



2025 Minnesota State Treatment Court Conference

Bloomington, Minnesota

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Speaker Bios & Session Descriptions

Hon. Tina Nadeau (ret.)

Justice Tina Nadeau was appointed to the New Hampshire Superior Court in 1996 and was named chief justice in 2011. She received her law degree from the University of New Hampshire School of Law in 1989. She was legal counsel to Governor Steve Merrill from 1992 through 1996. Among her awards are:

- The Caroline Gross Fellowship Award to attend the Kennedy School Executive Leadership program
- The Eric Cogswell Achievement Award, for work with incarcerated offenders with mental illness
- The New Hampshire Bar's Marilla Ricker Award, presented to women in leadership positions
- The Advocacy Award from New Futures, a nonprofit organization working to reduce substance use
- Greater Manchester Mental Health's Wheelock-Nardi Award for work advocating for those with mental health and substance use issues
- The Kathleen Taylor Legislator Award from the New Hampshire Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling Association

She is a board member of the New England Association of Drug Court Professionals and of New Futures. Justice Nadeau led the effort in 2006 to open the first drug court in Rockingham County, where she presided as the judge for four years. Under her leadership, funds were eventually secured for drug courts in all counties. She continues to work to ensure their compliance with the National Standards for Adult Drug Courts.

Overview Best Practice Standards

The first edition of the Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards set treatment courts apart as one of the most effective, successful justice system innovations in history. In the more than 10 years since their release, no provision has been retracted. Not, All Rise has released the second edition of the standards, renamed the Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards. This second edition offers more comprehensive guidance for how all adult treatment courts can improve outcomes. In this session you will learn what's new, what's changed and what the second edition means for your program.

Learning Objectives:

1. Learn the history of the Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards.
2. Understand what content has been added or modified in the Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards, 2nd Edition and why.
3. Identify areas where your treatment court can improve adherence to best practices.

Understanding Your Role: Judge

This session focuses on the judge's role in assuring program compliance with Adult Treatment Court Best Practice Standards. It includes a review of the research on some of the practices that have been proven to reduce substance use, recidivism and costs. The session will also cover what knowledge is required of Treatment Court Judges, who should make decisions in treatment court and how the judge should communicate with participants in the courtroom. Finally, the session outlines the strengths and challenges of the judges, with an emphasis on the judge's role as the leader of the team and as a conduit to the community.

Learning Objectives:

1. Learn the skills and attitudes necessary for effective communication with the treatment court team, and the

participants.

2. Understand how participant trauma appears in the courtroom and how to address it.
3. Explore opportunities to educate the community about the benefits of treatment court programs

Rachel Lindley

Rachel Lindley is a Director at the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, an adjunct professor in criminal justice at Montgomery College, and contractually the Specialty Court Administrator for Van Buren County Courts. With over 15 years of experience in the criminal justice field, Rachel's career spans leadership roles in both judicial and correctional systems across Michigan and Illinois, with a particular focus on treatment court programs. She has extensive experience in the direct planning, implementation and improvement of policies, procedures and programs that promote access to justice for all members of the public. Her education includes a BS in Criminal Justice, MS in Administration, MS in Organizational Leadership and graduate certificates from Cornell University in Human Resources Management.

Understanding Your Role: Defense Attorney

This training is designed for defense attorneys engaged in treatment courts, providing essential tools for effective client representation. Participants will explore best practices in communication, ethical considerations, and collaborative strategies to support clients through treatment court programs. Emphasis will be placed on proactive advocacy, understanding client needs, and navigating the complexities of treatment court processes.

Learning Objectives:

1. Enhance Client Communication: Develop skills to effectively explain treatment court processes to clients, ensuring informed participation and understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
2. Navigate Ethical and Legal Challenges: Identify and address ethical dilemmas and legal issues specific to treatment courts, ensuring adherence to professional standards and client advocacy.
3. Foster Collaborative Team Dynamics: Learn strategies for effective communication and collaboration with treatment court teams, balancing client confidentiality with team objectives to promote client success.

Alysa Hackenmueller

Alysa is a tenured social worker currently working as the Borderland Treatment Court Coordinator. Her social work experience spans over fifteen years and includes workforce development, child protection, mental health case management, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and domestic violence/sexual assault advocacy.

Integrating Workforce Development into Treatment Courts

Reducing recidivism and improving recovery capital are directly connected to employment success, but does your treatment court have a workforce professional on your staffing team? This workshop will provide the foundation for utilizing federal and state employment and training programs as evidenced based practice while working with participants in treatment court.

