



# MADCP

*Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals*

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**CONFERENCE DATES**

**May 9-11, MADCP Jackson**

**June 13-16 NADCP Washington, D.C.**

**May is National Drug Court Month. Plan an event.**

**MISSISSIPPI DELEGATES VISIT CAPITOL HILL**

Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals President Brenda Mathis and state Rep. Alyce Griffin Clarke visited Washington, D.C., March 19-21 to urge members of the U.S. Congress to restore federal funding for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program.

Mathis and Rep. Clarke, members of the Congress of State Drug Court Associations, were among 55 delegates from 26 states who met with Representatives and Senators to seek increased funding critical to new drug courts.

Mathis said, "One of the main focuses right now is talking



**U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson discusses Drug Court funding with Rep. Alyce Clarke**

to our Congressmen and Senators and asking them to sign letters supporting Drug Court funding of \$40 million. Currently, the President's 2008 fiscal year budget

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**12TH CIRCUIT DRUG COURT SEEKS SEN. COCHRAN'S SUPPORT**



**U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran and Probation Officers Robert Minor and Joan Kyle listen to presentation in Hattiesburg.**

Circuit Judge Robert Helfrich and participants in his Drug Court met with Sen. Thad Cochran on Oct. 28 in Hattiesburg to seek his support for national funding for drug courts.

Judge Helfrich, who presides over the 12th Circuit Drug Court in Forrest and Perry counties, said, "We need your help to ensure that drug courts are fully funded."

Judge Helfrich asked Sen. Cochran to support funding at the previous level of \$40 million.

"In 2005 we spent \$39.1 million on wild horses and bur-

ros. They are important and they are beautiful," Judge Helfrich said. "Millions of Americans benefit from drug courts. We need your help to provide the resources to reign in our children and our brothers and our sisters that have strayed. They are important and they are more beautiful."

Sen. Cochran said, "I'm convinced this is a good program.... I will do everything I can to see that we get the support that we need."

Sen. Cochran, in Hattiesburg for the dedication of the Thad Cochran Center at the University

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Our organization has made great strides since its creation in 2003. I have an ambitious list of goals for 2007. I want to:

- create a MADCP website;
- increase MADCP membership;
- get treatment providers more involved in MADCP;
- promote the creation of drug courts statewide.

We have had two great conferences since the association was formed in 2003, and the MADCP Board members are currently working on plans for the Third Annual Drug Court Conference, which will be held on May 9-11, 2007, at the downtown Marriott in Jackson. Plan to attend, and help us spread the word to others.

I especially encourage treatment providers who are working with drug court offenders to attend this conference. It is important that treatment providers under-

stand the concept of blending treatment with the criminal justice system.

It is our responsibility as drug court practitioners to get the word out about drug courts. I challenge each of you, as members of this association to:

- Communicate with state legislators and congressmen about issues pertaining to drug court and the effectiveness of drug courts. Invite them to your court. Send letters from graduates and families of graduates letting them know how drug courts save lives and put tax dollars back in the community.
- Celebrate National Drug Court Month in May and make it a big deal in your community.
- Attend local and national drug court training conferences.
- Encourage others to join MADCP and NADCP.

In 2002, I had a vision that one day Mississippi would have one of the largest drug court associations ever. At that time, only a few drug

courts were in operation in Mississippi and a few were in planning stages. I had the opportunity to become a delegate to the Congress of State Drug Court Associations and a member of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. By attending those meetings, I was inspired to create an association in Mississippi.

Judge Mike Parker, who headed the Hinds County Drug Court, shared my interest in a statewide organization and encouraged me. I scheduled an organizational meeting in Reno, Nevada, at the National Drug Court Conference in 2003. Those who attended are charter members. Judge Keith Starrett was instrumental in organizing the association. Judge Parker was selected as president and I, as secretary. The Mississippi Association became a reality. In January 2004, other officers were nominated to the Board, and the association became known as the Mississippi

Association of Drug Court Professionals.

I would especially like to thank Judge Parker, now a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Hattiesburg, for providing such great leadership to this association. I would like to thank our immediate past president, Christy Gutherz, who has been so helpful serving as a representative from corrections. Both past presidents had great visions for this association.

I would like to thank all who attended the very successful MADCP Conference held in May 2006 in Tunica. I would also like to thank the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and the State Drug Court Advisory Committee for all of their support in co-sponsoring the conference. We welcome your support of the 2007 conference.

Again, thank you for your support. Feel free to contact me at (601) 714-6205.

*Brenda Mathis*  
MADCP President

## DELEGATES ASK CONGRESS TO RESTORE FUNDING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

proposal has zeroed out funding to the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program."

Mathis and Rep. Clarke asked members of the Mississippi Congressional delegation to sign a letter supporting restoration of funding to \$40 million.

Congressman Bennie

Thompson was supportive and signed the letter. Mathis and Rep. Clarke met with staff of other Congressmen and Senators and presented the letter for their consideration.

John P. Heekin, Legislative Coordinator for the National Association of Drug Court Profession-

als, hopes some Discretionary Grant Program funding will be restored. "We have been working through grassroots initiatives and regular visits on the Hill to raise awareness of the funding needs of drug court in the coming year."

Mathis said, "It is our responsibility as drug court practitioners and members of the

Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals to talk to our Congressman and Senators throughout the year, inviting them to all drug court activities whenever they are in Mississippi so that they can actually see the drug court participants and hear them say that drug courts work!"

## COCHRAN COMMENDS DRUG COURT PROGRAM, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of Southern Mississippi, met for half an hour with Judge Helfrich, Forrest County Sheriff Billy McGee, staff from Pine Grove Recovery Center, Drug Court staff and about 20 program participants and family members.

Federal funding through the Bureau of Justice Assistance provides grants which help start drug courts. Several courts in Mississippi have received the grants.

Judge Helfrich said the federal grants are more sorely needed in other states. Mississippi is one of the few states which has a stable source of funding for its 19 drug courts. The Mississippi Legislature in 2004 added a special assessment for drug court operations to fines for

felony crimes, traffic offenses and misdemeanors.

"We are in great shape compared to the rest of the nation," Judge Helfrich said. "We are asking you for the entire nation because everybody has been touched by the disease of addiction."

A young woman who introduced herself as Brittany said both of her parents are enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> District Drug Court. "Drug Court completely changed my parents and my life. It saved my life. And I want other people to have the chance to be saved too."

Participants were identified only by their first names.

Brittany's mother, Dawne, said, "The first time me and my husband went to

jail, our kids were taken away from us and that didn't stop us from using.... The second time we got put in jail, whenever they came to get us, they told me to look at the pictures on the wall and they told me that I would never see my kids again. Drug Court gave me a chance. And if it hadn't been for Drug Court I would be dead right now....And I think other people need the same chance I was given to be able to get clean because it's hard. I couldn't do it by myself. I needed help and Drug Court gave me that chance."

