

OJACC

Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections

Over 30 Years Promoting and Supporting Effective Community Corrections

Mission:

To bring together stakeholders to promote and support effective community corrections that enhance public safety.
www.ojacc.org

Officers:

Pres: Jim Slagle
1st VP: Kysten Palmore
2nd VP: Molly Gauntner
Sec.: Amy Klumpp
Treas.: Linda Janes

Table of Contents:

President’s Message.... 1
June Symposium 2
OJACC Conf..... 2
TASC Conf 3
Amethyst Client 3
Adult CJ Data..... 4
Policy Platform 5

Also Enclosed:

FY 2018 Fact Sheet
OJACC Membership

What Works?

Earlier in my career as a prosecutor, I thought that if we could send more drug dealers to prison, we could make a significant impact on our drug problem. We started a task force, used undercover operatives, and obtained prison sentences for record numbers of drug dealers— some of whom law enforcement had been chasing for years.

However, as we sent drug dealers to prison, they were replaced by new drug dealers. And, as the drug dealers we sent to prison eventually got out, they returned to selling drugs, and we started the cycle over again.

Later in my career as a judge, I would see success with some offenders, but not with others. We would want to teach a lesson to those who would not conform by imposing harsher sanctions. Often when we did that, those same offenders would be back before the court later after they were released from jail or prison and had committed new crimes.

So what works? The truth is that nothing works for all offenders. Enforcement is important. However, we have to look at what provides the best chance for long term success. Prison is effective at keeping criminals from committing crimes in the community while they are locked up. It is not effective at changing offender behavior in positive ways—and it is our most expensive option.

That is where community corrections comes in. Research shows that programs designed to change criminal behavior are more effective when administered in a community setting, rather than while incarcerated.

While the criminal justice system traditionally has only imposed sanctions, a combination of rewards and sanctions achieves better results. This is one of the reasons that drug courts and other specialized dockets are more effective than incarceration at reducing recidivism for higher risk offenders.

Community corrections is most effective when the courts, probation, and residential programs work in partnership with resources available in the community. We all want a safer community. Prison can provide a short-term solution, and it is necessary for some offenders. However, a robust system of community corrections provides the best chance to make our communities safer in the long run.



Jim Slagle, Former Judge
Marion County
Common Pleas Court

Submissions:

The OJACC Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections. Subscription is free to all members.

The OJACC Newsletter encourages submission of articles relating to community corrections. Articles must be relatively brief, and OJACC reserves the right to edit articles for space considerations and to select which articles to publish.

Points of view expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJACC.

OJACC accepts paid advertising.

Article

Submission

& Advertising:

Gayle Dittmer

OJACC Organizational
Coordinator

** Please note new
address**

P.O. Box 79

New Albany, OH 43054

(740) 420-6444

dittmergr@gmail.com

Addressing Challenges in Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Symposium

June 11-12, 2019

In 2015, the first Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Symposium for Community Corrections was hosted by OJACC, the Ohio Chief Probation Officer Association, the Ohio Community Corrections Association and CORJUS. The Symposium was a great success and continued through 2018. However, in the interest of economy and efficiency, the host organizations have decided to discontinue the CQI Symposium as a separate stand-alone event. Instead, CQI sessions will be offered during the 33rd annual OJACC conference scheduled for October 2019. We appreciate all of those who made the past symposiums a success and are excited to offer CQI sessions in conjunction with the wonderful annual OJACC conference.



Instead, we are pleased to announce a day and a half symposium focused on strategies to overcome challenges of implementing evidenced based practices will be held in Columbus on June 11-12, 2019. Hosted by the Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC), Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association (OCPOA), Ohio Community Corrections Association (OCCA), CORJUS and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), the symposium will be presented by the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute.

The target audience is mid-level management and supervisors and the entire symposium will qualify for COB training hours. **Registration will be limited. Priority will be given to those from agencies providing direct community corrections services.** Topics include: What Works, Dosage, Real World Challenges, The Behavior Management System, How to be a Coach, Is Risk Assessment Your Enemy, Measuring Success, CQI in Practice and Individualized Case Planning. Information on registration will be emailed in early April. If you have questions, please contact Gayle Dittmer at dittmergr@gmail.com.

The target audience is mid-level management and supervisors and the entire symposium will qualify for COB training hours. **Registration will be limited. Priority will be given to those from agencies providing direct community corrections services.** Topics include: What Works, Dosage, Real World Challenges, The Behavior Management System, How to be a Coach, Is Risk Assessment Your Enemy, Measuring Success, CQI in Practice and Individualized Case Planning. Information on registration will be emailed in early April. If you have questions, please contact Gayle Dittmer at dittmergr@gmail.com.