Garry Metcalf

Garry Metcalfe, B.S., has worked in the field of toxicology since 2001. He began his career working postmortem toxicology cases with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the state of Oklahoma. He spent his time at the medical examiner's office testing a variety of specimens like blood, liver, urine, gastric contents, bile and vitreous humor. After 12 years there, he transitioned to working for the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigations (OSBI), where his focus switched from postmortem toxicology to antemortem toxicology. At OSBI, he tests mostly blood and urine for the presence of drugs in suspected DUI cases. His role requires him to perform tests for the presence of various drugs such as THC, synthetic cannabinoids and other designer drugs, prepares a report and testifies on the results in court. He has been deemed an expert witness in the state of Oklahoma. He has assisted in the validation of newer synthetic cannabinoids to existing procedures at the OSBI. As a part of his role, he has audited the Drug Recognition Expert

program. While at the OSBI, he took over the administration of the Forensic Science Academy, which is a program designed by the OSBI to provide a better understanding of the test performed at the OSBI to judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys in the state of Oklahoma. Garry was recently promoted to Supervisor of the Toxicology Unit at OSBI. Garry has completed the course for ANAB (ANSI National Accreditation Board). This course makes him eligible to access other laboratories for accreditation by ANAB. He also is a former assistant teacher for the University of Central Oklahoma. In this role he assisted in a senior level Forensic Toxicology Laboratory class. Garry has volunteered for numerous community outreach programs to educate the community on the field of toxicology. Garry is a former board member and past President of the Southwestern Association of Forensic Toxicology (SAT). He has also attended the Borkenstein Drug Course, DEA Forensic Chemist Seminar and the Midwest Forensic Resource Training Program.

Drug Testing Best Practices

The “Peeling Back the Curtain on Drug Testing” presentation will be given by Garry Metcalfe. Garry has worked as a toxicologist for the state of Oklahoma since 2001. This presentation was designed for people that are not familiar with how drug testing performed in the lab. The three major learning objectives of the presentation are as follows:

1. Give a behind the scenes look at how a toxicology lab performs a drug test.
2. Understanding some of the strategies for differentiating between CBD and THC.
3. Understanding new drug trends
4. Determining fact versus fiction of common drug myths.

After the presentation, attendees will better understand the instruments used in the lab, how drug confirmation is determined and how specimen tampering can affect drug tests. This presentation will also introduce some sources of information available on the web to drug abusers. These sources provide guidance on beating drug tests. After the presentation, time will be given to answer any questions that may arise during the presentation.

Ericka Jeffords

Ericka Jeffords serves as a Program Director for the Tulsa County Alternative Court Programs, responsible for the day-to-day management of Tulsa’s specialty court programs for more than 15 years. As the Director she provides facilitation of program goals and objectives through empowering and motivating team members, community partners, and volunteers, provides strategic direction, assists with establishing and monitoring budgets, ensures accurate data compilation and analysis, reviews and updates program policies and procedures, participates in community-wide justice reform initiatives, seeks new avenues of funding, and provides general administrative decision making.

Throughout her tenure, she has aided with the development and expansion of need-driven services within Tulsa County to include gender specific drug and DUI courts, co-occurring drug court, mental health court, the nation’s 3rd Veteran’s Treatment Court, and medication assisted treatment protocol. Ericka has been working in the mental health and substance abuse therapeutic court field since graduating from Wayne State College with her Bachelor of Science in Human Service Counseling and Sociology with a Minor in Criminal Justice. Throughout her career, she has attended an expansive amount of advanced training to ensure current and effective practices are utilized at the local level. Prior to her time with treatment courts, Ms. Jeffords worked as a substance abuse counselor and case manager with criminally justice involved clientele. She has recently begun serving as a mentor for the alternative courts across the state of Oklahoma through the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

Recovery Capital

While utilizing substance use disorder treatment is critical in the treatment court model, what other elements are important to bring about long-term recovery for clients? Research over the past two decades has found that individuals with strong concentrations of personal, social, and community capital are more likely to sustain long-term recovery. But what exactly does this

mean, and how do we operationalize this in the treatment court model? Recovery is more than abstinence. Recovery is more than remission. Recovery is a process of change through which individuals achieve remission from substance use disorder (SUD), improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Research demonstrates that recovery is not only possible, it’s probable. Most people living with SUD will eventually achieve stable, long-term recovery. Unfortunately, not everyone has the same likelihood of moving from addiction to

recovery. This session will explore the critical steps in achieving stable recovery, the factors that differentiate those who recover from those who do not, and how treatment courts can help and will introduce participants to the concept and definition of Recovery Capital.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain the research finding on the importance of assessing and building personal, social, and community capital to strengthen long-term recovery beyond the treatment court program.
2. Learn how to move these concepts into practice throughout their program, with a specific focus on applying the recovery capital framework in staffing and case management.
3. Teams will learn how to move these concepts into practice throughout their program, with a specific focus on applying the recovery capital framework in staffing and case management.

