

OJACC (formally known as OCCO) published its first newsletter in 1988 as a means to share information across the state.

Volume 18
Number 2
Summer 2018

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

Table of Contents

<i>32nd Annual OJACC Conference to be Held Oct. 11 and 12, 2018</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>2018 OJACC Planning Retreat</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Ohio Justice Reinvestment 2.0 – Update</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Celebrating Judge John M. Durkin.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>OJACC Policy Positions.....</i>	<i>5</i>

OJACC President’s Message

Lock ‘em up or provide treatment?

Are we tough on crime or soft on crime?

How do we keep the community safe without having our jails and prisons burst at the seams?

These are some of the tensions we face in the criminal justice system. As we look for effective solutions, we need to seek common ground among law enforcement, judges, legislators, prosecutors, defense counsel, corrections officials, treatment providers, and others.



*Judge Jim Slagle
OJACC President*

This is one of the reasons OJACC was established over 30 years ago. OJACC’s mission is to bring together stakeholders to promote and support effective community corrections that enhance public safety.

Promoting public safety is our common ground. There are some dangerous and violent criminals that need to be locked up for a long time to keep the public safe. However, locking offenders up for short periods and then releasing them back into the community, without addressing the issues which led to the criminal behavior, destines us to keep repeating the cycle.

The effective use of community corrections involves tailoring local sanctions to the needs and risks of the offender. Some offenders are best served by non-reporting probation. Others need to be in a residential program with a gradual release back into the community. Others need to be in a specialized docket like a drug court, where supervision and court involvement is much greater.

Change is hard – whether that involves changing habits, losing weight, or changing criminal thinking. Thus, it is not surprising that most offenders will have difficulty immediately changing behavior. Some will be sanctioned multiple times before they move forward.

Continued on next page...

OJACC Newsletter

Over 30 Years Promoting and Supporting Effective Community Corrections

OJACC President – Hon. Jim Slagle

OJACC First Vice President – Kysten Palmore

OJACC Second Vice President – Molly Gauntner

OJACC Treasurer – Linda Janes

OJACC Secretary – Amy Klumpp

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 the submission of articles dealing with all aspects of community corrections. Articles must be relatively brief. OJACC reserves the right to edit articles for space considerations and reserves the discretion 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.

How to reach us

Please send all articles and letters to:
Cheryl Taylor
OJACC Organizational Coordinator
Post Office Box 849
Pataskala, OH 43062
Phone: (740) 420-6444
E-mail: tctaylor@mac.com

Advertising

OJACC Newsletter accepts paid advertising. All inquiries regarding advertising should be directed to:

Cheryl Taylor
OJACC Organizational Coordinator
Post Office Box 849
Pataskala, OH 43062
Phone: (740) 420-6444
E-mail: tctaylor@mac.com

...continued from page 1

However, many offenders do make positive change. They complete treatment, obey the law, pay their restitution, obtain employment, and pay taxes. For most, this would not happen without the hard work of probation officers, treatment providers, counselors, and others who make community corrections work on a daily basis.

At the end of the day, our communities are safer when we have helped offenders become law abiding citizens. That is one of the purposes of community corrections. 

32nd Annual OJACC Conference to be Held Oct. 11 and 12, 2018

The Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) is pleased to present its 32nd annual conference, “Adjusting the Sales-Changes are on the Horizon” at the Crowne Plaza Hotel North in Columbus, Ohio, October 11 and 12, 2018.

The general session Thursday morning will feature Douglas Marlowe, NADCP Director of Science and Law, addressing the issue of Medication-Assisted Treatment in the Criminal Justice System.

In the closing general session, Carl Reynolds, Senior Legal & Policy Advisor for The Council of State Governments Justice Center will present Policy Options as a result of Ohio Justice Reinvestment 2.0.

Many workshops are being planned to provide practical information for the improvement of community corrections.

OJACC is honored to continue its 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. Please take the time to nominate a professional for the OJACC Achievement Awards who has demonstrated a commitment to the improvement of community corrections. A nomination forms can be found in this newsletter or on the OJACC website, ojacc.org.

Credits are being applied for in the area of Changing Offender Behavior (COB), CLE, RCH, and Counselor/Social Work.

Please make plans to attend this highly informative conference. Conference registration information will be available at ojacc.org.



2018 OJACC Planning Retreat

Every two years the OJACC board members participate in a retreat to plan for the work of the organization for the next two years. Mohican State Park was the setting for the most recent two day retreat.