33rd Annual OJACC Conference: Oct. 10 and 11, 2019

The Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) is pleased to present its 33rd annual conference, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel North in Columbus, Ohio, October 10 and 11, 2019.

We are honored to continue our partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) as ODRC once again presents The Clifford Skeen Awards in conjunction with the OJACC Achievement Awards luncheon recognizing excellence in community corrections.

New this year– the conference will include a track of workshops focused on CQI/QA. OJACC will apply for credits in the area of Changing Offender Behavior (COB), CLE, RCH, and Counselor/Social Work. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this highly informative conference. Conference registration information will be available at ojacc.org.



**NATIONAL
TASC**
Bridging the gap between criminal
justice and behavioral health

25th Annual National TASC Conference on Drugs, Crime and Reentry

April 29-May 1, 2019 | Hilton Cleveland Downtown | Cleveland, OH

Each year, the National TASC Conference brings hundreds of individuals from around the country together to explore the latest advancements and issues in the treatment and recovery of justice-involved individuals with behavioral health needs. National TASC is a national membership organization representing TASC programs across the United States. Our mission is to offer leadership, advocacy, and policy recommendations for innovative treatment and recovery supports resulting in opportunities for justice-involved individuals with behavioral health needs to achieve healthy and productive lives with their families and communities. NTASC Conference Registration \$550 for 2 and ½ days. Hotel Cost \$141/night+ tax. To register go to: <http://nationaltasc.org/annualconference/>

**Client of Amethyst, an Alvis Recovery Program,
Selected as a Special Guest at the State of the
Union Address**

Ashley Evans has struggled with opioid and substance abuse for much of her life. In 2017, she was pregnant and suffered a relapse. Her recovery began with the birth of her daughter along with the help of Brigid’s Path, a medical care facility in Kettering, Ohio. Ashley has persevered and overcome many obstacles to maintain her sobriety. She is passionate about sharing her story of hope.



Ashley Evans

Ashley, one of the special guests at the State of the Union, is a current client at Amethyst, an Alvis Recovery Program. Ashley is a strong young woman receiving intensive behavioral health services through the program and is thriving in the recovery housing community. On February 9, 2019, Ashley celebrated 1 year and 1 month in recovery and on February 15, 2019, she is to be reunited with her daughter full-time. Because the Amethyst program of Alvis is just one of a handful in the nation that allows children to live with their mother while the mother is in treatment and recovery housing, Ashley’s infant daughter will be joining her at our program.

The article identifying special guests of the State of the Union indicated, “They represent the best of America.”

OJACC Trustees

- Assoc. of Local Reentry Coalitions
- Assoc. of Muni/Cty Judges of Ohio
- Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Assoc.
- CorJus, Inc.
- Corp. for Supportive Housing
- County Commrs. Assoc. of Ohio
- Juvenile Justice Coalition
- National Youth Advocate Program
- Ohio Assoc. of Chiefs of Police
- Ohio Assoc. of Court Admin.
- Ohio Assoc. of Crim Def. Lawyers
- Ohio Assoc. of Juvenile Ct Judges
- Ohio Assoc. of Pretrial Servs
- Ohio Chief Probation Officers Assn.
- Ohio Common Pleas Judges Assn.
- Ohio Community Corrections Assn.
- Ohio Municipal Attorneys Assn.
- Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Assn.
- Ohio TASC Assn.
- Ohio Victim Witness Assn.
- Specialty Dockets
- Supreme Court of Ohio
- U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services

Ex Officio:

- Office of the Ohio Attorney General
- Office of the Ohio Public Defender
- Ohio Dept. of Dev. Disabilities
- Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Servs.
- Ohio Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Ohio Dept. of Rehabilitation and Correction
- Ohio Dept. of Youth Services
- Ohio Judicial Conference
- Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services

Connecting Adult Criminal Justice Data: Does it matter?

Staff, Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission

In 2019 it may surprise some that there are real challenges to aggregating Ohio criminal justice data, but those who work in the field are well aware of this challenge and do their best to work around it on a daily basis.

Think about how much of the work you (and your office) do on a day-to-day basis that relies on criminal justice data. For example, are you a probation officer that pulls together information each morning to complete PSIs on individuals? Are you a defense or prosecuting attorney trying to piece together information on a defendant? How accessible is the information that you need? Is it in one place? Can you quickly assemble it, to do your job?

The disconnected nature of Ohio's criminal justice data is the real story here. Every criminal justice agency has some data- but, the process of connecting the data and sharing it is the challenge. While every jurisdiction or agency has its own data, accessing real-time and archived information between agencies and systems to understand the whole story of a defendant or offender can be difficult, if not impossible.

