

Glacier Consulting, Inc.

**SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF A MODEL
JUVENILE TREATMENT COURT PROGRAM:
*Anne Arundel County, MD Juvenile Treatment Court
Program
Producing Community Outcomes***



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Anne Arundel County, MD Juvenile Treatment Court Program Producing Community Outcomes

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This Summary Report of a process and outcome evaluation of the Anne Arundel County Juvenile Treatment Court. The evaluators would like to thank the Program Coordinator, Cristin Tolen, all of the Team members, as well as other individuals interviewed for taking time out of their busy schedules to make this evaluation a success. This report was prepared under grant received from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U. S. Department of Justice, by Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The views of the authors do not represent the opinions, policies or official positions of DOJ, the Anne Arundel County or other offices and organizations included in the report.

INTRODUCTION

Specialty Courts are judicial problem-solving processes designed to address the root causes that contribute to criminal involvement. Anne Arundel County has led Maryland in the development of Drug Courts as an alternative way of returning productive members to society.

Specialty Courts consist of teams with a judge, coordinator, prosecutor, defense, treatment personnel, probation and other agency staff as needed. They provide early intervention by the court while protecting the rights and due process of the defendant. The swift application of rewards or sanctions holds the client accountable throughout the process.

Drug Courts have been proven highly effective with defendants whose drug use or abuse has brought them into contact with the criminal justice system. Several categories of Drug Courts are currently operating throughout the state. These include adult, juvenile and family. All play a unique role in helping and preparing people to live substance abuse free lives.

- The Adult Criminal Drug Court is the most common. Participants are part of the criminal justice system and enrolled in the program as a part of their sentence and rehabilitation. Anne Arundel County is served by two Adult Drug Courts – one as part of the Circuit Court and another as part of the District Court.
- Family, Dependency, and Child Support Drug Courts all deal with domestic situations, such as a failure to pay ordered child support, that are worsened by use of illegal drugs.

- Juvenile Treatment Courts are for youth that find themselves in the criminal justice system with drug use as part of the problem.

In addition to the assistance provided individual defendants, counties and taxpayers receive the benefit of cost savings due to a reduced number of people incarcerated, and an increased number of productive members in society. The work of these courts cannot be underestimated. National and state studies show the success of these courts both in lower recidivism and cost saving to state health and service agencies, correction agencies and the courts. In addition to producing clean, sober and productive citizens, other benefits are received by the state. A recent study found that every dollar spent on substance abuse treatment generates \$7 in monetary benefits for society.

Following the implementation of a pilot program in March 2002, the Anne Arundel County Juvenile Treatment Court (AACJTC) program held its first drug court session under the federal drug court grant in October 2003. AACJTC succeeded in holding its first graduation in March 2003. As of March 2007, the Juvenile Treatment Court has entered over 120 participants to its program, which has produced 55 successful graduates. This report represents a summary of the in progress final report on the program.

This study was conducted by an independent evaluation team¹ from Glacier Consulting, Inc. (GCI), the current process and outcome evaluation for Anne Arundel County

¹ The team managed by Dr. Robert A. Kirchner, Director of Research, Glacier Consulting, Inc., who served as principal investigator, and Thomas R. Kirchner, Senior Research Associate, who performed the analysis and helped develop final findings and conclusions. This project was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance. The views of the authors do not represent the opinions, policies or official positions of DOJ or Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Juvenile Treatment Court from March 2002 to March 2007. The Juvenile Treatment Court program is located in Maryland, including the principal city of Annapolis, the State's Capital. The framework² used by this approach to document the program provides a basis for specifying its uniqueness. The evaluation formulated a program logic model,³ including descriptions of all program components and the relationships between program components. The model establishes a baseline for the process evaluation to determine (1) if the components are being implemented as designed and expected and (2) if improvements can be made to current operations. The summary conclusion of the evaluators is that Anne Arundel County has developed a program that meets the needs of its target population.

² See: Kirchner, Robert A., and Michael Jewell. (2003) "Evaluating Juvenile Treatment Courts at the Local Level," Presented at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals' 4th Annual Juvenile and Family Drug Court Training Conference, January 9-11, 2003, Washington, D.C.

³ This approach and definitions presented here are fully explained and demonstrated in: Kirchner, Robert A., Roger K. Przybylski and Ruth A. Cardella Assessing the Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Programs. Assessment and Evaluation Handbook Series Number 1, January 1994. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance. This publication is available on the INTERNET at: www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org.

