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The 4th Homeless Veterans Court at Stand Down – A Highlight of DeKalb County at Its Best

Stand Down 2012 was held on October 20, 2012 at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center located at 1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA. The theory of Stand Down rests in the homeless veteran crisis. The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans estimates that “62,619 veterans are homeless on any given night.” The coalition asserts further that, “over the course of a year, approximately twice that many experience homelessness.” The AJC reports “about 1,200 homeless veterans live in Atlanta, and more than 400 are thought to be chronically homeless.” It’s projected that 50% of the homeless veteran population has serious mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse problems, along with very high incarceration rates.

The DeKalb County Magistrate Court organized and hosted the 4th Annual Homeless Court at Stand Down that has, to date, served more than 100 veterans. DeKalb County Magistrate Court has been successful in this endeavor due to the collaborative efforts of the VAMC, DeKalb County Public Defender, District Attorney and Solicitor General Offices. More

information on the National Stand Down initiative is available at www.nchv.org for the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans and at www.vvsvd.net for Veterans Village of San Diego, “Leave No One Behind.”



RESOURCE INFORMATION – JAIL

Metro Atlanta Area Jails

DeKalb
www.dekalbsheriff.org

Fulton
www.fultonsheriff.org

Gwinnett
www.gwinnettcountysheriff.com

DeKalb County Jail Medical Information

Medical Sections: 3NW, 3SW, 3A

Jail Mental Health:
404-298-8330

Health Services
Coordinator:
404-298-8531

Confidential line to leave health information:
404-298-8525

Visiting the DeKalb County Jail

Last Names A – K
Monday, Wednesday, Saturday

Last Names L – Z
Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday

Your name **MUST** be on the inmate's visitation list for you to visit the inmate housed in the DeKalb County Jail

How to alert and send medications to the DeKalb County Jail

- Send prescription bottle with the police/arrestee
- Call confidential medical telephone line 404-298-8525 and leave medical information
- Bring prescription bottles to the jail. Request medical assistance from the nurse on duty



Graduate Gab

We are VERY proud of our graduates and have highlighted two of these very special and determined individuals below.*

Ms. P is a 28-year old female who was accepted into DTC on May 31, 2012. She was referred based on a December 2011 arrest for False Report of a Crime to a 911 Operator. Ms. P resides with both parents and her younger brother. Ms. P is very family oriented and has a great appreciation for her parents.

Ms. P is diagnosed with depression and she receives her treatment from Clifton Springs Mental Health Center. Ms. P was not prescribed any medication but had a psychiatrist that she saw once a month in addition to a therapist. While active, she also participated in the women's group facilitated by Ayonna Johnson of the Women's Resource Center. The women's group is held three times a month. Ms. P said she thoroughly enjoyed getting together with other women and interacting with them on similar issues. Ms P was compliant with everything that was required of her while in the program.

While a participant, she pursued her GED and worked full-time at McDonalds where she has been an employee for approximately five years. She worked many hours in

order to be a responsible adult while living with her parents. She graduated from DTC on December 27, 2012. Braddy Smith was her DTC case manager.

Ms. P was very polite and a pleasure to work with at all times. She was very receptive to the input of her case manager as well as that of the DTC team. She knew that the DTC team not only wanted to get her back on track with her mental health treatment, but with her life as a whole. This individual attention, she said, made her feel a personal connection. Since her graduation, she continues to call Ms. Smith to update her on her progress and family life. During her calls, she never fails to ask about the well-being of the DTC team.




Mr. M was accepted to DTC in December 2012 on a Reckless Conduct charge. According to his case manager, Chip Forte, he always kept a positive attitude. In addition to open communication with Mr. Forte, his upbeat outlook served him well as he dealt with personal hardships.

Mr. M participates regularly in Civil



War reenactments. He is pictured above in period-accurate garments. Mr. M also has some experience in prospecting, specifically panning for gold, and brought to court some of the gold he had unearthed.

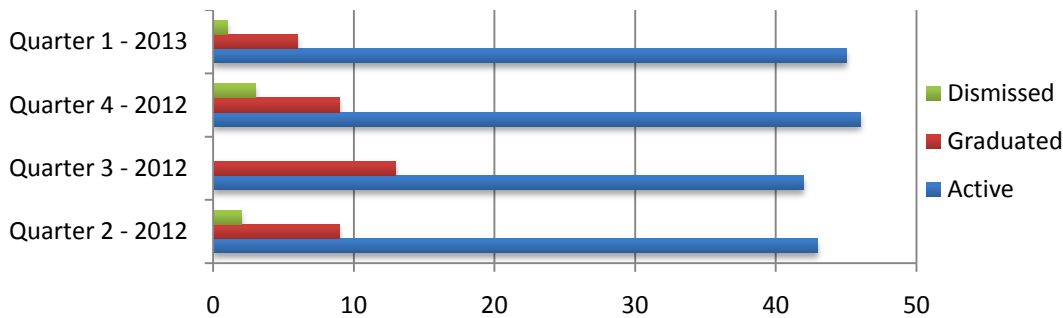
Mr. M is one of several DTC participants featured in an informative video shown to defendants that have been referred to observe a DTC court session. In it, he gives insight into his positive experience with DTC, which helps other potential participants make a knowledgeable choice about going forward with DTC participation.