After much valuable discussion, the board establishing the following goals:

Create a platform that advances OJACC's mission. This will be in the form of a White Paper. As we approach an era of the potential for much change, this will provide a tool education and advocacy of effective community corrections.

Advocate for meaningful, uniform data collections and sharing. As we all know, this has been an area that has been lacking in Ohio. In order to identify what is working well and where improvements are needed, it is important to collect and share uniform data.



Seek common ground with community corrections practitioners and stakeholders on the provision of and advocacy for effective community corrections.

We look forward to the increasing the effectiveness of OJACC as a result of this renewed focus and planning.



Ohio Justice Reinvestment 2.0 – Update

In our last newsletter, information was provided on the next phase of Ohio Justice Reinvestment by the Council on State Government (CSG), which was initiated by Ohio's three branches of government.

Under the direction of the Ohio Justice Reinvestment Committee, comprising designees from all three branches of government and state and local criminal justice stakeholders, CSG Justice Center staff will conduct a comprehensive analysis of data and help develop policy options that are designed to both increase public safety and contain the cost of corrections.

The first meeting was held November 9, 2017 to address the impact of violent crime and opioids while enhancing public safety and look to reduce recidivism and manage the number of people in prison and on probation and parole. The second meeting was held on April 5, 2018, and focused on law enforcement strategies to reduce violence along with

an introductory discussion of the behavioral health challenges facing the state. The third meeting will be held on June 21, 2018 and will cover sentencing and the data gaps in the state.

The committee is expected to meet at least two more times before delivering a final report and policy proposals to the legislature in the fall of 2018. For more information on this initiative, please visit <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/Sentencing/committees/justiceReinvest/default.asp> and <https://csgjusticecenter.org/jr/oh/>.



“In 2016, over 8000 inmates were released from Ohio's prisons without being under any type of supervision”

Celebrating Judge John M. Durkin

Mahoning County Common Pleas Judge John M. Durkin celebrated the 20th year of operation for his Felony Drug Court Program. The Mahoning County Drug Court accepted its first participant in 1997 and was the third such court in the state. Today, Judge Durkin's program is the second longest running specialty docket program and works with the Ohio Supreme Court in mentoring new and struggling programs.

Judge Durkin often says, "If we're doing the same thing we were doing 5 years ago, then we're doing something wrong." It has been necessary to change many things with the court due to the evolution of drugs used, age of participants, change in collaborative partners, and changes in legislation. In 2000, 85% of the participants identified cocaine and marijuana as their drug of choice and 50% of the population was over 35 years of age. In 2017, 89% of the participants identified opiates- particularly heroin- as their drug of choice and 50% of the population was between 18 and 28 years of age.

A special event was held on December 13th, 2017, in conjunction with the Drug Court's formal graduation in which 9 individuals successfully completed the program and had their charges dismissed. The graduation was attended by their family members and friends, but also by numerous past participants of the court and Judge Durkin's family. Judge Durkin was presented with a plaque by those past participants saying, "You have changed the world because you have touched our lives. Thank you for Chances, Choices, Changes!"

The Administrative Director of the Supreme Court, Michael Buenger, Esq., and Specialized Dockets Section Manager, Monica Kagey, were unable to attend the graduation as planned due to inclement weather, however, Director Buenger did come to the court the following week to present Judge Durkin with a Certificate of Recognition from Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor. In it, she states, "Your work was cutting-edge in the legal realm... It is your devoted service to others in the judicial system, too, that causes many to appreciate your wisdom and contributions, whether through your work on the

Task Force on the Code of Judicial Conduct, the Ohio Judicial Conference, or the Ohio Judicial College. Most certainly, your vast experience on the bench and with your drug court was a great benefit to your more recent work on the Task Force for Court Funding and the state leadership team for the Regional Judicial Opioid Initiative."



Michael Buenger, Gina ???, and Judge Durkin

"From 2006 to 2016, Ohio's violent crimes rates decreased by 14%. During the same time, Ohio's prison population increased by 12%."

OJACC Policy Positions

As indicated in the included article concerning the 2018 OJACC Planning Retreat, one of the goals agreed to at the retreat was to create a platform that advances the mission of OJACC. As a result, OJACC is in the process of creating a White Paper to support the below policy positions. More information will be available as the paper develops.

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 Medicaid expansion would be a major setback in the efforts to address 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.
- 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 and give judges some discretion to remove registration requirements after a period of time.

We support initiatives to encourage the uniform collection and sharing of meaningful data regarding community corrections. Currently, no one knows basic statewide 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.



“National property and violent crime rates have dropped 50 percent since the early 90’s.”



Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections

Post Office Box 849  Pataskala, OH 43062