PROGRAM SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

The Anne Arundel County Juvenile Treatment Court (AACJTC) program has continued to improve its operations over the more than three years of its implementation. National guidance on implementing drug courts presents a general framework to establish a program, but not all jurisdictions fit the general model – especially with the diverse differences and unique nature of individual juvenile justice regulations and practices.

First, it is important to understand what the Anne Arundel County Juvenile Treatment Court program has already produced as of March 2007, and how it has improved over time, remembering that it is much more cost-effective during the last 3 years than its first two years of operation:

- Reducing recidivism - Only 8.6% Re-Offend rate through March 2007 which is a dramatic improvement of the 31% rate in February 2005, and now far exceeds this objective of the program. Additionally, this result compares to the average juvenile drug offender re-offense of 78%.
- Retaining clients in treatment – The positive outcome of producing a 68.5% Retention Rate continues to be met, which far exceeds the average of 28% reported in research for substance abuse treatment programs.
- Graduating clients - 55 graduates as of 3/5/2007, which represents a doubling of the number of successful graduates for the past twelve months.

In terms of cost-benefits, from March 2002 through October 2005, to Anne Arundel County and the community, AACJTC drug court clients have:

- Clients completed 2,958 hours of community service, valued at \$22,865.34⁴.
- Integrated and consolidated approaches to treatment and recovery which substantially reduced the cost of individual service delivery to clients.
- Delivered 37,000 client days – including substance abuse treatment, supervision, ancillary services and judicial review.

Program components and accomplishments that have created an effective program include:

- Consistent judicial review with cooperative input from all drug court team members – the role of the judge is in itself an effective intervention which impacts a client's performance and retention in the program
- Improved delivery of Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), a cognitive behavioral therapeutic modality that has proven its effectiveness in accelerating client's progress to recovery⁵ – completion of MRT leads to increases in graduation rates
- Strength-based approaches to programming client participation

⁴ Calculated on the recommended value of community service hours by the National Drug Court Institute. As a drug court component, community service fulfills three objectives: (1) the value of the service delivery; (2) therapeutic rehabilitation of the client; and (3) client restitution to the community.

⁵ See: Little, G.L., Robinson, K.D., Burnette, K.D., & Swan, E.S. (1996). Review of Outcome Data with MRT: Seven Year Recidivism Results. Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Review, 5(1), 1-7.

- Dedicated supervision component strongly supported by Juvenile Probation, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- A custom designed Management Information System supporting (1) case management; (2) progress reporting; and (3) monitoring and evaluation
- Parent/ Guardian and family therapy as appropriate, including home visits
- Intensive efforts to gain community partnerships and collaborations, such as Expressive Art Therapy (Insights); Experiential Therapy (Insights and Adventure Therapy), and Interaction with Schools
- Substantial cost savings to Anne Arundel County through reductions in confinement time and the value of clients' performance of community service

The AACJTC program will proceed in its design to fit into state and county approaches to handling juvenile drug offenders by ensuring a balance between client's needs based on assessment and the constraints of law and agency operations. This should produce a program that will become more effective for the jurisdiction, expand its active client base and lead to even greater outcomes for the community.

