



Administrative Office of the Courts

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For Immediate Release

**Perry County Drug Court awarded \$1.3 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., March 17, 2017 – The Perry County Adult Drug Court program has been awarded a \$1.3 million federal grant to help participants who are the most difficult to treat and have the fewest resources to successfully complete the program and obtain education and work. The program began using the funds 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 counseling and job coaching, 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.

“I am excited to have additional funding to provide even more services to the Drug Court participants and make the program available to more people who need it,” said Perry County Circuit Court Judge Alison C. Wells, who volunteers her time to serve as the Drug Court judge. “By helping participants with important life needs, we allow them to focus on their recovery.”

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.

A portion of the grant is being used for Kentucky River Community Care to employ a substance abuse counselor, peer recovery specialist and case manager to work exclusively with Drug Court participants. The counselor’s duties include providing counseling and enhanced treatment for individuals and groups of participants. The peer recovery specialist and case manager conduct

home and jail visits, lead mentoring groups and offer job coaching and transportation. The peer recovery specialist also offers participants moral support and the case manager works with Drug Court staff to oversee participant's cases.

SAMHSA's portion of the joint grant covers the enhanced treatment and is \$325,000 a year for three years for a total of \$975,000. BJA is providing \$400,000 for wrap-around services, such as assistance with education expenses, housing, transportation, child care and other needs. The funds are for use over a three-year period.

"I am very pleased that we have received this additional funding to enhance and expand our program," said Sheena Falter, program supervisor for the Perry County Drug Court program. "Many of our participants come into the program lacking the basic human necessities – housing, clothing, food and transportation. With the grant, we can assist them in meeting those needs and offer more treatment options to help them build a strong foundation for their recovery."

Kentucky Drug Court programs are funded with state money 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 transportation and clothing.

"I'm proud of the Drug Court team in Perry County for the hard work it has done," said Connie Payne, who oversees Drug Court and other specialty courts for the state court system. "I look forward to seeing the funding help participants who need it the most succeed long term."

In addition to Judge Wells, Falter and Drug Court case specialist Gracie Dillon, the Perry County Drug Court team members are Perry County Sheriff Les Burgett, Lt. James East of the Hazard Police Department, Kentucky State Police Trooper Isaac Whitaker, probation officers Jason Turner and Megan Simms, attorney Cody Goehring of the state Department of Public Advocacy, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Tom Eckert, Judy Cattoi of KRCC, and Alison Williams and Layla Fugate of the Little Flower Clinic.

The staff KRCC has hired under the grant are substance abuse counselor Leslie Craft and peer recovery specialist Amber Gibbs. The agency is working on hiring the case manager.

There are 47 participants in the Perry County Drug Court program. Since it began in March 2005, 104 participants have graduated from the program. Participants have paid more than \$65,000 in child support and more than \$96,000 in other court obligations, such as restitution and fines, while in the program. Participants have completed more than 150,000 hours of community service. Seventeen drug-free babies have been born to Perry 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 of the state's 120 counties. Drug Court provides 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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