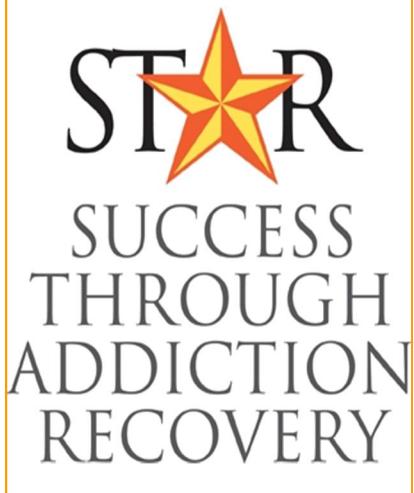


Stellar Success

“Moonlight drowns out all but the brightest stars.” — J.R.R. Tolkien

December 2015

Volume 9, Issue 1



Happy Holidays from the STAR Drug Court Family!!!



Inside this issue:

New Edition to the Team	1
Run for Recovery	2
STAR Picnic	2
Graduate's Story	3

With the end of the year nearing, we are looking back on all of the greatness Drug Court has been a part of in 2015!

Judge Stacey Bond

From day one, Judge Stacey Bond took the reins and never looked back! First beginning her twenty-two year career working for the District Attorney's Office and later transitioning to a becoming a defense attorney, ultimately leading her to being elected as the presiding judge of the 176th Criminal Court, Judge Bond has found the perfect niche with the STAR Drug Court Program. Initially being introduced to the drug court program through Judge Brock Thomas, Judge Bond became overwhelmed with his “positive reac-

tion towards it,” and immediately became curious about the program.

With a bashful chuckle she recounts her first day as being, “a little overwhelming [with] unfamiliar jargon, different phases and colors,” but realizes it only helped to “give [her] a little insight on why the clients struggle.” Her experience with drug court has even helped her identify drug addiction in defendants who are in her home court docket in the 176th. She insists, “when I hear [the defendant’s case during probable cause], where before I may dismiss why something might be happening because of drugs, [now] I listen with a different ear because I have much more education in addiction.”

Judge Bond’s interaction with her clients demonstrates that she is emotionally invested in not only their successful completion of the program but also their success in becoming a productive citizen of society. When asked what the STAR Drug Court Program means to her, she gives a resounding, “it’s the best day of my week!...Being a Judge...you’re removed from the people that justice impacts...you have to love the clients and get to see them completely change, which is awesome!”

Special Announcement

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

STAR SUCCESS THROUGH ADDICTION RECOVERY

Program Management

Mary Covington
Tiffany Cadoree
713.755.4610
(Fax):
713.368.3941

Supervisor

Carl Waters
713-755-4523

Case Managers

Kenyatta Anderson
Charletta Johnson
Pamela Thomas
Gary Valenzuela

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.

Announcements

Run for Recovery

On September 27th, Houston held its 6th Annual 5k Run for Recovery race. Attracting over 600 attendees and sponsors, the community celebration The yearly 5k and 1k Fun Run and Walk event highlights the celebration of September, the National Recovery Month. On this bright and early Sunday morning, hundreds of volunteers, supporters, and sponsors laced up their running shoes and lined the pavement

*Right:
STAR
Graduate Jeffrey C.
enjoying the Run for Recovery
with Drug Court Defense Attorney Deborah*



together as they walked or ran 5k for recovery. Since its inception, the Harris County Drug Court has attended each Run for Recovery event in its 5 year existence. Run for Recovery has always been an integral part of what our program promotes, recovery, and each year we encourage not only the clients but also the Drug Court staff, probation officers, judges, and even the attorneys to

attend the run and lend a supporting hand for those who have succeeded or who are on their

STAR Picnic

This year the STAR Drug Court held its annual Drug Court picnic at the Salvation Army Adult Recovery

Below STAR Graduates and Staff at the Drug Court



Center. Despite the blazing heat, the picnic was attended by a collection of new and old clients, hosted by the STAR Alumni. It exemplified a collective effort of each client to

successfully organize and participate in a sober activity that was enjoyed by all. This picnic gave our new clients the opportunity to establish new friendships in the sober community and serves as a bridge for new clients to introduce their friends and families to their judges, Community Supervision *Continues on page 3*

Voices of Recovery

Continued from page 2

STAR Picnic

Officers, and court staff.

The STAR Court picnic is more than just an event to eat and talk in the cool summer sun. It personifies the unity of our Drug Court family by celebrating and supporting one another as we demonstrate to our clients our commitment to take that long walk with them as they journey towards recovery.

In September we celebrated National Recovery Month; a month designed to increase awareness and understanding of mental health and substance use issues and celebrate the people who are in recovery. Many drug courts and substance abuse treatment facilities across the country celebrate by sharing stories from successful clients. This year,

STAR honors a September graduate, Patricia B. by asking her to share a part of her story with those who does not know how drug court works and her peers. Here is her



Above: STAR Graduate Patricia B. has worked hard towards her recovery and continues to be a shining example to our newer clients.

story...

Patricia B.

Since joining STAR Drug Court, Patricia Bond has found new dignity and direction in her life. She describes her self before the program

as being “a shell of a person [with] no real life. I was an addict on the road to death.” Through educational and support programs and personal growth, she realized a different type of life. She attended AA and NA meetings regularly and has been sober for almost 2 years. “I have a ton of positive resources to help me – I am not too proud to ask for help...I am no longer so stubborn that I compartmentalize my stress.” She has undergone a more personal internal and moral change. Her “constant contact with God” is very important to her, “Without him I’d have none of [the things I have now].” She is also focused on “doing the right thing no matter what.” The change to a more stable life has come with its own perks. She states, “I now have a meaningful and honest relationship with my parents again. My children are back in my life and are no longer afraid of me or afraid that I will disappear.”

Wanting independence, Patricia was determined to find employment to be able to financially support herself.

After much faith and resilience, she found employment at Treebeards where she now does food preparation, cashier duties, and customer service. “There is room for growth [here] and I am dedicated to trying to advance within this company.” She also wants to “finish [her] degree as time and life permit.” While she has goals she would like to attain in the near future, she realizes her accomplishments today would not be possible if not for her sobriety. “Although I remain hopeful for the future, I do stay humble and remember where I came from....I thank God every single day for this new chance at a life I thought I’d never see.”



SAVE THE DATE

The Texas Association of Drug Court Professionals (TADCP) will host the 2016 Annual Conference training in