AACJTC JUVENILE TREATMENT COURT OUTCOMES

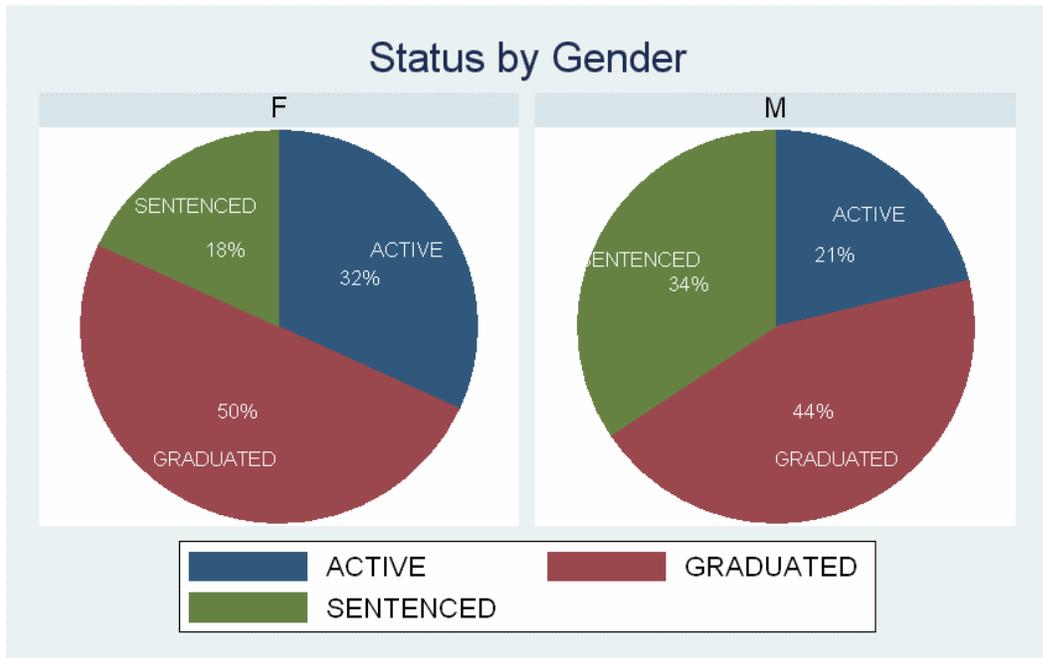
PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Over time, the program has become more active in its attempt to attract appropriate candidates for the Juvenile Treatment Court. The level of graduates to date far exceeds comparable programs in other jurisdictions. It is important to note the significance of one graduate and its impact on the community in which they reside.

STATUS	Frequency	Percent	Cumul ative Frequency	Cumul ative Percent
ACTI VE	28	23. 14	28	23. 14
GRADUATED	55	45. 45	83	68. 60
SENTENCED	38	31. 40	121	100. 00

To date, most of the participants are males (82%). However, the success rate of both Females and Males are similar to each other. This is important because it indicates that the program is effectively developing programs to meet the needs of both genders.

GENDER	Frequency	Percent	Cumul ative Frequency	Cumul ative Percent
Femal e	22	18. 18	22	18. 18
Mal e	99	81. 82	121	100. 00



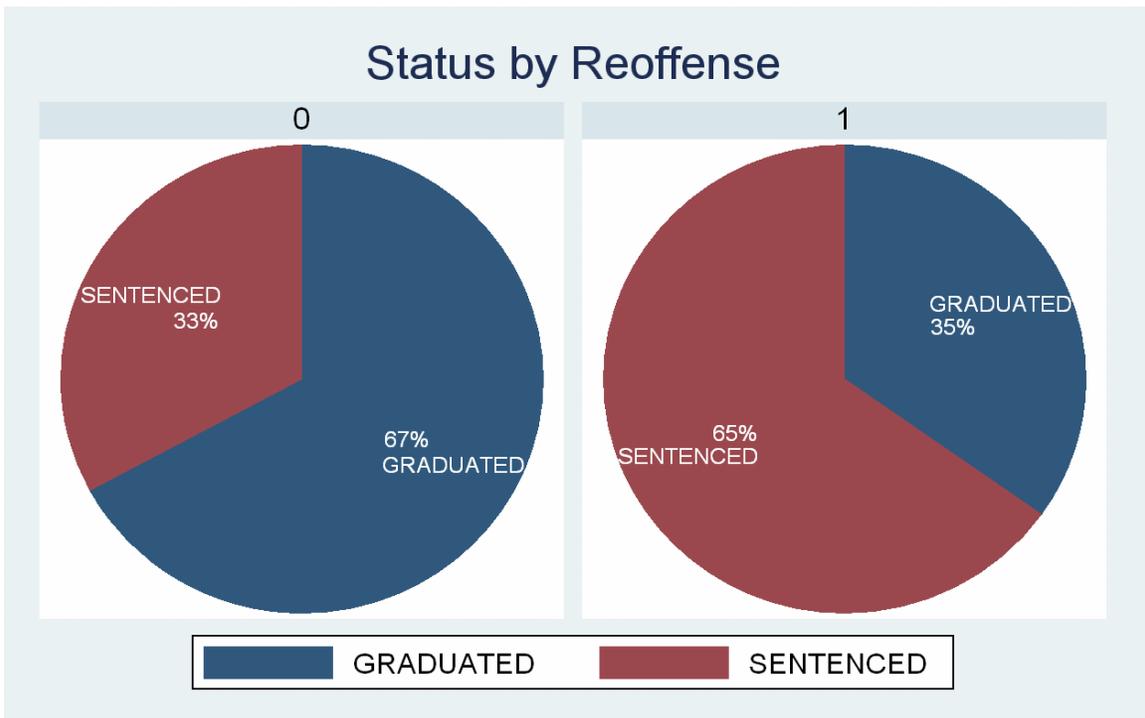
According to the most recent census, Anne Arundel County is 14.7% African American, and the Juvenile Drug Court for the length of its implementation has included the 21% of its participants from this part of its community. As with gender, the success for participants according to their race, are similar.