Lori and her husband Tim are both enrolled in Drug Court. "My daughter has her mother back. She never had me before. Drug Court gave me my husband back - the husband I never knew."

Regina, 55, said she was an addict for 37 years. She's taking college courses.

"Being in Drug Court not only saved my life. It gave me a life....I know it costs the state of Mississippi a lot of money but it would be well worth it to save someone's life."

Judge Helfrich said it costs between \$16,000 and \$17,000 a year to incarcerate a person. It costs less than \$1,500 a year to keep them under Drug Court supervision.

"We build prisons and we've locked these people up," Judge Helfrich said. "They come out. They are better



**Circuit Judge Robert Helfrich**

criminals. But they are still addicts."

Sen. Cochran said that the first drug court he became familiar with was started in 1999 by former Circuit Judge Keith Starrett in the 14<sup>th</sup> District of Lincoln, Pike and Walthall counties. It was Mississippi's first drug court.

Sen. Cochran said, "I thank you and Keith Starrett and others who are actively involved. You are to be commended for your leadership in helping provide alternatives." He thanked the participants for their courage and determination.

The Drug Court gave the Senator a gift to remind him of the \$40 million funding request. Drug Court Coordinator Lucy Davenport presented him with a canary yellow athletic shirt with the "Helfrich's Heroes" logo worn by the 12th District Drug Court's softball and basketball team. "Cochran" was written on the back, with the number "40."

## MADCP TO ELECT OFFICERS, BOARD

The Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals will elect officers and executive board members for 2007-2008 during the Annual Conference. Offices of secretary and treasurer are currently vacant, along with two executive board seats.

Offices include treasurer, secretary, vice president, president and immediate past president. Each officer may serve on the board for five years, if they choose to hold all five offices. The two executive board members have all voting

authority and privileges of the officers, but are replaced by the membership at the annual conference.

The Nominating Committee will present a proposed slate of officers during the May 10 luncheon and business meeting. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. If you are interested in serving as an officer or executive board member, please contact Christy Guthertz at [cguthertz@mdoc.state.ms.us](mailto:cguthertz@mdoc.state.ms.us) or (601) 933-2887 Ext. 6180.

## RANKIN COUNTY YOUTH DRUG COURT BEGINS OPERATION



**Judge Thomas Broome**

The Rankin County Youth Court began enrolling participants in its new Drug Court in November 2006.

The state now has 19 drug courts, including five juvenile drug courts.

Rankin County Court Judge Thomas Broome created the Drug Court program to address the high percentage of juveniles who come into Youth Court with substance abuse problems. Judge Broome said the program will provide counseling, treatment and supervision to help teenagers before the grip of drug addiction drags them into serious criminal behavior.

The mission of the program is to promote drug-free living through intense supervision, accountability, family involvement and effective treatment to improve the quality of life for juveniles, their families and the community.

The program focuses on high-risk teens ages 12 to 17

who have appeared before the Youth Court on non-violent delinquent offenses and who have been diagnosed with substance abuse or dependency.

"With the delinquent children we see coming through Youth Court, drugs and alcohol are usually at the root of every problem, whether it be domestic violence in the home or disorderly conduct or even assaults involving other children," Judge Broome said.

Paul Bowen, Youth Court Administrator and Drug Court Coordinator, estimated that 85 to 90 percent of the juveniles who come into Youth Court test positive for drug or alcohol use. While a drug or alcohol offense may not be what landed the juveniles in Youth Court, those are the underlying problems.

"It's rare that someone comes through and tests negative," Bowen said.

Judge Broome said, "If you can eliminate the drugs and alcohol, children's judgment improves and they don't find themselves in the bad situations that they often do when they are trying to either use drugs or buy drugs."

Many of the children in Youth Court have progressed beyond experimentation with drugs, but haven't reached the stage of addiction. Intervention is crucial.

"It is an opportunity to

make a difference where a child has not progressed to the next level of usage, and you can still offer rehabilitation for that child," Judge Broome said. "With some of these drugs that are on the market now, both illegal and prescription drugs, once you become addicted it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to remove those drugs from your life. And if they never graduate to those types of drugs, then their lives and their families' lives will be that much better."

The Drug Court program has four phases designed to take a minimum of eight months to complete, and can last up to 18 months. The first month is the most intense phase. In that first month, teens each week will have one individual therapy session, two group therapy sessions and two family therapy sessions and one appointment each week with the case manager. They must appear in court twice during the first month, and remain under house arrest. They will meet with a probation officer and be drug-tested three times a week. Phases two, three and four include family, group and individual therapy as well as court appearances, with the number of sessions and appearances scaled back at each phase.

Participants must have a parent or an interested adult

who is committed to complying with the program's rules and regulations and participating throughout all phases of the program. "It requires commitment on the part of the children and the parents," Judge Broome said.

Many of the parents are searching for help. Drug Court "offers them an opportunity to work together on something that is productive. It opens up the lines of communications again," Judge Broome said.

Outpatient therapy is provided by Region 8 Mental Health Center.

"We will be saving the taxpayers' money because these children will not be in residential treatment, which is extremely expensive, and they will be able to develop real world coping skills at home," Judge Broome said.

The Rankin County Board of Supervisors agreed to pay the up-front costs. The Drug Court will seek reimbursement from the Administrative Office of Courts, which administers the State Drug Court Fund.

Other members of the Drug Court team include Youth Court Probation Officer Brooke Walley, Case Manager Katrina Phillips, Region 8 Mental Health Center Therapist Tasha Johnson, Youth Court Prosecutor Amanda Lingold, and Public Defender Connie Jones.

## HINDS CREATES JUVENILE PROGRAM, ASKS FOR MENTORS

Hinds County Court Judge William Skinner assumed supervision of the felony adult Drug Court in January, and launched a new Juvenile Drug Court for Hinds County April 1.

He is the only judge in the state supervising Drug Court programs for both adults and juveniles.

Judge Skinner credited Hinds County Drug Court Coordinator Brenda Mathis with the idea for the expansion. "Brenda is the backbone of this court," he said.

Judge Skinner saw an immediate need for a juvenile drug court program when he began hearing Youth Court cases in January. He estimated two out of every five juveniles he sees in Youth Court have drug and alcohol problems.

"When I have 10-year-old kids using powder cocaine, we've got a problem."

Judge Skinner said he sees a juvenile drug court as a preventative approach. "Maybe we can prevent them from turning into adult drug users and abusers."

He's looking for mentors among the felony adult court he supervises. "They will be great mentors. They can show them the pitfalls. At 13 or 14, they think they are Superman, 10 feet tall and bullet-proof," Judge Skinner said.

