

Directions

Oriana House's Community Corrections

VOL. 7, ISSUE 1, 2008

THE GAVEL IS PASSED IN SUMMIT COUNTY'S FELONY DRUG COURT

**Looking for a speaker?
Oriana House can
provide your group or
organization with a
speaker who can present
on community corrections
and chemical dependency
issues. Call 330-535-8116
for more information.**

Summit County's Felony Drug Court program celebrates its fifth anniversary this year with a farewell send-off to its founding judge and a welcome to the judge who will take over the court. Summit County Common Pleas Judge Mary Spicer has presided over Felony Drug Court since its inception in 2002 and has celebrated the successes of 119 people who completed and graduated from the program.

Many people involved in Drug Court along with several judges came to thank Judge Spicer as she held her last day as the presiding judge of Drug Court in January. Judge Spicer will continue with her regular court docket in Summit County Common Pleas Court; her term expires in January of 2009. Summit County Common Pleas Judge Tom Teodosio is now presiding over Drug Court.

"We help, but you did it," Judge Spicer said to a woman who now lives in Toledo and drove to Akron to thank Judge Spicer for the opportunity to complete Drug Court. The woman has been sober for almost three years.



Summit County Common Pleas Judge Mary Spicer listens as a woman who has maintained sobriety for three years thanks the Judge for allowing her to complete the Drug Court Program. The woman explained how the program changed her life.

abuse treatment and facilitating behavioral change. Clients are closely monitored, regularly meet with their caseworker from Oriana House, receive chemical dependency treatment, and make numerous court appearances during the 18 to 24-month long program.

"This is a tough program because it requires people to take ownership of their mistakes, address their chemical dependency issues, and change their life, but that change will be for the better," said Anne Connell-Freund, executive vice president of operations for Oriana House.

When a person enters Drug Court, they plead guilty to the felony drug charge, and upon completion of the program, the charge is dismissed.

Initially clients meet with their caseworker a minimum of twice a week. In addition to these meetings, clients must attend recommended treatment programs and self-help meetings which also can be several times each week. Some clients are ordered to obtain their GED and many who are unemployed are required to find and maintain employment. Clients are regularly tested for drug and alcohol usage, and sanctions are imposed when clients are not in compliance with program rules. Clients must maintain sobriety and remain drug and alcohol free for a minimum of four months prior to release. Clients who fail the program face a prison sentence.

"If this program didn't exist, many of these 119 people who completed the program would have went to prison and most likely continued their drug and alcohol abuse once released," said Connell-Freund. "Instead, they are now contributing members of our community," she added.

"I have my life; I volunteer in the community; I'm engaged; I owe everything I am to you," she said.

Felony Drug Court assists clients in obtaining a drug and crime-free lifestyle by providing immediate and appropriate substance

REENTRY COURT GRADUATES FINISH 12-18 MONTH PROGRAM

“THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU’VE DONE TO SAVE ME FROM MYSELF...I DON’T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH OF AN IMPACT YOU HAD ON MY LIFE.”

Stated by a woman who was addressing the court upon her successful completion of the Reentry Court Program in Summit County.

Reentry Court recently celebrated its one-year anniversary with a ceremony that recognized the first graduates of the program. Summit County Common Pleas Judges Elinore Marsh Stormer and Patricia Cosgrove commended the graduates for their hard work and perseverance in the program. The judges also thanked all parties that work together to make Reentry Court possible.

The ceremony featured remarks from Judge Stormer and Judge Cosgrove, Oriana House Program Manager Anne Gatti, and Oriana House Program Coordinator Scott Altier. A woman who graduated from the program gave a testimonial on how Reentry Court has changed her life. “Thank you for all you’ve done to save me from myself...I don’t think you understand how much of an impact you guys had on my life. We took a negative and turned it into something positive. My children thank you, I thank you, and may God be with all of you.”

Since Reentry Court’s inception in August of 2006, 96 people have been placed into the program.

Participants are adhering well to the strict program; 71% of the people who have been accepted into Reentry Court have been abiding by the rules and treatment requirements of the program. If an individual fails to follow the program requirements gradual sanctions are given, with potential for a return to prison.

The Reentry Court Program is 12 to 18 months long and offers intense, structured supervision and counseling services to adult felony offenders who have been granted judicial release by the designated court. The goal is to reduce the rate at which offenders reoffend and to demonstrate measurable progress in achieving treatment goals prior to successful release. The program includes cognitive behavioral skill training and offers treatment and/or counseling for drug and alcohol, employment, emotional, budgeting, educational, and family/martial issues.

Judges Stormer and Cosgrove, along with Summit County Common Pleas Judge Brenda Unruh, preside over the program. Reentry Court was established as a result

of the joint effort between the Summit County Court of Common Pleas, the Summit County Adult Probation Department, and Oriana House, Inc.

Reentry Court addresses issues that affect successful offender reintegration including:

- **Programming that addresses behaviors, attitudes, and thought processes that are associated with reoffending**
- **Drug and alcohol abuse treatment**
- **Employment**
- **Education**
- **Family/marital issues**
- **Accountability**
- **Supportive community resources**

ART IS PART OF CBCF PROGRAMMING TARGETED TO REDUCE REOFFENDING

Hidden talents were showcased during a recent family visitation at the Cliff Skeen Community Based Correctional Facility (CBCF) for Women. The women turned the facility into an art gallery displaying their flair for painting, poetry, sewing, and other art projects.