To sum it up, Mr. M was a wonderful and interesting participant. 

*Names are always redacted or changed to safeguard our participants' identity.

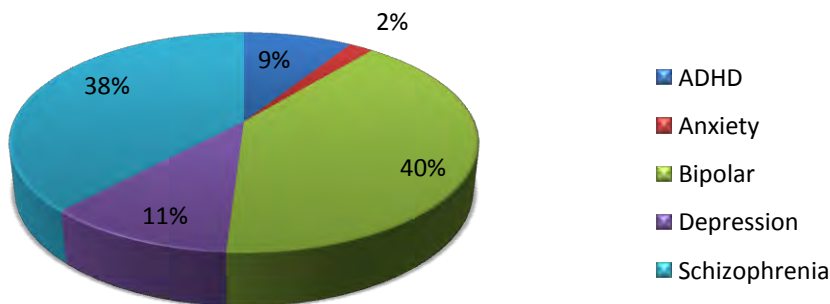
BY THE NUMBERS

During the first quarter, a total of **forty-five (45)** defendants were active participants in DTC. Of these forty-five, **six (6)** defendants graduated from the DTC. **One (1)** defendant was dismissed from DTC during this quarter for non-compliance or for having symptoms later revealed which required services of greater intensity than the DTC can provide.



All participants in the Diversion Treatment Court must have an Axis I mental health diagnosis. Many have co-occurring substance usage and alcohol abuse issues as well. The diagnostic breakdown for Axis I DTC active participants is as follows:

Axis I Diagnosis



RESOURCE INFORMATION – LEGAL

Low-Cost Civil Legal Services

DeKalb Legal Aid Society
404-377-0701

DeKalb Volunteer Lawyers Foundation
404-373-0865

Public Treatment Providers

DeKalb Community Service Board – Central Access
404-892-4646

Georgia Crisis and Access Line
1-800-715-4225

Clayton County Mental Health
770-4478-1099

Cobb Community Service Board – Central Access
770-422-0202

Fulton County Health Department
404-730-1212

Gwinnett County Mental Health Center
770-963-8141

Rockdale County Mental Health Center
770-918-6677



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SPOTLIGHT FEATURE Georgia Radio Reading Service, Inc.

DeKalb County Chief Magistrate Berryl A. Anderson and Magistrate Rhathelia Stroud went live on-air with information about the DeKalb Diversion Treatment Court last year for “Veterans Information” at the Georgia Radio Reading Service, Inc. (VI@GaRRS). The Georgia Radio Reading Service, Inc. (GaRRS) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1980. It is the State’s only radio reading service whose mission is to improve the quality of life for every Georgian who is blind, visually-impaired or has difficulty with access to the printed word. The

program is done in partnership with the Veterans Affairs Department. VI@GaRRS is hosted by William “Bill” Davis and airs the 2nd Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m.



SCHIZOAFFECTIVE DISORDER

Schizoaffective disorder is a serious mental illness and represents an attempt to encompass individuals who have features of both schizophrenia and mood disorders; it does not consist of unique symptoms. Instead, patients experience some combination of symptoms associated with these two disorders. This means that a person with schizoaffective disorder may suffer from delusions and/or hallucinations as well as depression and/or mania.

This lack of characteristic symptoms can make diagnosis difficult. It's only with extremely careful screening, testing and interviewing that a person can be accurately diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder. In fact, reassessing the diagnosis over the course of the illness may even be necessary to ensure the correct diagnosis has been made. The cause of schizoaffective disorder is not known but genes and brain chemicals (neurotransmitters) may play a role.

For most people with schizoaffective disorder, treatment will be very similar to treatment of schizophrenia and will include antipsychotic medications to help address symptoms of psychosis. Finding the right type and dose of antipsychotic medication is important and requires collaboration with a doctor. Treatments such as cognitive behavioral therapy to target psychotic symptoms, support groups to increase family and community support, peer support and connection, and work-and-school rehabilitation, such as social skills training, are very helpful for people with schizoaffective disorder. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is also of critical importance; the role of good sleep, hygiene, regular exercise, and a balanced diet cannot be underestimated.



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"When the Japanese mend broken objects, they aggrandize the damage by filling the cracks with gold. They believe that when something's suffered damage and has a history, it becomes more beautiful."

—Barbara Bloom
HealthPlace.com

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JOIN US FOR AN OBSERVATION OF A DIVERSION TREATMENT COURT SESSION

You are welcome to observe a DTC court session.
DTC convenes every Thursday at 9:00a.m.
DeKalb County Courthouse,
Magistrate Court of DeKalb County
First floor, Courtroom 1200 D

For further information, or if you would like to receive the DTC newsletter or submit an article for consideration, contact:

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phone 404-371-2241, fax 404-371-2683

The Diversion Treatment Court (DTC) operates under the direction of the DeKalb County Magistrate Court and is a collaborative effort of the Magistrate Court, Adult Probation, DeKalb Community Service Board (DCSB), DeKalb Volunteer Lawyer's Foundation (DVLV), Integrated Life Center (ILC), Jail Mental Health Services, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Office of the District Attorney, Office of the Sheriff, Office of the Solicitor, Pre-trial Services, Recorder's Court, State Court, Superior Court, Traveler's Aid of Atlanta, Inc. and the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC).

The impetus behind this effort is the decriminalization of persons suffering with serious mental illness.