

“SUSTAINING THE GAIN” – REAL LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Name: Anchorage Therapeutic Court Alumni Group

Panelists: Michael Mooradian, Muriel Morse, Doreen Schenkenberger, Randy Wilson

Address: Anchorage Therapeutic Court Alumni Group

406 G St #302

Anchorage, AK 99501

Email: akwellnesspartners@yahoo.com

Proposed Categories: Treatment – Aftercare – Innovations

Abstract

Intended Audience: Those interested in the Learning Objectives/Talking Points as stated below:

Learning Objective A: **Helping graduates maintain gains achieved in therapeutic courts.**

A DUI/Drug Court Alumni group is a unique peer group that bridges the gap in support between therapeutic court and life after graduation. While Drug /DUI courts have had an important impact on treating substance abuse offenders and reducing recidivism, relatively little attention has been given to the aftercare of court graduates.

Learning Objective B: **Engaging graduates and keeping them engaged, thus helping them stay clean and sober.**

The Anchorage Therapeutic Court Alumni Group has developed multiple programs to engage graduates and keep them engaged, and help all members stay clean and sober. Examples of how alumni create personal investment in their group and also generate excitement about the group in the community include:

- Raising funds (\$60 each) for a sober table at the Mayor’s Diversity Dinner
- Organizing two sober celebrations a year – summer picnic and holiday party
- Attending court to encourage and mentor current participants

Learning Objective C: **Maintaining self-esteem among graduates and fostering it in other addicted offenders**

1. Group meetings twice a month with food provide sharing atmosphere. Graduates use the meetings to:

- Support each other when the going gets rough in “real life” – dealing with difficulties they face.
 - Network for job opportunities
 - Discuss parenting issues
2. Group members meet with judges and court team members to discuss suggestions for improving the court program. Being valued by these authorities for their opinions and experience fosters a sense of self-worth.
3. Invitations for speaking engagements promote positive visibility so that being a member of the group is attractive. The presentations (examples listed below) also help educate the community and mitigate the stigma associated with this population.

Bios

All presenters are graduates of Anchorage Therapeutic Courts and founding members of the Anchorage Therapeutic Court Alumni Group. They represent a cross section of the community, including a grant writer, drug & alcohol treatment provider, outreach coordinator, and pollster, and have given presentations to judges, attorneys, Wellness Court participants, legislators, high school students and communities throughout the state of Alaska.

Prior Engagements

- Testifying on Therapeutic Courts to the Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Judicial Hearing, Juneau, Alaska, March 2007
- Wellness Court Graduation Ceremony, Anchorage, Alaska, attended by state and local dignitaries, October 2007
- Panel at Statewide Therapeutic Court Team Training, Anchorage, Alaska, April 2008
- Community presentation in the rural town of Tok, Alaska, to educate about therapeutic courts and help address local underage drinking issues, March 2008
- Fairbanks Wellness Court Presentation to participants of the new therapeutic court, which does not yet have own graduates as examples. Fairbanks, Alaska, June 2008
- Presentations to Anchorage School District High School students.