One 28-year-old woman was gleaming with pride while looking at her painting of lavender flowers along an ocean line. She never knew she could paint before taking the art class. “It gives us something that we are good at,” she said.

The art classes and the sewing classes help clients be creative and productive. Both skills can be used for recreation purposes once the women return home, and perhaps to enhance employment skills. Painting and writing poetry also help the women express themselves.

Many clients learn to sew their own clothes and also use these skills to help the community. The women sew laundry bags that are given to the Summit County Children Services Board for children to use for their clothes. The ladies also make scarves, hats, bibs, and blankets.

The sewing and art classes are a small part of the CBCF program. Oriana House operates a CBCF program for both men and women in Summit County and the

CROSSWAHEH CBCF in Seneca County which serves the counties of Crawford, Richland, Ottawa, Seneca, Sandusky, Wyandot, Erie, Ashland, and Huron.

The CBCF program provides a highly-structured and secure community sanction for felony offenders and offers chemical dependency treatment, academic assessments and opportunities, community service, and employment training which are all imperative to the rehabilitation of offenders.

Research shows that carefully screened offenders can be diverted from prison to controlled community supervision settings without compromising the safety of the community and with significantly higher success rates. Offenders sentenced to CBCFs usually complete the program in four to six months and are involved in a multi-tiered treatment plan. There are four phases of programming and offenders are given more responsibilities as they progress through the phases.



A woman at the Cliff Skeen Community Based Correctional Facility for Women in Summit County looks at the poetry she wrote for an art show the ladies put on for Family Visitation Night.



Quilting is one of the skills taught in the sewing and LifeSkills class offered to women who are sentenced to Summit County’s CBCF program. Many items are donated for use in the community.

“The reason I continue doing this is because I know how hard it is for people to take the first step toward getting help with their addiction. When they walk through that door, I want to be there for them to help them regain their dignity and walk back out with their humanity.”

Kathleen Essik, R.N., Oriana House, Inc.



Kathleen Essik, a nursing supervisor with Oriana House, with Don Davies, executive director of the Summit County ADM Board. Essex was honored for her work in helping individuals achieve sobriety.

ORIANA EMPLOYEE RECOGNIZED FOR SKILL AND COMPASSION

Several hundred guests attended the annual luncheon for the County of Summit Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADM) Board, recognizing agencies and individuals who provide mental health and substance abuse treatment. Kathleen Essik, R.N., a nursing supervisor in the Detoxification Unit of the ADM Crisis Center was presented with the Sister Ignatia Inaugural Award. Essik has been employed by Oriana House for 14 ½ years.

In accepting her award, Essik thanked several individuals who provided her with

great mentoring and training, and then said, “The reason I continue doing this is because I know how hard it is for people to take the first step toward getting help with their addiction. When they walk through that door, I want to be there for them to help them regain their dignity and walk back out with their humanity.”

The Detoxification Unit of the ADM Crisis Center provides medical support, a chemical dependency assessment, and counseling to adults who live in Summit County who are intoxicated and/or

experiencing withdrawal symptoms. The ADM Crisis Center is located behind St. Thomas Hospital in Akron and can be reached by calling (330) 996-7730. Clients can be self-referred or referred by family, friends, a physician, a community agency, or law or court personnel.

Call 330-996-7730 to learn about detox and assessment services.

VOTE FOR ISSUE 8 — METRO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

METRO HASN'T RECEIVED ANY NEW LOCAL TAX REVENUE SINCE 1990. IF ISSUE 8 DOESN'T PASS, BUS ROUTES WILL BE REDUCED AND WEEKEND SERVICE WILL BE ELIMINATED.

Oriana House is putting its support behind METRO Regional Transit Authority by supporting Issue 8. The proposed one quarter of one percent sales tax increase for Summit County will appear on the March 4, 2008 ballot.

METRO Regional Transit Authority is an important public service for Oriana House programs. The transportation provided is essential for clients who have been authorized for work release while completing rehabilitative program requirements. METRO also serves as an integral service for Oriana House clients who are successfully reentering the community and the local workforce.

Approximately 22,000 people rely on METRO every day to travel to receive medical care, do essential shopping, and travel to their place of employment. Many of those residents would be home bound without METRO. Over 5,200 employees and hundreds of employers need

METRO's dependable transit services to provide access to work.

Despite being financially responsible, state funding cuts will force METRO to eliminate important transportation services if Issue 8 is not passed. METRO has lost over \$3.5 million in state funds since 2000, and has spent an additional \$1.45 million on fuel since 2004. METRO has had no new local tax revenue since 1990 and now faces a \$1.8 million deficit in 2008 and a \$4 million deficit in 2010, making cuts to service inevitable without additional funding. Those cuts will include eliminating weekend service, and service hours and routes. Without additional funding METRO will also have to eliminate SCAT services for older adults and persons with disabilities.

If passed, METRO officials hope to restore many of the service cuts that have already been made and offset future cuts.

It is the policy of Oriana House, Inc., to treat all clients regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, or religion. There is no distinction in eligibility for or in the manner of providing client services. Services are provided to clients and visitors regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, or religion. All persons and organizations having occasion to refer clients for services or to recommend Oriana House, Inc., are advised to do so without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, or religion.



Oriana House, Inc.

P.O. Box 1501

Akron, OH 44309

www.orianahouse.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
AKRON, OHIO
PERMIT NO. 01464

Oriana House programming involves:

Treatment

Employment/Education

Accountability

Community Service

Housing

Oriana House, Inc., is an affiliate of the
County of Summit