"If you are interested in this, you can make a differ-

ence in their lives," Judge Skinner told participants at a March 13 graduation for the felony adult Drug Court. "You can have more of an impact on these kids than I could ever have."

Thomas Bowen, 30, who graduated from the felony adult program in December 2006, said he would like to work with the youth because he wishes someone had been there to turn him around earlier.

"I know 14 years ago if somebody had stepped into my life, maybe my life would have turned out different," said Bowen, who was arrested on charges of possession of cocaine and crystal methamphetamine.

"I had literally got to the pits with the pigs, and they got up and left. I just totally gave up," Bowen said. "Somebody gave me a fighting chance....Somebody believed I could do it."

While the Hinds County adult and juvenile Drug Court programs will be separate, Judge Skinner said staff of the two programs will assist each other, and they will share drug testing equipment.

Larry Hale is the Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator. Tanya Thompson is case manager and probation officer.

Hinds County is the only county in the state with drug court programs at all levels of the criminal court system. The Hinds County Justice Court and Jackson Municipal Court started programs in 2005 for misdemeanor participants.

State Drug Court Coordinator Joey Craft said, "I think it shows a very strong incentive, and they recognize the need at all levels."



Judge William Skinner

## HINDS STAFF THANKS JUDGE GOWAN

Hinds County Drug Court staff and participants thanked Judge William Gowan for two stints heading the program.

Drug Court Coordinator Brenda Mathis presented him with a plaque at the Dec. 19, 2006, graduation.

Hinds County Court Judge William Skinner said, "It takes a lot of courage for him to do what he has done."

Judge Gowan, who twice filled a Hinds County Court vacancy, said, "This has been my opportunity to give back."

"This is an alternative sentencing program that really works," he said. Without a means to treat addiction that drives so much criminal behavior, "we are setting ourselves up to fail again."

Drug Court graduate Johnna Brock said, "The one thing this program has af-



William Gowan

forded me is a chance to have a stable life and to stay sober long enough to realize that this is the life I do want."

Judge Gowan told graduates, "I'm proud that you are going to go back into society as a productive citizen." He told them to use the coping skills they learned.

"All of us are going to get kicked in the face from time to time. It's how you deal with that."

## REP. CLARKE CHALLENGES YOUTH TO SHARE SUCCESS, HELP OTHERS



**Rep. Alyce Griffin Clarke speaks to Madison County graduates.**

Drug Court pioneer Rep. Alyce Griffin Clarke challenged Madison County Juvenile Drug Court participants to multiply their own successes by helping others.

"You have been blessed. Help somebody else," Rep. Clark told the three graduates at the Dec. 18 ceremony at the Madison County Courthouse .

Rep. Clarke said that the milestone they reached was a time to take stock of themselves and decide what to do with their lives. She challenged them to set goals,

figure out a plan to get there, and make sure they have someone to turn to for help when things get rough.

Remaining drug free should be a cornerstone of the plan, she said. She urged them to think about their choices and their associates, and to avoid people and things that might cause them to falter.

"I want to congratulate you for making a wise choice. You could have done something else, but you didn't," she said.

Madison County Court

Judge William Agin, who presides over the Juvenile Drug Court, said the three teenagers who graduated completed the program without any setbacks. The program takes a minimum of a year to complete, and participants can earn one point toward graduation each week. The three who graduated earned 52 points in 52 weeks.

"Nobody has ever done better than that and nobody ever will," Judge Agin said.

But he said it is equally important to focus on those who don't sail through the program. Those are the ones with severe drug problems, and they are the ones who most need help.

"We could look good on paper," if the program took only easy cases, Judge Agin said. But, he said. "We need to find the ones who may not be able to make it in 52 weeks." When they stumble, the program and its staff are there to help them get up.

Rep. Clarke said she has been a proponent of drug courts since she first saw a news report about the earliest program in Miami. "In my opinion, it is better to treat than to incarcerate," she said. She said it's cheaper to provide treatment than to send people to prison.

The Madison County Juvenile Drug Court program accepts participants ages 12 through 17 who have been

referred to the Youth Court after having either been charged with nonviolent delinquent acts or deemed to be children in need of supervision. Parents of some of the children sought the help of the Youth Court, said Drug Court Coordinator Tiffany Parker.

The program targets teens with alcohol and drug problems. The act which brings them into contact with the Youth Court does not have to be a drug or alcohol violation. However, the majority of teens in the program are there as a result of possession of marijuana or some other controlled substance, Parker said. Marijuana is the most prevalent form of substance abuse among teens who come into the program, followed by prescription drug abuse.

The one-year program uses early intervention and intensive supervision to steer juveniles away from alcohol and drug abuse. Phase One is six months of weekly court sessions and weekly drug testing. During Phase Two, which lasts at least three months, participants attend court sessions twice a month, meet with the case manager and are drug-tested twice a month. In Phase Three, which lasts three months, participants go to court, meet with the case manager and are drug tested monthly.

## CHIEF JUSTICE SAYS ADVERSITY SHAPES STRONGER INDIVIDUALS

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice James W. Smith Jr. challenged teen graduates of the DeSoto County Juvenile Drug Court to envision a better future and work to make that a reality.

"You've got to have a vision not of how things have been in the past, but as they will be from this day forward," Chief Justice Smith said. "The adventure of life is to see how good you can possibly be."

Chief Justice Smith was the keynote speaker at the DeSoto County Juvenile Drug Court's first graduation on Aug. 10, 2006, at the DeSoto County Courthouse in Hernando. Three of the program's four graduates attended the ceremony, along with other Drug Court participants, parents, court staff and public officials. DeSoto County Judge Mills Barbee presided over the ceremony.

The DeSoto County Juvenile Drug Court was established in January 2005. The first participants were enrolled in the program in February 2005.

Although they achieved a milestone with their completion of the one-year Drug Court program, troubles may come again, Chief Justice Smith told the teenagers. He told them don't be discouraged and don't quit.

"Have the courage to get back up, shake the dust off, stand tall and forge

ahead," he said. "Adversity in your life should not break you. It makes you better. I've always come out of these trials a little bit better, a little bit better able to face the next one....Don't let a slammed door in your face stop you from achieving. Opportunity exists. Pursue it."

Drug Court Counselor and Case Manager Peter Selden said the graduates have proved that they can overcome adversity, but warned them to be prepared for more trials ahead. "Know that it doesn't stop here, and the minute you stop, you open yourself up for problems," Selden said.

One of the graduates said Judge Barbee wouldn't let him quit even though the teen hated the Drug Court program at the start. "I was a problem child. I didn't care about anybody but myself," he said. He said the program made a difference for him. "Thank you all for everything."

Graduates acknowledged that Drug Court forced them to change their behavior. "I get along with my family better. I don't fight," another teen said.

A third youth thanked his mother and told the Drug Court staff, "Thank you to everybody for helping me."

