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Geauga County New Leaf Program Receives National Recognition as Mentor Court

Judge Carolyn J. Paschke is pleased to announce that the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas New Leaf (Drug Court) Program has been named one of just ten national mentor treatment courts by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) and the U.S. Department of Justice. The New Leaf Program will receive an award marking the distinction on May 26, 2022.

National mentor courts are exemplary treatment courts selected to serve a three-year term as model programs to assist new or growing courts to learn innovative practices. These top-tier programs follow evidence-based best practices and play a significant role in national training, technical assistance and research efforts.

According to Judge Carolyn Paschke, who founded and presides over the New Leaf Program, “We are extremely fortunate here in Geauga County to have such a great team of people and community partners enabling us to provide this quality program for our participants.”

Judge Paschke adds “Our participants start the New Leaf Program after having committed crimes here in the county. Most of them have already served numerous terms of incarceration. We offer them a new and different solution. Sixty-Nine percent of our participants have either graduated or are currently in good standing in the program. The majority of them are working,



many have regained custody or visitation with their children and have become contributing members of society. Of course, this is fantastic for our participants and their families, but it is also a great success for the community as a whole.”

Judge Paschke further states, “On behalf of our team and participants, I am pleased to accept this honor and recognition. We are very happy for the opportunity to help courts in other jurisdictions establish and/or improve their programs and gain similar success for their communities.”

As part of the mentor court network for 2022-2024, the New Leaf Program will help develop, identify, and test national best practices and provide technical assistance to jurisdictions interested in implementing an adult drug treatment court, including hosting site visits by team members from other jurisdictions around the country.

“It is a great honor to recognize this court as one of only ten mentor courts in the country,” said NADCP Chief of Training and Research Carolyn Hardin. “This program is a shining example of how a combination of accountability and treatment can save lives, reunite families and make the community safer. As a mentor court, this program is helping to transform our justice system and leading countless people who might otherwise be incarcerated into lives of long-term recovery.”

There are now nearly 4,000 treatment courts nationwide. These are considered the cornerstone of justice reform.



The New Leaf Program was established in June of 2019. It is a voluntary program for participants who have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder. The program lasts between 16 and 24 months. It is a comprehensive program in which participants are held accountable and required to follow all treatment recommendations, submit to biweekly drug and alcohol screens, appear regularly for weekly court hearings and complete other recovery related goals.

Program Coordinator, Maureen Maruna, stated, “Our treatment team consists of representatives from the Court, Probation Department, Prosecutor’s Office, Public Defender’s Office and social service and area treatment agencies in Geauga County. The team meets weekly to review and discuss each participant’s progress. The collaboration and dedication of our treatment team members is like no other I have ever worked with or experienced in my 24 years in the field. It is an honor to work with them on a daily basis to help persons struggling with addiction in the community.”

As Program Coordinator, Ms. Maruna has several duties which include managing the daily program operations, assuring the program is adhering to the national and state best practice components, organizing community events, maintaining a data collection system, developing strategies to acquire funding and writing grant applications.

Probation Officer, Greg Potts, who supervises the participants in the community stated, “We believe Geauga County is an amazing place and that everyone can find their place within the community. Our goal is not just for participants to complete the program, but to help them build



life skills and nurture them, building a strong foundation for long term success.” He further stated, “We believe in a ripple effect. When you invest in people the entire community wins.”

NADCP’s mentor court network is supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. To learn more, visit ndci.org/resource/training/visit-a-mentor-court/.

About NADCP

NADCP is the premier training, membership and advocacy organization for the treatment court model, which now includes nearly 4,000 programs found in every state and four territories of the United States. Since 1994, NADCP and its divisions—the National Drug Court Institute, the National Center for DWI Courts and Justice For Vets—have trained hundreds of thousands of professionals spanning the legal, clinical, psychosocial and law enforcement fields. NADCP regularly publishes cutting-edge, research-based materials, and the association works tirelessly to improve the response of the American justice system to people with substance use and mental health disorders. NADCP is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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