mad if you have been smoking and you have just used mouthwash to hide your smoky breath. This will explain the high alcohol reading. But if you drink and drive you are the most stupidest man alive. Every time you drink and drive you risk killing others and yourself.

Answer: This is a stupid idea, you shouldn't be drinking and driving. One way though to beat the breathalyzer is not really beating it. You'll still end up with a drinking in public charge for this one, but then the cops can't prove you were drunk while driving. If you're stopped and know you're going to be caught, keep a bottle of rum or vodka with you. Turn off your car, throw the keys out the window, and then make sure the officer sees you drink your bottle of liquor down. Voila, drinking in public fine for sure but they cannot charge you with DUI.

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20060619142252AAg6NO5> (Date: 3/31/1008)

**Some minor spelling and punctuation errors were changed for the sake of readability.*

Enjoying Court Review Hearings
Submitted by 52-2 (Clarkston) Sobriety Court

Participants in Phase 1 of the Sobriety Court program are required to stay for the entire court review session, whereas Phase 2 and 3 participants can leave as soon as they have had their review in front of the Judge. At the conclusion of one participant's review session, in which he was advanced into Phase 2, he was reminded that he was permitted to leave the court. He motioned for his mother to follow him out of the courtroom and she replied, "No." She proceeded to tell him, loud enough for the entire courtroom to hear, that she likes hearing how everyone is improving their lives and wanted to stay. The participant gave her a look of protest and she replied, "I drive you everywhere you need to go – now it's your turn to be where I want to be." The participant conceded and sat down next to his mother.

OAKLAND
DRUG
COURT
ASSOCIATION
OF PROFESSIONALS

ODCAP Contact

Person:

Ellen Zehnder
Adult Treatment Court
Coordinator
6th Circuit Court
Phone: 248-975-9890
Email:
zehndere@oakgov.com

O
D
C
A
P

About ODCAP ...

ODCAP (Oakland Drug Court Association of Professionals) was founded in March 2003 by 6th Circuit Judge Joan Young for the purpose of sharing information and ideas that would benefit all drug courts in Oakland County. It is not mandatory that a court have an operational drug court in order to attend ODCAP meetings. The meetings are open to anyone who is interested in learning about drug court and knowing what the drug courts in Oakland County are doing. The next **ODCAP Seminar** is scheduled for **Friday, October 10, 2008** in the morning. The seminar will be hosted by 52-3, Rochester Sobriety Court, at the Oakland County Conference Center.

Goodbye Thy Drink
Submitted by a 52-3 (Rochester)
Sobriety Court Participant

Goodbye grimy
Dirty unworthy
Grunge filth of worm ridden guilt
Spilling over inadequate taste
Goodbye dry mouthed hate confusion
Absorbing all absolute delusion
Of the first image,
You edible grimace
Goodbye bottom of bottle search
Looking for the next taste of horrible dirt
Goodbye to a drunken soul search
Your liquid reason will no longer
Frequent my easement of me
Insolent fluid passion irrational
There's the sink use it
Your portal to the sewer where fluids like you belong
Next to nuclear waste and spilt blood
Soon humanity will all recognize
Your destructive genocidal passion against life...
As I have.

Treatment Providers in Oakland County . . .

Oakland County Health Division's Office of Substance Abuse Services (OSAS) funds and monitors substance abuse treatment and prevention programs throughout Oakland County. For a list of treatment and prevention programs, please go to the following link on the Oakland County Health Division's website:

http://www.oakgov.com/health/program_service/osas/osas_programs.html