Selden recalled the three teens' answers to his questions a year ago about why they used drugs. One



Chief Justice James W. Smith Jr. addresses DeSoto graduates.

said he liked to get high and didn't think it was a big deal. A second said he got high when he was angry. The third said that he must just be stupid.

Selden said the teens have changed their attitudes and made great strides. "You three have set a precedent for what we expect in Drug Court."

Drug Court Coordinator Susan Guzman-Boyce thanked all the people who work with the Drug Court program. "We've all heard that it takes a village to raise a child and that is what the team has done. They have embraced the families. They have worked in the good times and the not so good times to make a drug-free child."

Guzman-Boyce said the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors, several area

churches and many local businesses have supported the Drug Court. Their efforts made the program possible, she said, thanking all for their support.

Judge Barbee said the Drug Court benefits the children and their families as well as the community. "They don't end up in the adult court system. They become productive citizens. It reduces crime. That's where it benefits the community."

Chief Justice Smith said drug courts are an effective means of rehabilitating adults and juveniles.

"If I were still a County Judge, I would have a drug court," said Chief Justice Smith, who handled Youth Court matters as a Rankin County Court Judge for 10 years. "I'm here to tell you it's very effective."

NADCP National Conference is  
June 13-16.  
See page 16 or go to  
[www.nadcp.org](http://www.nadcp.org).

## Third Annual MADCP Training Conference May 9-11, 2007 Marriott Hotel, Jackson

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### Wednesday, May 9

9 a.m.– 2 p.m. Registration Mezzanine  
1 p.m. Call to Order, Brenda Mathis  
Welcome by local officials, Windsor Rooms III, IV, V  
1:45–3 p.m.  
West Huddleston: Taking Drug Courts to Scale  
Judge Jeffrey Tauber: What Is This Thing We Do?  
3:15-4:30 p.m. Terrence Walton: Treating Juveniles  
4:30-5 p.m. Voices of Drug Court Graduates  
5-7 p.m. Welcome Reception, Windsor II

### Thursday, May 10

8 a.m.– Noon Registration Mezzanine  
7:30– 8:15 a.m. Breakfast  
8:30-9:45 a.m. Jeffrey Tauber, West Huddleston  
Utilizing 10 Key Components for a More  
Effective Drug Court  
10-11:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions  
Jeffrey Tauber: Role of the Drug Court Judge  
Vernard Jones: Substance Abuse and the Criminal  
Justice System  
11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Luncheon, Business Meeting  
U.S. Magistrate Judge Mike Parker, keynote speaker

1:30-2:45 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
Terrence Walton: Psychopharmacology  
David Cook: Juvenile Issues  
3-4:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
David Cook: Co-occurring Disorders  
Helen Harberts: Adult Case Management

### Friday, May 11

7:30-8:15 a.m. Breakfast  
8:30-9:45 a.m. Helen Harberts  
Confidentiality in Drug Courts  
10-11:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions  
Larry Wilkie Jr., Gene Cleckler and Don Lindley:  
Sustaining Drug Courts Via Testing  
Jim Binion: Advanced Computer Technology  
11:30 a.m. Conference Adjourns

**C. West Huddleston III** is CEO of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and executive director of the National Drug Court Institute. As a licensed substance abuse counselor, he worked throughout Tennessee and Oklahoma before he joined NDCI.



**Judge Jeffrey Tauber** was founding president of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and founder of the National Drug Court Institute. In 2001, he became executive director of the Center for Problem Solving Courts.



**Terrence D. Walton** is treatment branch director for the federal government's DC Pretrial Services Agency in Washington, D.C. He is an internationally certified alcohol and drug abuse counselor.

**Vernard Jones** of Amory is a minister and clinical coordinator/clinician for Region III Chemical Dependency Services Outpatient Program in Tupelo. He is president of the Mississippi Association of Addiction Professionals.

**U.S. Magistrate Judge Mike Parker** previously headed the Hinds County Drug Court as County Court Judge. He was the first president of the Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals.



**David Cook** is director of Fairland Treatment Center and Institute for the Treatment of Addictive Diseases in Coahoma County.

**Helen Harberts** is a special assistant district attorney in the problem solving courts of Butte County, Calif. Since 1994 she helped implement drug courts for adults, juveniles, DUI offenders, and mentally ill offenders.

**Larry Wilkie** works for Dade Behring. He helped establish more than 100 on-site drug testing programs.

**Gene Cleckler** is director of Drug Testing Program Management in Fort Payne, Ala.

**Jim Binion** is president of Advanced Computer Technologies, a Montgomery, Ala., web design and case management software development company.

**Don Lindley** is probation officer for the 14th Circuit Court, Mississippi's first felony drug court.





**4TH CIRCUIT REWARDS SUCCESS WITH TRIP TO THE DRUG COURT STORE**

Drug Court cash to spend at the Drug Court store is a perk for staying clean in the Leflore County program.

There are no drugs at this drug store. The former courthouse closet has clothing, bedding, cosmetics, toiletries and other donated household items. Drug Court participants who have been in the program for at least three months earn \$5 vouchers with each successive month they remain in compliance. Those with the longest record of compliance get first pick once a month.

Circuit Judge Betty Sand-

ers uses the store to encourage and reward participants' success.

Participants delighted in finds such as lotion, perfume and flip-flops to match an outfit. Cash-strapped participants working to put their lives back together after getting out of treatment have also benefited from affordable household items and children's clothing.

The idea started as a loaner program. "Initially, I was thinking to have the store where they could borrow clothing for job interviews," Judge Sanders said.



**Judge Betty Sanders, at right, and staff and program participants display goods in their Drug Court Store.**

But businesses, churches and individuals have been generous with donations. "The response was so overwhelming that we don't need

to have the items returned."

She hopes to set up similar "stores" soon in the Drug Courts in Washington and Sunflower Counties.

**17TH CIRCUIT DRUG COURT KICKS OFF PROGRAM IN DESOTO COUNTY**

Circuit Judge Robert Chamberlin started accepting participants in a new Drug Court in DeSoto County in August 2006.

Circuit Judge Ann H. Lamar expanded the felony 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court program to Panola, Tallahatchie, Tate and Yalobusha counties.

"Jail is just going to be a revolving door if we don't fix their addiction," Judge Chamberlin said.

Judge Chamberlin said he sees people re-arrested

on new offenses or violating probation on prior convictions within as little as six months after release from prison. They are re-arrested for drug possession, or charged with stealing something to get money to pay for drugs.

Judge Lamar said she sees a tremendous need for a program with intensive supervision and frequent drug testing to help keep people from lapsing back into drug use.

"When you are dealing with a 17-year-old burglar, it just breaks your heart to send those folks to the penitentiary," Judge Lamar said.

She expects to use the Drug Court program for some of those already convicted

and facing probation revocation for drug violations, as well as for those charged with new offenses.

