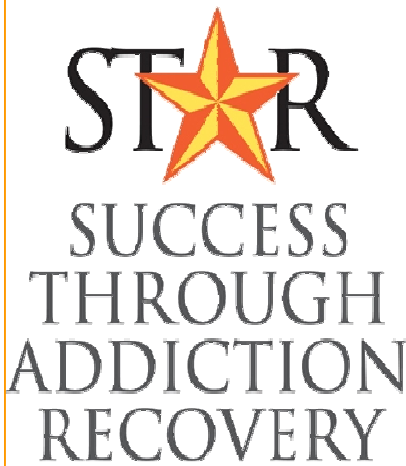


# STELLAR SUCCESS

“When it is darkest, men see the stars.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

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## All in the Family:

**The STAR Family Intervention Court Celebrates National Drug Court Month**



*Left* District Judge Bonnie Hellums (second from right) and recent Family Intervention Court graduates Juan L., Lena B., and Christina B. The May Graduation Ceremony marked the 34th FIC graduate!

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### Special Announcement

Congratulations to all of our June graduates! We are incredibly proud of you and all of your accomplishments. Good luck in your new lives—you have worked hard for them!

Drug Court programs across America help rebuild people, families and communities. The STAR Family Intervention Court (FIC) focuses on reuniting families destroyed by drug use and neglect.

STAR FIC was founded in 2004 with the mission to effectively provide for children's safety and welfare by optimizing opportunities for the recovery and healing of substance dependent parents. The program achieves this goal through early intervention, education, and treatment using a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to the entire family.

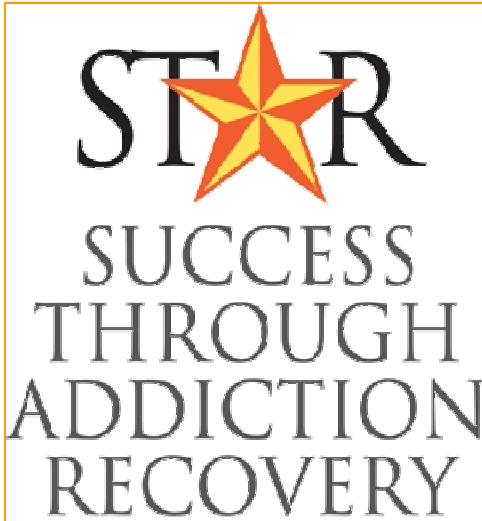
The FIC staff, including District Judge Bonnie Hellums, FIC Coordinator Anne Okeke, Harris County Child Protective Service Officers, Domestic Relations Officers and many volunteer attorneys, help clients access drug detoxification, residential treatment, outpatient treatment, aftercare, individual

counseling, family counseling, and couples counseling and vocational training. There is a strong emphasis placed on achieving and maintaining sobriety as well as redeveloping a healthy family.

Judge Hellums says, “Miracles happen when these folks quit using alcohol and drugs and find the joy of parenting with clear vision. The collaborative effort of agencies, the Drug Court, and the volunteer lawyers are of immeasurable help to these families.”

In honor of the National Drug Court Month and the successful completion of the program by three clients, STAR FIC held a commencement ceremony on May 21, 2009. This graduation marks their 34th graduate from the program. Currently, there are 16 clients in the program and 27 children involved in the process.

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## Quarter in Review

**STAR's 200th Graduate**

This graduation marks our 200th graduate from the STAR Program! We are so proud of each and every former graduate who helped us make this goal. STAR's success is directly linked to the success of our graduates.

**STAR Links Up with Facebook**

STAR recently created a Facebook page so that our graduates can keep in touch and easily communicate with each other about upcoming events. To join our Facebook group, please contact Program Manager Laura McCarty.

**Clean and Green**

The 4th STAR Clean and Green event was a huge success! Thank you to all who participated in helping keep Houston clean. And thanks again to Deputy Alaniz with Precinct 6 and Jessalyn Ballard with Buffalo Bayou Partnership for all their hard work.

**Third Annual STAR Picnic**

The STAR Alumni graciously held the 3rd annual STAR picnic at MacGregor Park on April 25th. Judges, staff, clients, family, and friends all came out to enjoy the food, fun and sun. Thank you to the Alumni Association and to all that brought food. A special thanks to Aftercare Manager Gary Valenzuela and STAR Alumni Bruno R. for cooking up the fabulous burgers and hot dogs!

**Mission Statement** To build the community's confidence in the criminal justice system through more effective judicial and public intervention based on changed perceptions of addiction. The drug court will seek to more efficiently utilize all available resources to save money and to save lives.

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The STAR FIC strives to end the cycle of substance abuse, crime and neglect. The beneficial effects are seen at many levels: the individual client, the children, other family members and friends, the justice system, and the community as a whole.

### Announcement: NADCP Conference

Several of the STAR team members and judges will attend the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in Anaheim, California next week to discuss drug court issues and learn new methods in treatment recovery.

Also as a reminder, there will not be court June 8-11, 2009 to accommodate the limited staff. Clients should check with their case manager about group reporting dates and times.

## In Memory of STAR Client Lindsey Groom

STAR clients and staff suffered a great loss last month with the death of Lindsey Groom. Her passing serves as a reminder to all of us that we must be vigilant in our recovery to lead healthy and sober lives.

Lindsey will be missed by her family, who thanked all the people who made the last months of Lindsey's life her most fulfilling. She was a dear friend to many, and we will honor her memory by continuing to seek success through addiction recovery.

Please keep Lindsey, her family, and her friends in your thoughts and prayers.

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free  
I'm following the path God laid for me.  
I took his hand when I heard him call;  
I turned my back and left it all.*

*If my parting has left a void,  
Then fill it with remembered joy.  
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss;  
Ah, yes, these things, I too will miss*

*Perhaps my time seemed too brief;  
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.  
Lift up your heart and share with me,  
God wanted me now, He set me free*

*-Excerpt, anonymous*

**"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."**

## Working that Twelfth Step with STAR Graduate Eric C.!

After submitting over a thousand drug tests as a client for STAR drug court, Eric C. found himself in a strange situation—he was now *administering* drug tests as part of his current internship coursework to become a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor.

When Eric C. started the STAR Program in December of 2004, he never imagined he would one day dedicate so much of his life to his recovery and the recovery of others. He credits his success to Drug Court, Pathway To Recovery, and Career and Recovery Resources. He now says, "My life is on the right track."

Despite struggles in both his addiction and his early recovery, Eric is a model for STAR clients.

He graciously gave the opening blessing at the STAR Alumni banquet and was recently honored by Career and Recovery as their STAR Client award recipient.

Eric currently attends Houston Community College in his pursuit of an Associate's Degree in Human Service and his LCDC certificate—and he maintains a 3.6 GPA! He interns at Houston's premier Memorial Hermann Hospital, helping others in their addiction recovery.

As if school and work were not enough, Eric also is the public relations manager for a new book called *Unemployment is Not a JOKE* by Andre Johnson. Eric says, "I am two years clean and sober, and my life is great."



**Above District Judge Brock Thomas congratulates Eric C. at his STAR graduation.**



## The Quarter in Pictures