RACE	Frequency	Percent	Cumul at i ve Frequency	Cumul at i ve Percent
AFRI CAN AMERI CAN	25	20. 66	25	20. 66
CAUCASI AN	91	75. 21	116	95. 87
Other	5	4. 13	121	100. 00

PUBLIC SAFETY OUTCOMES

Foremost among the concerns of citizens in dealing with drug offenders is the need to ensure public safety for the community. While juveniles are participating in the drug court program their behavior results in reduced criminal activity. The cost to the criminal justice system of frequent and continuing criminality by juveniles is constantly rising. Successful graduates of the program produce sustained cost savings for the County's juvenile services. Of course, the most valued outcome in this area is increased security in the community through the replacement of drug using delinquents with responsible young citizens. Finally, if institutionalized, the program can lead to a modest improvement in the overall juvenile justice system.

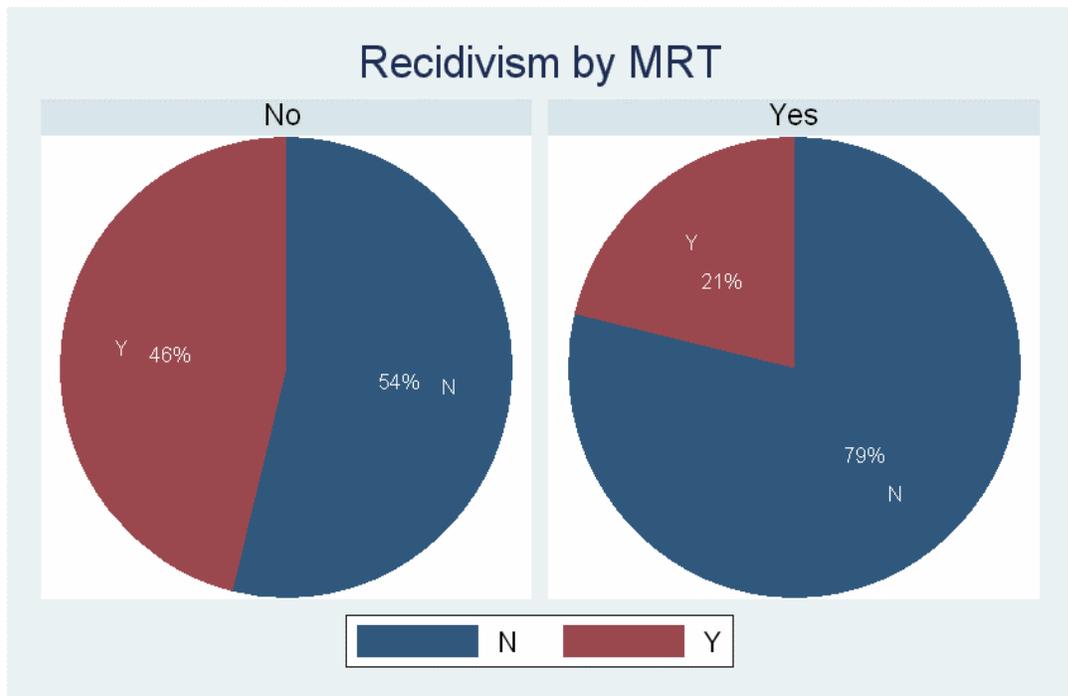
If Juvenile Treatment Court participants graduate, they are twice as likely to never re-offend again in the future.



TREATMENT OUTCOMES

The principal outcome expected through treatment services is sobriety. However, drug use is often a symptom of other problems juveniles encounter, and other behavioral changes are desired as well. Based on assessments, the program addresses the total needs of each participant and seeks permanent, cognitive behavioral changes that directly yield client outcomes, such as: improving the client's image to others and within the community; removing the link to crime; and reinforcements for future living.

If participants complete the cognitive behavioral treatment component of their treatment plan (MRT), 79% have not committed new offenses either as juveniles or adults. Whereas, participants not completing or entered into MRT re-offended almost 50% of the time. Today, all participants receive MRT Therapy.