For probation violators facing jail, "they have a lot of incentive to straighten out. But they don't have the skills to do it without more intensive monitoring."

Judge Chamberlin said the program will take three years for participants to complete. They must plead guilty to the charges and pay for their own drug treatment. They may be sent to a residential treatment program or be placed in intensive outpatient treatment for one to three months.

After completing treatment, participants meet

weekly with the judge and submit to weekly drug screening. They are subject to intensive supervision by a probation officer. They must remain employed and pay fines as well as a \$100 monthly fee to participate. Meetings and drug testing are less frequent as participants progress to later phases of the program.

Some offenders who were offered a chance to participate in Drug Court opted to take a jail sentence rather than face the program's stringent requirements, said Drug Court Coordinator Craig Sheley. "We've had several say, 'No, thank you. Give me my conviction and give me my time.'"

## DRUG COURT GRADUATES WORK AS CASE MANAGERS IN 19TH CIRCUIT



**Idice Darden**

Idice Darden and Heather Adams Bond rebuilt their lives around Drug Court.

After graduating from the 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit Drug Court, both women were hired as case managers for the program.

Darden also met her husband, William Darden, while both were Drug Court participants.

Circuit Judge Kathy King Jackson, who supervised both women in Drug Court, hired Darden as her own case manager in August 2005. She recommended Bond to Circuit Judge Dale Harkey when he formed a Drug Court in July 2006. Darden supervises 44 people in the George and Greene County program from an office in Lucedale, and Bond supervises 20 in Pascagoula in the Jackson County program.

Judge Jackson, who encourages private industry employers to hire Drug Court participants, heeds her own advice. "How do I expect other people to do it if I didn't



**Heather Adams Bond**

do it? They have turned out to be great employees."

Darden, 32, formerly worked in construction as an ironworker's helper, and later in an attorney's office. Bond, 34, is a former restaurant manager whose singing won second place in a local "Search for a Superstar."

Their experiences for their current jobs aren't what ordinarily goes on a resume. They've both battled back from drug addiction.

People who have experienced drug addiction have a different perspective.

"They understand it a lot better than I can ever understand it," Judge Jackson said.

Darden and Bond say people they supervise may be more willing to open up to them about problems than they would to the judge or another court staff member.

"They'll talk to me because I've been where they are," Darden said.

Darden landed in the Drug Court program after

being charged with possession of methamphetamine, marijuana and Lortab.

People who have experienced drug addiction also have an advantage in dealing with those not quite ready to get with the program.

"It's the tricks of the trade. They know them all. They can spot the cons. They already know all the excuses," Judge Jackson said.

Darden said, "There's an old saying: it takes one to catch one. I tell them all the time, I can either be their best friend or their worst enemy."

Bond agreed. "I know every lie that they could possibly think of. The fact I have done it all before helps," said Bond, who was once addicted to crack cocaine, heroin and Oxycontin.

Bond, who went to Drug Court after being charged with receiving stolen property, said, "I struggled and fought. I didn't want Drug Court. In my mind, I was a drug addict. If I went to Drug Court, I couldn't do drugs any more....When I did Oxycontin, I did it every single day of my life for three years."

"Once I got in Drug Court, I saw how wonderful life was, being a normal person. We are taught all over again how to live like everyday people live. When you are into drugs, you are in your own little world. We have to

learn all over again things that normal people do every day of their lives – work, pay bills and raise a family, just simple things like buying groceries," said Bond, who is expecting her first child.

In a recent late afternoon telephone interview, Darden talked between buying refreshments for one of her children's birthday party and picking up her 2-year-old at daycare. She put the phone aside briefly to deal with a bout of tears from the toddler. Her blended family includes four children.

On the job, the case managers do drug testing and keep track of participants' progress. That means taking calls at all hours to head off problems.

"It's like having 44 children," Darden said.

Judge Jackson is proud of both women. She calls Darden "my greatest example of what Drug Court can do."

"It means so much to them to have gone from rock bottom to now being part of or an organization that has done so much to help people. It's really rewarding for me to see them," Judge Jackson said.

Bond said she loves having the opportunity to turn someone else's life around. She considers where she might be if not for treatment in Drug Court: "Dead or in prison. Probably dead."

## RECOVERY JOURNEY LEADS TO EMPLOYMENT IN TREATMENT CENTERS

Sarah Johnson loves waking up in her own bed, in pajamas.

Maria Balias pays her bills and has insurance and a driver's license.

Simple, everyday things in an ordinary life mark a journey for recovering alcohol and drug addicts.

Johnson and Balias are helping others in recovery. They are Hinds County Drug Court program graduates who now work with other addicts in recovery programs.

"Addiction knows addiction," said Johnson, 42, an administrative assistant at New Life for Women Substance Abuse Center in Jackson. "All the counselors I ever worked with are recovering alcoholics and addicts."

Balias, 43, a house manager at New Life for Women, recalled the impact of an experienced counselor when she was going through drug treatment. "It was like she was talking about my life, so I knew that she knew how I felt, why I did the things I do, why my thinking is different."

Drug and alcohol addiction interventionist, therapist and counselor David Vincent, guest speaker at the Hinds County Drug Court graduation on March 13, said he helped start the Recovery Lodge treatment center in 1993 when there were two employees and 40 clients. "I didn't know anything about any of



**Maria Balias**

this, but I knew what it was like to be a drunk."

Vincent told Drug Court participants that they can have a new life if they take a leap of faith. "Don't tell me you can't do it. I ate out of garbage cans. I know what it's like to be locked up."

Vincent sobered up in 1988. He founded Miracle House, a three-quarter way house for homeless, chemically dependent people, in 1990. He went on to start the I.S.I.A.H. Project, Innovative Solutions in Assisting Homelessness; Jonah House, an intensive inpatient primary and secondary facility; James House, a transitional residential facility; and Joshua LLC, which assists alcohol and drug offenders to enter treatment instead of prison.

He hired other recovering addicts. They understood.

Hinds County Court Judge William Skinner said Vincent "took people nobody else wanted, and hired them, and they ended up being



**Sarah Johnson**

some of the best alcohol and drug counselors."

Johnson and Balias told their personal stories at the March 13 graduation to encourage others.

Johnson said, "Today I have a great opportunity to work with women in recovery. I have a constant reminder of how I was and how I made it to where I am today. I haven't arrived."

"I wanted a new life. I had gotten a taste of it. It felt kind of good. I knew where I went to sleep, and I woke up in the same place, and I had my pajamas on." Johnson recalled earlier times waking up somewhere else and wondering, "How did I get over here?"

