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For Immediate Release

McCracken County Drug Court awarded \$1.2 million
to help participants who are hardest to treat, have fewest resources

Federal grant to help participants succeed in Drug Court, get education and employment

FRANKFORT, Ky., Feb. 22, 2017 – The McCracken County Adult Drug Court program has been awarded a \$1.2 million federal grant to help participants who are the most difficult to treat and have the fewest resources to successfully complete Drug Court and obtain education and work. The grant became effective in January.

[The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) and the [U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) jointly awarded the program the grant to expand treatment services, including job coaching and counseling, and assist participants with education expenses, housing, transportation, child care and other needs. The funds are to help participants who struggle with employment issues, suffer with mental health problems and/or lack basic education.

“The goal of Drug Court is for the participants to learn to live a life free of drugs and alcohol and to support themselves and their families,” said McCracken County Circuit Court Judge Tim Kaltenbach, who volunteers his time to serve as a Drug Court judge. “This federal grant provides the temporary resources they need to get back on their feet so they can accomplish these goals. We and our participants are grateful.”

Under the grant, the Drug Court program will use the Assertive Community Treatment Model, which is designed to enhance the chances of success for participants who need assistance beyond traditional treatment. The model calls for increased case management and a multidisciplinary team approach. The grant funds will pay for Four Rivers Behavioral Health to hire a substance abuse counselor, peer recovery coach and case manager to work with participants. The counselor’s duties include providing counseling and enhanced treatment for individuals and groups of participants. The peer recovery coach and the case manager conduct home and jail visits, lead mentoring groups and offer job coaching and transportation. The peer recovery coach

also offers moral support for participants. The case manager works with Drug Court staff to oversee participant's cases.

SAMHSA's portion of the joint grant is for enhanced treatment and is \$325,000 a year for three years, for a total of \$975,000. BJA provided \$300,000 for wrap-around services such as assistance with education expenses, housing, transportation, child care and other needs. All the funds are for use over a three-year period.

Kentucky Drug Court programs are paid for with state funds approved by the Kentucky General Assembly. State funds are for treatment, drug testing, home visits and other services but do not cover wrap-around services like housing and clothing.

"This funding will allow us to help participants overcome barriers that stand between them and a successful recovery, such as lack of transportation and childcare," said Crystal Poloski, program supervisor for the McCracken County Drug Court program. "They can then focus on reclaiming their lives and becoming productive citizens in their community."

This is the second consecutive grant period in which the McCracken County program was selected to receive \$1.2 million in grant funds from SAMHSA and BJA for enhanced treatment and wrap-around services. The program was first awarded the grant funding for 2013-2016.

"The McCracken County Drug Court team should be proud of meeting the grant criteria and again being selected for this federal funding," said Connie Payne, who oversees specialty courts for the state court system. "The team has worked hard to get the program where it is today and its efforts are meaningful for the long-term success of participants."

In addition to Judge Kaltenbach, Poloski and other Drug Court staff, the McCracken County Drug Court team members include Four Rivers Community Mental Health Center, the commonwealth's attorney, the local public defender, law enforcement officers, a pretrial officer and a probation officer.

There are 43 participants in the McCracken County Drug Court program. As of Feb. 23, 160 participants will have graduated from the program since it began in March 2005. Twenty-two drug-free babies have been born to McCracken County participants.

About Kentucky Drug Court

Kentucky Drug Court is administered through the Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort, which oversees 54 adult programs that serve 113 counties. Drug Court's mission is to provide court-supervised treatment as an alternative to incarceration. The program's success can be measured in the number of lives changed and the cost savings to Kentucky taxpayers. For every \$1 spent on Drug Court graduates, the state saves \$2.72 on what it would have spent on incarcerating these individuals.

The program has helped reduce illicit drug use and related criminal activity and lowered rearrest, reconviction and reincarceration rates. It has increased payments of delinquent child support and improved employment rates. As of December 2016, 8,257 individuals had graduated from Drug Court programs statewide and participants had paid \$6.1 million in child support and \$6.5 million in court obligations, including restitution and fines.

Drug Court coordinates the efforts of the judiciary, prosecution, defense bar, probation, law enforcement, mental health, social services and treatment communities to actively intervene and break the cycle of substance abuse, addiction and crime. The program consists of three phases that last at least one year and are followed by aftercare. Drug Court staff and participants work together to develop individual program plans with specific responsibilities and goals with timetables. Plans include group, family and individual counseling; frequent and random urine testing; education and vocational training; scheduled payments of restitution, child support and court fees; and health and community activities. Participants report directly to their Drug Court judge, who rewards progress and sanctions noncompliance.

When participants successfully complete the program, charges may be dismissed through diversion, or conditional discharge may be granted through probation. Judges who participate in Drug Court volunteer their time to the program.

Administrative Office of the Courts

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