

Riverside Criminal Justice Agency

Correction Connection

May 2023



Drug Court Program Welcomes Yolanda Hines!



The Hopewell, Prince George, Surry Drug Court Program recently welcomed **Yolanda Hines** as the Drug Court Coordinator. Yolanda joins an interdisciplinary team whose members include the Judiciary, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Defense Bar, BrightView Addiction Center, and Riverside Criminal Justice Agency. The Drug Court Program provides a therapeutic alternative to substance-using offenders and utilizes a special court docket to address non-violent criminal offenses committed by addicted offenders. Yolanda is excited to use her vast experience in public service to enhance and grow the Drug Court Program.

The National Association of Drug Court Professionals recognizes May as **National Treatment Court Month** to highlight the important role drug treatment courts play in helping communities fight drug addiction. Since its inception in 2002, the Hopewell, Prince George, Surry Drug Court Program has served 130 individuals, celebrated 50 graduates, and had an immeasurable positive impact on participant families and their community.



NADCP

**National Association of
Drug Court Professionals**

Denise D. Waff, RCJA Director

804-862-5281

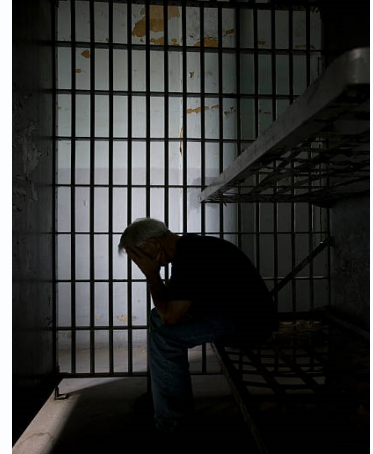
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Improving Court Appearance Rates for Pretrial Supervision

The Pretrial Services team at Riverside Criminal Justice Agency performs two crucial functions:

- ♦ Provide judicial officers with crucial defendant background information so they may make more informed release decisions.
- ♦ Provide community supervision for released defendants awaiting trial to help ensure court appearance and community safety.



Failing to appear at a court date is considered a pretrial failure, but many of these failures are not malicious. Defendants can miss a court date simply because they forgot the date, confused it with another appointment, or faced a barrier such as transportation.

Court date notification systems, such as texts, phone calls, emails or letters to remind defendants of court times and locations — have a track record of increasing court appearance rates and are considered a Best Practice in pretrial services.

Using Reminder Services, LLC, the RCJA Pretrial Services team will begin sending court reminder notifications via text message to defendants. Text message information will include the court date, the locality, the hearing time, and RCJA's phone number if any additional information is needed.



STAFF NEWS



Drug Court Probation Officer, **Kim Gregg**, recently completed the 4-day Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) Facilitator Training. MRT is a systematic, cognitive-behavioral group used to treat a wide range of issues including substance abuse. MRT is currently used in the Drug Court Program.



James House Community Services Coordinator, Katie Harlow, and Associate Director, Anna Smith, recently presented an overview of James House services at a RCJA staff meeting. James House provides support, advocacy, and education for individuals affected by sexual violence, domestic violence, and stalking. Collaborative relationships with community resources such as James House enhance RCJA pretrial and probation supervision strategies.

Katie Worley (February)

*** 6 YEARS ***

Charlotte Walmon (May)

*** 4 YEARS ***

Denise Waff (April)

*** 2 YEARS ***

Chris Murphy (February)

*** 5 YEARS ***

Stacci Nutty (January)

*** 2 YEARS ***

Brandon Harrington (April)

*** 1 YEAR ***





*On Monday, April 17, 2023, the **Hopewell, Prince George, Surry Drug Court Program** celebrated its 23rd Graduation Ceremony. Drug Court offers offenders a chance to achieve recovery in a structured program providing substance abuse treatment and intensive supervision. Drug Court uses a system of sanctions and rewards as an approach to help reinforce positive behaviors. Drug Court is a chance for offenders to develop skills that will allow them to continue in recovery and have a healthy lifestyle once they are released from supervision and the program is completed.*

Congrats to our newest graduate!