Balias said, "Today I have to thank God for the gift of desperation because I was desperate to not live the life I was living, existing. I was homeless. I was obsessed with nothing but drugs and alcohol. I did not care about people. I didn't care about



**David Vincent**

myself. This program has taught me to be a caring, loving, law abiding citizen willing to give to others. I'm responsible for my own debts. I go to work on a daily basis. I pay my bills on time."

Many in the audience laughed, but understood, as Balias described her encounter earlier that day with two officers who asked for directions. "I didn't get nervous. I didn't stutter. I wasn't thinking, 'Oh, my God! They are going to want my driver's license!' It didn't matter. I had insurance. I had a driver's license. It was wonderful to be able to speak to people and not worry about what authority they have over me. I didn't have anything to hide."

Balias said, "Recovery is wonderful and I really hope those of you that are graduating tonight and in the future join us. We understand what you are going through. All those things, been there, done that. We can help you get through it if you'll just let us."

## FORMER METH ADDICT TELLS OF HIS CLOSE BRUSH WITH DEATH



**David Parnell**

David Parnell blew his face apart with a rifle in a botched suicide attempt after seven years of methamphetamine addiction.

Parnell, 39, of Martin, Tenn., spoke at the Vicksburg City Auditorium Sept. 5, at Vicksburg and Warren Central High Schools Sept. 6, and at Porter's Chapel Academy and St. Aloysius High School Sept. 7.

Parnell said his wife had told him that she was leaving him and taking their six children with her. "At that point something in me snapped. I grabbed that SKS assault rifle....I felt my face blow apart. I told my wife I was sorry. I told her don't let the kids see me."

Now, he wants people to see. He showed the crowd at the Vicksburg City Auditorium photos at the shooting scene and of his misshapen face after early surgeries.

"I think if the way I look might help some kid...my looks are a blessing from God," he said.

Circuit Judges Isadore

Patrick and Frank Vollar said the shock value may work.

"I think our young people especially need to see that," Judge Patrick said.

"We have to reach these young people," Judge Vollar said.

Warren County Sheriff Martin Pace said, "I think for people to see and hear the results of drug addiction from someone that has actually lived it many times is more effective than hearing it from counselors or law enforcement."

Parnell used marijuana at age 13 and progressed to other drugs. He tried to quit, but kept the same friends. "If you really want to kick an alcohol and drug habit, the first thing you've got to do is get away from the same old people you are using with, even if it is your own family."

His wife begged him to stop. He tried to entice her into drug use. "If I could get her using, she would stop nagging me."

Parnell said he slapped his wife and threatened her with a shotgun.

He used meth in a locked room. "I justified it that I did not do it in front of the kids. That's who always suffers most, the children."

He stalked the mailman with a rifle, thinking he was an undercover agent.

"The one thing all meth addicts have in common is

paranoia. I put more than 200 bullet holes in my house. I thought I heard things.

He tried suicide before by hanging. The rope broke.

He heard voices in his head. "That voice told me that day that my wife and kids would be better off if I

was dead."

Paramedics resuscitated him after his heart stopped. While he was hospitalized, he learned that his wife was pregnant with their seventh child. They named him Gabriel, like the messenger angel.

## HINDS JUSTICE COURT GRADS IN COLLEGE



**Judge Nicki Martinson Boland introduces graduate Ray Shaw.**

Hinds County Justice Court's first Drug Court graduation was missing a graduate. He was working toward another diploma - from college. He missed the ceremony to take an exam.

Seven people graduated Feb. 6. One recently won first place in a college automotive technology competition. Several are enrolled in college courses. Another earned a General Education Development (GED) degree.

Hinds County has the state's only Justice Court Drug Court. Judge Nicki Martinson Boland started the problem-

solving misdemeanor court in October 2005. "Our main goal is to intervene before they commit felonies."

Participants include people charged with first and second offense driving under the influence of alcohol, reckless driving, public drunkenness, possession of less than an ounce of marijuana, petit larceny and shoplifting.

The Mississippi Bar Foundation recently gave a \$5,000 grant to the Drug Court. Money will be used for supplies, recovery literature and training, said Drug Court Coordinator Matthew Riley.

## DRUG COURT LAW PUT TO GOOD USE, LEGISLATOR SAYS

Bertha Myles beamed with pride as she stood at the podium in her cap and gown.

"I'm a recovering addict," Myles told a crowd assembled for the Ninth Circuit Court District Drug Court graduation. "But for the grace of God I wouldn't be standing before you clean and sober."

Three graduated from the program Aug. 14, 2006.

Guest speaker Sen. Mike Chaney of Vicksburg said the Ninth Circuit Drug Court makes great use of the law which the 2003 Legislature created.

"You've been given another chance in life. Take that success you made in a year and go out and tell others. Make a difference in your community," Chaney said.

Myles, 44, of Vicksburg,

said she managed to keep going for years while supporting a cocaine habit.

"I worked three jobs to support my habit. I was a functional addict," Myles said. "I took care of my mother. I took care of the kids, and then I would go get high."

"We are sick. We have a disease," Myles said. "If we don't start recognizing that, we are going to lose a lot



Sen. Mike Chaney



Circuit Judge Frank Vollor and Bertha Myles at graduation.

more than we have already."

Circuit Judge Frank Vollor said Drug Court works because it helps people change their lives. "They get off drugs, but they also deal with the rest of their problems."

"I've seen people like

this before. They would have been in and out of our criminal court system until they died," Judge Vollor said. "If we can change people so that they don't commit any more crimes, we've been successful. We've given society a productive citizen."

## 19TH CIRCUIT SERVICE PROJECTS FILL COMMUNITY NEEDS

Circuit Judge Kathy King Jackson says she no longer has to think of service projects for her Drug Court participants. They see things that need to be done and suggest ideas.

Their recognition of community needs marks their progress from drug-addicted burdens on society to productive citizens, Judge Jackson said.

Participants in the 19<sup>th</sup> District Drug Court in George, Greene and Jackson counties are required to perform at

least 200 hours of community service work to graduate from the three-year program.

"These kinds of projects really make them see the need to continue to do things to help people who can't help themselves," Judge Jackson said. The Drug Court participants "were a real drain on the communities they lived in. It's important for them to give back."

This past October, participants in the George and Greene County Drug Court collected goods for a domes-

tic violence shelter. Approximately 25 Drug Court participants, as well as their families, employers and local businesses contributed baby food and formula, clothing, diapers, kitchen utensils, linens, personal care items and phone cards, said Drug Court Case Manager Idice Darden.

Church food booths at the Jackson County Fairgrounds were back in operation last October thanks to repairs done by Drug Court participants. Hurricane

Katrina damaged the colorful fairgrounds buildings. Participants in Judge Jackson's and Judge Robert Krebs' Drug Courts repaired seven roofs, wired two structures, and fixed plumbing in one, said Drug Court Case Manager Margaret Chapman.

