

# Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 3

September 2022

## Executive Committee

The Honorable Melanie G. May  
Chair, 4th DCA  
The Honorable Howard McGillan,  
Vice –Chair, 7th Judicial Circuit  
Jennifer Grandal, Treasurer,  
Statewide  
The Honorable Michele Towbin-  
Singer, Secretary, 17th Judicial Cir-  
cuit  
The Honorable Jeri B. Cohen  
Past Chair, 11th Judicial Circuit  
Eve Janocko, At-Large, 7th Judi-  
cial Circuit  
Leslie Weidenhammer, At-Large,  
20th Judicial Circuit

## Board Members

Cristy Altaro, 15th Judicial Circuit  
Maria Johnson, 1st Judicial Circuit  
Arianna Leone, 1st Judicial Circuit  
Alina Stoothoff, 5th Judicial Circuit  
Crystal G. Watkins, 5th Judicial  
Circuit  
Jamee Whited, 7th Judicial Cir-  
cuit  
Julia Schilling, 13th Judicial Circuit  
Cristy Altaro, 15th Judicial Circuit  
Stephanie Coberly, 17th Judicial  
Circuit  
The Honorable Susan L. Alspecter,  
17th Judicial Circuit  
Joanna Greene, 19th Judicial  
Circuit  
Jessica Holberton, 19th Judicial  
Circuit  
The Honorable Josephine  
Gagliardi, 20th Judicial Circuit  
Stephanie Coberly, 17th Judicial  
Circuit  
The Honorable Gisele Pollack, Ret.,  
17th Judicial Circuit

Dear FADCP Members:

I hope you had a wonderful Summer and that many of you had the opportunity to attend All Rise!

In the good ole days of my tenure on Broward County's Adult Drug Court, I always looked forward to the NADCP Annual Conferences. They were so informative and energizing. I always returned home with lots of ideas for improving our drug court.

We had our first meeting of our newly elected Board of Directors on July 7, 2022. We had a wonderful meeting and we all got to put faces with our names for the first time as a Board. I am so encouraged by the board members who volunteered to take on the business of running FADCP. And I must say, everyone volunteered for some responsibility. What a team!

We still have room for more volunteers for some of the committee work. So if you have an interest in helping out on a more informal basis, please let me know. Once again, our committees are Membership, Newsletter, Strategic Planning, Bylaws, and Training/Conference, . The last committee will be essential as we plan for a statewide conference in the not too distant future.

We will also be hosting the new Director of the Florida Office of Drug Control, Doug Simon, for a short zoom meet and greet and some networking in October. Thanks to Governor DeSantis, we now have a "body" in a position of importance for all of us and the work we do. He is eager to meet you! Be on the look out for upcoming dates!

And last, it's time to renew your memberships. It's hard to believe a year has gone by. Please watch for the membership mail out.

Sincerely,

Acting Chair

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**To The New**  
**FADCP Executive Committee and Committee Chairs!**

**Executive Committee**

The Honorable Melanie G. May, Chair  
The Honorable Howard McGillin, Vice-Chair  
Eve Janocko, Secretary  
Jennifer Grandal, Treasurer  
The Honorable Michele Towbin-Singer, At-Large  
The Honorable Josephine Gagliardi  
Leslie Weidenhammer, At-Large

**Bylaws Committee**

Jamee Whited, Chair  
The Honorable Michele Towbin-Singer

**Membership Committee**

Crystal Watkins, Chair  
Julia Schilling  
Eve Janocko

**Newsletter Committee**

Gisele Pollack, Chair  
Cristy Altaro

**Strategic Planning Committee**

The Honorable Susan Alspecter, Chair  
Alina Stoothoff

**Training and Conference Committee**

The Honorable Michele Towbin-Singer, Chair  
The Honorable Josephine Gagliardi  
Joanna Greene  
Alina Stoothoff

## ***THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSOR***



We wish to recognize and thank SCRAM Systems for their Bronze Level Corporate Membership. SCRAM Systems support of the Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals will help our efforts to coordinate our next statewide training conference.

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***Look Who Used to Attend the NADCP Conference!***



Current U.S. President, then Senator, Joe Biden addressing attendees at the NADCP Conference.



## ***“AHEAD OF IT’S TIME”***

### ***Marion County’s Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court***

*By Crystal Watkins, Drug Court Manager  
Marion County*

Long before the Florida Legislature passed legislation to create post-adjudicatory drug courts, Marion County launched its Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court on April 14, 1994. It was the first problem-solving court in the Fifth Judicial Circuit and established only five years after the very first drug court was created in the United States.

On June 10, 2010, the program "Expanded" into the Marion County Prison Diversion Drug Court Program, fka Expansion.

The Prison Diversion program began accepting persons with eligible felony charges, post-adjudication as an alternative to prison. To qualify, participants needed a sentencing guidelines score between 23 to 60 points and be diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Qualifying offenses included violations of probation and community control, excluding violent crimes and sales or trafficking offenses.