This disconnect impacts practitioners and policy-makers alike. For policy-makers, the lack of connected data means a fair portion of criminal justice policy cannot easily be measured for its intended outcome or evaluated for efficacy. Further, information about those defendants sentenced to something other than prison is not readily available at the aggregate level, or available at all.

At the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (Commission), this is something we know firsthand and we think about all the time while employing proactive, forward-thinking strategies resolve it. The prospective work of the Commission is to improve connectivity and integration of criminal justice data in Ohio, despite the challenges, through an aggregated criminal justice repository.

For criminal justice agencies and practitioners, there is no single centralized criminal justice data repository in Ohio. As a result, individuals are often searching multiple databases or systems- and sometimes having to do more than that- just to pull together needed information. We recently asked a group, during a presentation, to raise their hands if they had to search multiple databases or systems to find information about a person. Almost everyone in the room raised their hands. We then asked how many people had to additionally use the phone to call other jurisdictions to make sure they had the most recent information on that same offender, and almost half raised their hands. Yes, in the web-based and google-savvy world, probation offices are making phone calls to piece together all of the information they need to get the job done because this is still the fastest, and sometimes only, way to get specific pieces of information.

As the Commission moves forward in its work to enhance justice and ensure fair sentencing in Ohio, we believe that an aggregated criminal justice repository will allow all criminal justice partners to do the work they need to do - without having to make phone calls to piece together critical information. Information should be accessible, retrievable and accurate (supplemental verification procedures should not be necessary). We realize that moving toward a centralized repository and a data-informed environment requires a mindful and thoughtful approach - which includes considerations of funding, data security, and ownership. In this way, individuals, agencies and jurisdictions will not be burdened (in cost, staff time, or otherwise), but instead will be provided with a repository that can help them in their work. In other words, practitioners will finally be able to go to one source (rather than multiple sources, including phone calls), legislators will have needed information when they craft policy, effectiveness of policies can be evaluated, policies can be improved and agencies such as the Commission will finally be able to tell the story of sentencing in Ohio.

If you are interested in learning more about the data challenges in Ohio and our recommendation, the Commission recently produced the first data brief in a series, titled The Adult Criminal Justice Data Disconnect. Read our brief [here](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/Sentencing/resources/general/dataBrief.pdf) at <http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/Sentencing/resources/general/dataBrief.pdf>



OJACC Policy Platform

Our Mission: To bring together stakeholders to promote and support effective community corrections that enhance public safety.

About OJACC

In the mid-1980s, a group of community corrections practitioners and interested parties came together with state agencies to address the rising prison population. This group of dedicated professionals saw real value in coordinating all aspects of community corrections to work toward common goals and formed The Ohio Community Corrections Organization (OCCO) in 1986. In 2005, the non-profit organization changed its name to The Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC).



OJACC serves as an umbrella organization representing Ohio's criminal justice stakeholders to include judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, pre-trial and probation officers, law enforcement officials, corrections officials from adult and juvenile systems, treatment providers, reentry practitioners, and victims' representatives. OJACC focuses on collaborating with all stakeholders to educate policy makers and legislators on issues affecting community corrections. OJACC also provides education to community corrections practitioners to enhance services throughout the state.

Adult Community Corrections in Ohio

Since the passage of the Community Corrections Act in 1979, Ohio has been committed to creating the most comprehensively funded community corrections system in the nation. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), under the Bureau of Community Sanctions, funds Community Based Corrections Facilities (CBCF), Halfway House Programs, and Jail and Prison Diversion programs for Ohio's Courts. In Fiscal Year 2018, these programs served 49,329 individuals at a substantial cost savings, (see <http://drc.ohio.gov/community>).

Diverting non-violent offenders from prison results in a huge costs savings for Ohio's taxpayer. It costs over \$27,800 per year to house an inmate in prison. This amounts to an average cost of \$34,600 to house a felony 3, 4, or 5 offender in prison, based on average length of stay of 452 days. In comparison, the cost for a CBCF is \$10,179, based on average length of stay of 115 days. Placement in a halfway house costs an average of \$6,954, based on average length of stay of 88 days. Unlike prison, CBCFs and half-way houses provide intensive programming which is designed to change offender behavior and improve public safety.

The costs savings are even greater for offenders who are supervised on community control sanctions (probation) in a non-residential placement, rather than being incarcerated. Research demonstrates that programs designed to change offender behavior are most effective when offenders are being supervised in the community. Additionally, these programs can serve as step-down release mechanism for Ohio's prison system to provide effective reentry services that help ex-offenders become law abiding citizens. The University of Cincinnati has conducted extensive studies of Ohio's community corrections programs. These studies demonstrate that, when used appropriately, community corrections programs can be highly effective in reducing recidivism and promoting public safety.