Drug Court participants provide Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas gifts for several needy families. "Every year we adopt a family at Thanksgiving and Christmas. We always adopt a family with children," Darden said.

## GRAD SAYS GET SERIOUS OR GET OUT; OTHERS ARE WAITING



**Crystal Harrell and Probation Officer Deborah Garfield**

When Crystal Harrell got married, Drug Court Probation Officer Deborah Garfield was her maid of honor.

"She was a sweetheart for the majority of the time. She was tough when she needed to be," Harrell said of her experiences in the 14<sup>th</sup> District Drug Court under the supervision of the woman she now counts as a close friend.

When Harrell graduated from Drug Court on May 15, 2006, she credited the program with giving her a life.

"I needed some help. I just didn't know how to get it or ask for it. The sheriff's department helped me out quite well and locked me up," said Harrell, 35, of McComb, recalling her July 2002 arrest for possession of Oxycontin.

"I went from being strung out on everything that I could get my hands on to being a productive member of society. I was basically a junkie with no future when I

got put in Drug Court."

Rep. Bobby Moak of Bogue Chitto, guest speaker at the May 15 ceremony, told graduates to be grateful for the opportunity they got in Drug Court. The program is not available in all courts statewide.

If not for the extra time and effort by Drug Court judges and staff, those enrolled in the program would have only one option – jail, he said. Instead, they get to



**Rep. Bobby Moak**

start over with a clean slate.

One of graduates was an engineering student about to start her first job.

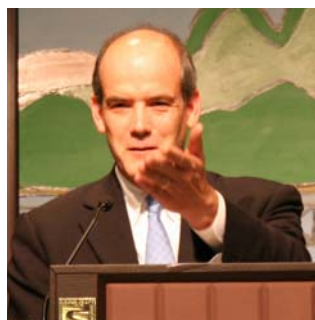
Rep. Moak told the

graduates, "Just think about the job opportunities you are going to get that you wouldn't have gotten."

Rep. Moak, an attorney, told the graduates, "I've had a client or two in the program, and I can tell it changes their lives. It's changed your life, and the only thing you need to do now is help somebody else."

Circuit Judge Michael Taylor said the 21 graduates earned their way through hard work. "This is not some kind of feel-good program," he said, reminding the crowd of other former participants that he sent to jail.

Harrell told participants moving up in the program, "If you don't want to be here, get out. There's other people that need the program



**Circuit Judge Michael Taylor**

worse."

Graduate Shannon Woodham, 35, of Brookhaven, said realizing and admitting that you have a problem is the hardest part. She recalled telling former Circuit Judge Keith Starrett that she didn't have a problem because she only used drugs on weekends.

"He said the penitentiary was the place for me." But he gave her a second chance. "I probably wouldn't have made it but for him."

Woodham said Drug Court "works only if you work at it. It only works if you want it to. Not everybody gets it. It took me five and a half years



**Shannon Woodham**

to realize that. Some of us get it sooner. Some of us don't get it at all."

## TAYLOR SERVES ON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Mississippi Supreme Court appointed 14<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Judge Michael Taylor to the State Drug Court Advisory Committee. The Committee was established by the Mississippi Legislature to recom-

mend improvements to drug court policies and procedures. The Committee developed statewide evaluation plans and models for monitoring critical aspects of drug court operations.

## AUDITOR: DRUG COURT SAVING OF HUMAN LIVES IS PRICELESS

Melissa Lang Broome's truck driving career with her father was a bumpy ride.

They drove trucks together, were arrested together for drug possession, and went through Drug Court together.

Broome, 31, of Meridian, said the arrest in Scott County was a good thing. "I'd be dead if I hadn't been."

Broome said she started taking crystal methamphetamine to stay awake on cross-country trucking hauls. She failed the drug test. She knew she would be re-tested. She never went back.

"Then I quit driving a truck and just kept doing the drugs," she said.

"My hair was falling out and my teeth were going bad. I just didn't care. All I thought about was doing drugs."

"I'll be clean three years on July 4," she said.

Broome, her father Michael Lang, and four others were recognized during a Jan. 16 advancement ceremony for the 8<sup>th</sup> District Drug Court at the Leake County Courthouse in Carthage.

The six will remain in the Drug Court program until January 2008. They must complete a year of non-reporting probation. Drug Court Coordinator Marcus Ellis said that phase is their opportunity to "demonstrate their ability to live a life of sobriety absent supervision

of the court."

Ellis said Broome made sacrifices to get out of a drug-infested neighborhood. She took cold showers all one summer after she moved because she couldn't afford to pay the gas bill.

Broome said, "I had just gotten out of treatment. I had court fees and court costs and my Drug Court fees and rent and lights and I didn't have any money to cut on the gas."

She had been in treatment before and didn't complete the program. She went to jail before being accepted into Drug Court. "I didn't want to go back to jail," she said.

Circuit Judge Vernon Cotten, who started the 8<sup>th</sup> District Drug Court program in January 2004 in Leake, Neshoba, Newton and Scott counties, said the program has an 80 percent chance of turning participants' lives around at an annual cost of about \$1,500 per participant. Without treatment in prison, that person would be highly likely to commit more another offense after release.

State Auditor Phil Bryant, the guest speaker at the Drug Court advancement ceremony, said the cost savings of drug courts have been borne out since his office did a feasibility study four years ago. Bryant said that the cost is measured in hundreds of dollars a year to place a person in a treatment and inten-



Melissa Lang Broome and daughter Olivia

sive supervision program of a drug court, compared to about \$18,000 for prison. There's savings in having people be taxpayers rather than tax burdens.

Bryant said Mississippi's drug courts can be a model to other states for more than saving millions of dollars in prison housing costs. The savings in human lives and functioning families defies being quantified on a spreadsheet.

"We will be the best in the nation in something and it will be redemption," Bryant said.

Judge Cotten said, "These people are in a Titanic struggle to regain control of their lives. They go to drugs to deaden the pain of everyday life."

Drug Court works with them through their personal

struggles. They've seen weddings and funerals. They've shared the joy of births. Judge Cotten noted that nine drug-free babies have been born to participants in his Drug Court, "which means these children will be raised in a home where they are not subjected to those illegal and harmful substances."

Broome has a baby daughter, Olivia. "It means a lot to me that I'm drug-free and I didn't have her while I was using," she said.

"I just have to pray every day and I thank God. God is Number One. Without Him, I couldn't have anything. I know that if I don't stay clean, I won't have my husband or my children or my life. I know that if I go back to using, I will die," Broome said.

**FIRST CLASS GRADUATES FROM JACKSON MUNICIPAL DRUG COURT**



Left to right, Jackson Municipal Judge David Rozier; Drug Court graduates Jasper Gray, Harold Wilson, Zakeia Beard, Alvin Holt, and Gregory Shaw; guest speaker former Administration Director Peyton Prosper; and Jackson Municipal Judge Henry Clay

Officials of the Jackson Municipal Court celebrated their first five graduates' completion of Drug Court on Sept. 19, 2006. After awarding certificates and offering

hugs and handshakes, however, they don't want to see these people again. At least not in court.