Our Prison Diversion program has served over 425 participants since 2010. Most of our graduates remain in recovery and work in the community.

Recently, a Drug Court Alumni group formed as a result of a partnership with the local Recovery Care Organization (RCO). The Recovery group has been actively engaged with and mentors new Drug Court participants. Their experiences bring awareness to the community, and they support one another in the overall goal of learning how to Live in Recovery.

The Prison Diversion Drug Court program is actively involved in community education, meetings, and events such as the Heroin Opioid Task Force meeting and the Community Council Against Substance Abuse.

## ***Show Up, Try Hard, and Be Honest***

Our participants have a history of manning tables and representing our programs at various Recovery events (the Recovery Fest, Recovery on the Square, Celebrate Recovery), and many other community events.





Judge Gary Sanders (pictured above) is a dedicated, sincere judge who presides with compassion and enthusiasm. He has an excellent working knowledge of the Best Practice Standards. Participants look forward to and enjoy engaging with him. He consistently reminds them of his three basic rules – “Show up, try hard, and be honest!”



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Carlos G. Muñiz  
Chief Justice

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Allison C. Sackett  
State Courts Administrator

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**Office of the State Courts Administrator**

**SUSAN EMMANUEL**

**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

09/01/2022

**Chief Justice Carlos G. Muñiz Proclaims September  
Awareness Month on Opioid and Stimulant Epidemics  
*Calls for Continued Attention and Action by Florida Courts***

TALLAHASSEE, FL - Illicit uses of opioids and stimulants have reached epidemic proportions, with far-reaching, destructive impacts on Florida and the nation. Substance use disorders threaten lives and a dramatic increase has occurred in drug overdose deaths. A surge in fentanyl use is creating added dangers.

Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid, is 50 – 100 times more potent than morphine. In addition to the hazards of other opioids, as well as stimulants like cocaine and methamphetamines, deceptive lacing of other drugs with fentanyl is occurring at an alarming rate, exacerbating the problem.

To raise awareness about opioid and stimulant use issues and disorders, and highlight solutions involving the courts, Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Carlos G. Muñiz issued a proclamation establishing September 2022 “as a month of awareness, training, and action regarding opioids, stimulants, and treatment for related substance use disorders.”

Drug addiction takes a severe toll on the lives of millions. Human suffering, health impairment, overdoses, and death are coupled with added impacts of family disruption, job losses, increased crime, and taxpayer expense to address these and related problems in the justice, social services, and healthcare systems. The effects are apparent throughout Florida courts, including drug courts, family courts, mental health courts, veteran courts, among other areas of the judicial system. Adverse impacts on both the courts and those whose lives have been directly affected can be reduced through greater awareness and access to resources.

-More-









The OSCA has scheduled the following webinars on the topics you asked for through a Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant to provide training and technical assistance to Florida's adult drug courts on the Florida Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards. The educational content being provided in the upcoming webinars will be valuable for other problem-solving courts. Relevant webinars are also being offered through the Florida Courts Opioid and Stimulant Initiative including replays from past webinars. Please take advantage of these educational opportunities!

**Upcoming Webinars for Adult Drug Courts and Other  
Problem-Solving Courts**

<https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Problem-Solving-Courts/Upcoming-Events>

**Florida Courts Opioid and Stimulant Initiative Upcoming  
Webinars  
and Event Replays**

<https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Problem-Solving-Courts/Opioid-Stimulants-Initiative>

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**MEMBERS ONLY— WEBINAR ALERT**

*By Judge Melanie G. May  
Fourth District Court of Appeal*



Calling all FADCP Members! Stay tuned. We are working on a new webinar for our members only.

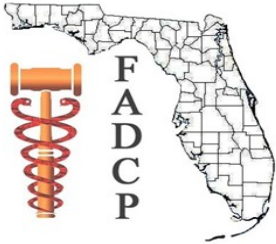
**BE A CONTRIBUTOR  
To the FADCP Newsletter**

We know lots of exciting things are happening in your drug courts and we want to hear about them. If you have a graduation, open a new problem-solving court, encounter some new obstacle, or stumble upon a successful idea in handling issues facing drug courts, our newsletter is a place to share. Please send any pictures and newsworthy items for inclusion in our next newsletter to [Maymg@flcourts.org](mailto:Maymg@flcourts.org).

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# FADCP SNIPPETS



## FADCP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE Always Open



We look forward to you joining or renewing your FADCP membership. We encourage drug court team members to become FADCP members. The FADCP welcomes your input as we look forward to supporting you and your drug courts and other problem-solving courts. Your membership supports our statewide association - - the voice of Florida's problem-solving courts.

Visit the [FADCP Website](#) for more information on initiatives and training opportunities.