(OJACC Policy Platform Continued)

Juvenile Community Corrections in Ohio:

The juvenile system in Ohio has greatly reduced the number of youth in custody in Ohio's Department of Youth Services, (ODYS). In 1992 ODYS had nearly 2,600 youth in its facilities. In fiscal year 2018, there were an average of only 515 youth in DYS facilities and an additional 227 youth in community corrections facilities. Incarcerating one youth costs over \$185,000 each year – the cost of approximately 8 years undergraduate education at The Ohio State University.

Funding for alternatives to youth incarceration is provided by ODYS through several programs, including the Youth Services Grant, RECLAIM (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors), Targeted RECLAIM, Competitive RECLAIM, and Behavioral Health and Juvenile Justice (BHJJ). Each of these programs encourage juvenile courts to develop or purchase a range of community-based options to meet the needs of youth who are at-risk of or involved in the juvenile court system. By diverting youth from Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) institutions, courts have the opportunity to increase the funds available locally through RECLAIM.

RECLAIM, Targeted RECLAIM, and BHJJ have all been proven to be effective while saving Ohio taxpayers millions of dollars.

What are Community Corrections?

Community corrections include a full range of local sanctions that may be imposed by the courts. These may include a local jail sentence, supervision by a probation officer, drug or mental health treatment, required programming, curfew, electronic home monitoring, community service, drug testing, as well as many other sanctions designed to help change offender behavior. The sanctions are individualized based on the seriousness of the crime committed, the risks posed by the offender, and the specific needs to be addressed.

Prison sentences protect the community from dangerous and violent offenders while the offender is in prison, but do little to prevent offenders from committing crimes after they are released from prison. Moreover, 95% of offenders who are sent to prison are eventually released and nearly half are released after serving less than one year.

Effective community corrections address the underlying issues which lead to criminal behavior. This may include drug or mental health treatment, or addressing criminal thinking, as well as educational and vocational issues. Effective community corrections also provide opportunities to hold offenders accountable. The sanctions can be tailored to the individual offender. For some, this includes a locked-down residential sanction, such as a community based correctional facility. For others, it may include a halfway house program. And for many, it may include outpatient programming and supervision by a probation officer.

OJACC Policy Positions:

We support appropriate funding for local adult and juvenile community corrections.

Community corrections save state tax dollars by helping to reduce the state prison population and by preventing the need to build additional prisons. Further investment and funding is necessary so that local communities have adequate options to avoid sending low level felony offenders to the state prison system. As Ohio is focused on sentencing reform and justice reinvestment, further investment must be made in community corrections to assist in a safe prison reduction strategy.

We support the continuation of Medicaid expansion. Before Medicaid eligibility was expanded in 2014, less than 10% of persons in the criminal justice system had health insurance. Medicaid coverage has allowed drug addicted offenders to receive medication assisted drug treatment, as well as other needed treatment including mental health services. Ending or significantly restricting Medicaid expansion would be a major setback in the efforts to address the opiate epidemic.

We urge the Ohio Department of Medicaid to extend Medicaid eligibility to individuals who DRC places in halfway house programs while on transitional control or through a treatment transfer. This is permitted by federal regulations and would allow all individuals in halfway houses to obtain needed medical and behavioral health services, another important tool in addressing the opiate epidemic.

We support the careful consideration of the recommendations of the Ohio Criminal Justice Recodification Committee and particularly the following concepts in their report:

- Include reducing recidivism and rehabilitating the offender in the purpose of criminal sentencing. [substantially accomplished by S.B. 66, effective 10/28/18]
- Require indeterminate sentences for offenders who are sent to prison.
- Encourage treatment, rather than incarceration, for low level drug offenders.
- Eliminate residency restrictions for sex offenders which do not enhance public safety and give judges some discretion to remove registration requirements after a period of time.

We support legislation to encourage the uniform collection and sharing of meaningful data regarding community corrections. Currently, there is no centralized repository for basic information, such as how many adult or juvenile offenders are involved in the court system, on probation, or reoffend. Without good data it is difficult for policymakers to fairly evaluate and improve community corrections practices.

We support the use of school safety funding in ways that do not lead to increasing student involvement in the court system. This includes the use of threat assessment protocols as recommended by the FBI, use of school climate grants as approved in HB 318, and improving student access to staff trained to work with students, such as counselors, nurses, psychologists, and social workers. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges have recognized that students who become court involved through a school referral are less likely to remain engaged in school or become productive citizens as adults.