



Anchorage Alumni Group

Graduation from the Anchorage Wellness Court marks the successful completion of a rigorous 18-month treatment program. It also marks the beginning of new lives as Wellness Court graduates gain a foothold on sobriety and strive to become functioning members of the community and part of the workforce. A number of graduates felt that it would be helpful to have a way to stay connected after graduation, and a way to be able to give back, so that their knowledge and experience could help others in the program. In July of 2006 The Anchorage Alumni Group was developed by the graduates of the Wellness Court of Anchorage with assistance from Partners for Progress.

Alumni Group Mission Statement

It is our mission as the Anchorage Therapeutic Court Alumni Group to promote healthy lifestyles through a safe and supportive self-governed body and to uplift and encourage participants toward positive change that promotes sobriety and right living for therapeutic court pre-graduates and graduates.

Goals and Projects

Graduates meet twice a month to share ideas, socialize and support each other in staying sober and succeeding after Wellness Court, and to consider ways to give back by assisting the Wellness Court and participants who are entering Wellness Court. Projects undertaken by the alumni group include:

- Outreach by two alumni to Tok in March 2008 for a Town Meeting on underage drinking and substance abuse prevention in the community.
- Outreach by three alumni to Tok in September 2008 for workshops with high school Students, grades 6-12, and meetings with community organizers for substance abuse prevention.
- Outreach by two alumni to the new Fairbanks Wellness Court to encourage and mentor participants and to meet with judges and other court team members.
- Outreach to Palmer Mental Health Court to help them establish an alumni group.
- Outreach at the Qutekcak Native Tribe Sobriety Fair in Seward with two alumni manning an Anchorage Alumni Group booth.
- Outreach to community members in Koyuk, Elim, Unalakleet, Scammon Bay, Bethel, Emmonak, Alakanuk, Kwigillingok, Dillingham and Nome.
- Attended National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) conference in St. Louis and established relationships with other graduate groups in the Lower 48.
- Outreach and mentoring of Wellness Court participants with a second Annual Summer Celebration in August 2008 as well as a post-celebration barbecue in September 2008.
- Spotlighting the community of people in recovery in Anchorage by sponsoring a sober table for ten at the Mayor's Diversity Dinner.
- Increased the general membership of the Alumni Group from 45 to 80 members with 10 new active members.

- Received a small grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust for a pilot mentorship and outreach program.
- Received almost \$2000 in donations.

Statewide Response

The statewide response to the Anchorage Alumni Group's Pilot Mentorship Program, funded by a grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust with matching funds from Partners for Progress, has been overwhelming. While we anticipated local requests and activities, we were unprepared for the response statewide. The group has been enthusiastically received in each community it has visited and the number of requests that have come from other communities far exceeds our expectations.

Requests from Nome, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Tanacross remain outstanding due to lack of funding. Because of high transportation costs as well as personal income lost from work while traveling, the Alumni Group has had to turn down requests from other interested communities throughout the state.

Meeting Dates and Time

The Alumni Group meets the first Wednesday and third Thursday of every month at 6:00 pm. Please call 272-1192 if you would like to join us. Recovery is a lifelong condition, one that can only be maintained, especially in its early stages, with a great deal of support.

Website: www.partnersforprogressak.org and go to "Graduates" page.