Recidivism is expected to be lower for people who

receive drug treatment and support through Drug Court, said Municipal Judge David Rozier, who presides over the one-year program.

Municipal Judge Henry

Clay said, "If you catch this early, maybe you can stop or prevent the cycle of abuse."

Jackson has the only municipal drug court program in the state.

**MARSHALL VISITS ADAMS YOUTH DRUG COURT**

The Adams County Youth Drug Court held its fifth graduation on Feb. 28 at the Adams County Courthouse. Judge John Hudson presided.



Six youths graduated.

Special Assistant Attorney General Patricia B. Marshall

was the keynote speaker. The Adams County program, the oldest of the state's juvenile drug courts, began in 2002 with the assistance of funding from the Attorney General's office.

**JUSTICE ADDRESSES 11TH CIRCUIT GRADS**

Supreme Court Presiding Justice Kay Cobb spoke Nov. 14 at the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Drug Court graduation at the Coahoma County Courthouse in Clarksdale. Six people graduated.



Circuit Judge Al Smith said, "Drug Courts provide the Court with a vital sentencing

alternative to traditional incarceration. Drug Courts provide participants with a highly supervised environment in which they learn skills necessary for recovery and a transition back into society."

**NADCP CONFERENCE JUNE 13 -16 IN WASHINGTON**

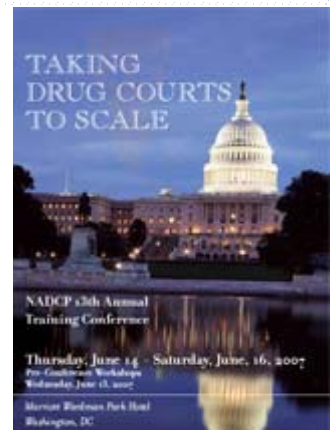
The 13th Annual National Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference is June 13-16 in Washington, D.C.

The program will get an early start with pre-conference workshops scheduled for June 13.

Advance registration for regular members is \$450. The registration deadline is May 18. On-site registration is \$525. The published hotel rate is \$226.71 per day, including tax, at the Wardman Park Marriott Hotel.

The conference theme is "Taking Drug Courts to Scale."

West Huddleston III, CEO of NADCP, said, "As we face a



growing population of drug-addicted offenders in the American justice system, we must expand our efforts to bring treatment to a larger number of those in need."

Find more conference information at [www.nadcp.org](http://www.nadcp.org).



**JUDGE: IT'S NOT THE FALLING DOWN. IT'S NOT GETTING BACK UP.**

Rex Cunningham ran a successful Internet publishing business until drug addiction left him homeless.

Cunningham, 41, of Pascagoula, said he stole from his boyhood church to pay for crack and Oxycontin.

"I was thinking, if I get caught, they will be forgiving. They weren't as forgiving."

He was charged with burglary and embezzlement. "I am responsible for everything I do, good or bad," he said.

Cunningham, who now manages a restaurant, was among 13 who graduated from the 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit Drug Court on June 30, 2006. He called them the "lucky 13. There should have been a lot more. A

lot of people didn't make it."

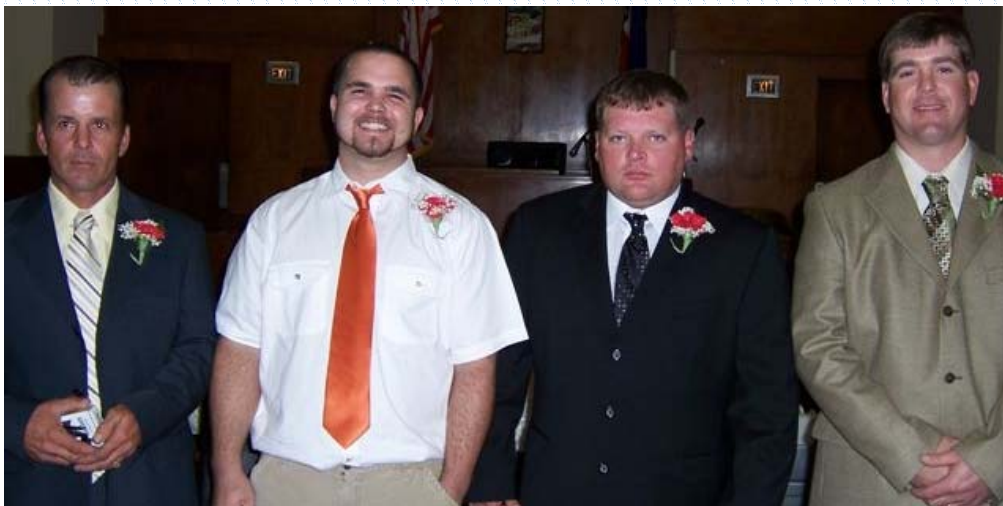
Mississippi's first felony drug court judge, U.S. District Court Judge Keith Starrett of McComb, told graduates, "Don't be held back by the people who want to see you fail."

Circuit Judge Kathy King Jackson told graduates, "Whatever you did in your past, put it behind you. You can regain the respect of your family and friends if you just do the right thing....I know they have my respect. This program has given you a chance to start over.... You haven't failed until you quit trying....It's not the falling down that's failing. It's not getting back up."



Rex Cunningham and his daughter Danielle

**GRADUATES MARK SUCCESSES IN JACKSON COUNTY DRUG COURT**



Left to right, Eric Raley, Michael Hyde, Ashley Martin, and Jonathan Byrd at graduation March 8 .

Circuit Judge Robert Krebs presided at Jackson County Drug Court graduation March 8 in Pascagoula.

Graduates made signifi-

cant changes. One is recovering from about 30 years of drug addiction. One is about to own part of a family operated business. One bought

his first home. One recently married, has two infants, and is seeking custody of a third child.

Judge Krebs said, "I tell

them, 'What we are asking you to do is not extraordinary. What you are being asked to do is what every person does every day of their lives.' Drug court attitudes are life attitudes more than anything else."

Judge Krebs said, "We are saving a lot of young people from being incarcerated and becoming career criminals. We are ensuring that families stay together, that children are supported, and that people are working and contributing to the community and not being warehoused. And it's saving the taxpayers' money."

Fifty people are enrolled.

# MADCP

Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals

P. O. Box 2224  
Jackson, MS 39225

**MADCP CONFERENCE REGISTRATION**  
**MAY 9-11, 2007**  
**MARRIOTT HOTEL, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI**

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Conference t-shirts are included with registration. Please indicate size.

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**Payment must be made by check. No refunds after April 30, 2007.**