EDUCATION, SKILLS AND WORK OUTCOMES

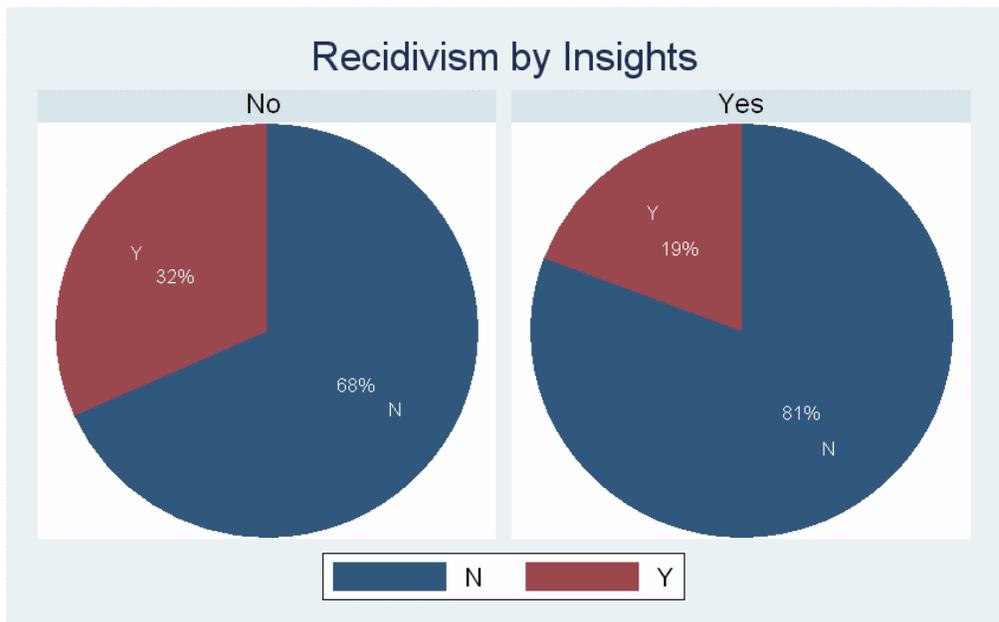
The program initially had limited success in attaining outcomes in this area, but has now matured to the point where each participant achieves a number of interim outcomes while in the program that ensures post-program success. Educational objectives are stressed and be achieved by clients. Those clients in school are performing at higher levels and defining goals for their future. Many clients that had given up on education are gaining their GED, and are seeking other education goals. Others wanting to work, and in need of enhanced skills to succeed, are moving forward in their plans to achieve those objectives.

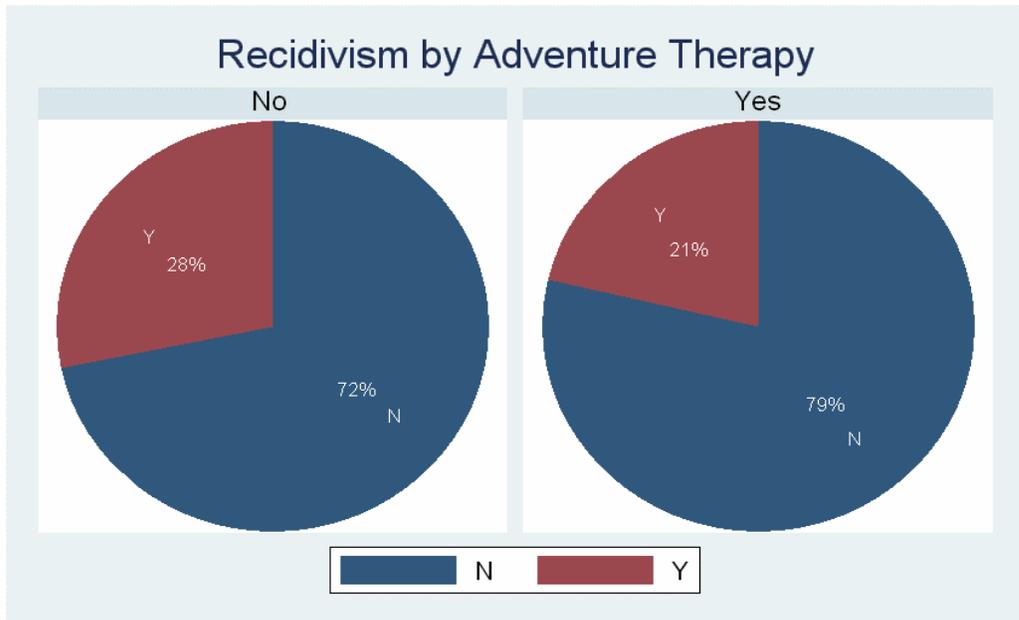
A major accomplishment of the Juvenile Treatment Court has been its success in promoting completion and/or preparation for completing GED requirements, especially considering how many of the participants have been expelled or drop out of school. The program has produced 18 GED graduates, and prepared 30 more for completing their GED requirements in the future. Very often, enhancing educational achievements moves juveniles from hopelessness to expectations that a positive future is possible.

Additionally, seven (7) participants graduated from high school, and 64 have continued in school and improved their behavior and academic programs.

EDUCATI ON	Frequency	Percent	Cumul ati ve Frequency	Cumul ati ve Percent
Enrol led	64	52. 89	64	52. 89
GED	18	14. 88	82	67. 77
HS Graduate	7	5. 79	89	73. 55
Pre-GED	30	24. 79	119	98. 35
Wi thdrawn	2	1. 65	121	100. 00

In addition to education, the juvenile drug has built bridges to the community to enhance their participants' active involvement in positive activities, such as the Insights program sponsored by Vision Workshops and Maryland Hall for Creative Arts. The results have been dramatic in terms of producing impacts for both completing the program and successful future life. It is notable that 68% of those that participated in the Insights program have maintained their success, and have not re-offended.





WORK	Frequency	Percent	Cumul ative Frequency	Cumul ative Percent
No	60	49.59	60	49.59
Yes	61	50.41	121	100.00

The objectives set for many of the Juvenile Treatment Court participants include establishing them as successful members of society, which includes their ability to make a living. The program has been particularly successful in promoting work experiences and placement in jobs for their clients. Of course, also means that they are actively participating in the community through work and paying taxes.

The program focuses on older juveniles, and hence has focused on the importance of effective work experiences in addition to enhancing their education. With a 61% achievement rate, the program is succeeding in its expectations.

FAMILY STRENGTH

The program's mission formulated during early planning sessions was to promote a strong family component for the Juvenile Treatment Court. When families are involved in the process, client progress through the program accelerates and the post-program outcomes are sustained. When conducive to an individual situation, the drug court team encourages improvements in parenting and family relationships. If assessments dictate, issues of dysfunctional domestic relations are considered in developing individual client plans to reduce continuing risk factors and increase family functioning. In some cases outcomes have led to successful steps toward family reunification.

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

The Juvenile Treatment Court program, by definition, can only be successful if the drug court team brings together all those involved in responding to the problem of juvenile drug offenders. But more than that, each team member and stakeholder must look at what they do in a different way than business as usual. The Drug Court Team members have learned a great deal about the diverse fields and approaches that other team members bring to the table. Former adversarial relationships have changed to produce a program design that leads to successful completion by participants that often have never been successful at anything before in their lives. The result is a series of outcomes where various sectors of a community realize that by working together they can produce enhancements to the way they contribute through their work to individuals, and thereby the community as a whole. Although the results of an innovative, or alternative

program like a Juvenile Treatment Court may only have the capacity to respond to the needs of a small proportion of the target population we know exists, the changes that innovation brings are often far reaching beyond the program within the agencies and relationships that are developed because the program is in operation.

Glacier Consulting, Inc.

Background

Glacier Consulting, Incorporated (GCI) is a non-profit organization (501 (c)(3)) specializing in promoting enhanced research and evaluation activities to confirm the worth and effectiveness of state and local private and public demonstration projects and programs. GCI focuses on programs and activities in the areas of education, health, mental health and criminal justice. GCI accomplishes its goals by providing consulting, conducting studies and delivering training programs to meet the needs of state and local, private and public agencies and organizations. Materials and resources are developed and published, including but not limited to books, periodicals, software for computers, tapes and discs.

The long-term goal of the organization is to contribute to identification and confirmation of those activities and programs designed to support and deliver educational, treatment, mental health and criminal justice services to the public in general, and within communities. Through enhanced research and evaluation, supported by training and demonstration activities, GCI anticipates improvements to the targeted programs. Successful operation of the organization will produce solutions to pressing societal needs and problems.

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