Understanding Your Role: Coordinator

Coordinator 101

Coordinators are critical to the planning, maintenance, and evaluation of the treatment court. This means wearing many hats and fulfilling duties based on need, but what is the standard for being effective? This session will provide coordinators with an overview of key areas of focus, provide new ideas, and a road map to improve your skills. Specifically, it will explore the core competencies of a treatment court coordinator, including case flow management, resource allocation, acquisition, budget and finance, visioning and strategic planning, building relationships, and program documentation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Acknowledge the key roles the coordinator has within the treatment court team.
2. Explore different approaches to managing your program.
3. Take away ideas to implement into your program.

Dr. Shola Olaoshebikan

Dr. Shola Olaoshebikan is current the executive vice president overseeing clinical operations at Mental Health Systems, Inc. Shola has worked in the San Diego County Behavioral Health System of Care for the last decade and her work is grounded in the belief that a diagnosis does not define a person, rather it is part of the richness of the human experience. She has experience providing social service support for those experiencing homelessness, co-occurring disorders, and those transitioning from the justice system. She received her doctorate in Education with an emphasis in counseling psychology and social services in 2018.

Engaging Families and Other Primary Participants Support Networks in Your VTC

Although there is a dearth of research evidence on incorporating family and friends in the recovery process of veterans and treatment court participants, the research from related areas establishes the wisdom of making this a part of the treatment court practice. We can see that intentional family engagement leads to better outcomes for participants and the family unit. In addition, related systems such as schools, drug treatment programs, and mental health treatment programs have a significant evidence base indicating that integrating family and friends into the recovery model has positive benefits.

Learning Objectives:

1. Summarize the evidence base for family/personal support participation in treatment courts based on evidence from related fields.
2. Use the VTC Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) to assess the appropriateness of potential family/personal support participation.
3. Identify ways to incorporate family and emotional support into VTC models.

Identifying, Preventing, and Managing Professional Burnout in Working with Justice-Involved Veterans

Self-care has perhaps never been so clearly necessary as it is within our current societal circumstances. Serving justice-involved veterans brings its unique risks of developing compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, vicarious traumatization, and professional burnout, which can negatively affect personal and professional well-being. This session

will help the audience better identify these conditions, including their related signs and symptoms, and will provide practical steps to prevent and mitigate their impact.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe signs and symptoms of compassion fatigue, vicarious traumatization, secondary traumatic stress, and professional burnout.
2. Examine contributing factors of compassion fatigue when working with justice-involved veterans with trauma.
3. Identify effective coping strategies to foster resiliency and prevent burnout.

Carla Baldwin

Carla J. Baldwin has served as Administrative and Presiding Judge of Youngstown Municipal Court since the fall of 2018. She presides over misdemeanor criminal cases; traffic cases and presides over Drug Court. The Judge received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Capital University (Columbus, OH). She obtained her Juris Doctorate degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School (Lansing, MI) with a concentration in Litigation. She most recently worked as a full-time Magistrate in Mahoning County Juvenile Court where she presided over Mental Health Court. Prior to this appointment she worked for the Mahoning County Prosecutor's Office as an Assistant County Prosecutor in both the Criminal and Juvenile Divisions, serving on the Mental Health Court Treatment Team. She presently serves as a faculty member for All Rise, the national leader in helping jurisdictions across the country ensure substance use and mental health disorders are addressed in treatment courts that promote treatment and recovery for the most vulnerable. She is also a member of the Pretrial Practitioner Network with the Center for Effective Public Policy which provides training and technical assistance to communities who seek to achieve fair, just, and equitable pretrial practices. Judge Baldwin is also faculty for the Ohio Judicial College. Judge Baldwin is an Officer of the Ohio Judicial Conference, Ohio State Bar Foundation Trustee, Association of Municipal and County Court Judges Trustee and the Immediate Past President of the Mahoning County Bar Association. Judge Carla J. Baldwin made history on November 7, 2017, when she became the first African American female elected as judge in Mahoning County.

How Do We Get Prosecutor Buy-In?

The session will focus on the essential role of the prosecutors in the success of treatment courts and offers strategies to foster their active engagement. Attendees will examine how treatment courts align with prosecutorial goals such as public safety, accountability, and recidivism reduction. This session will highlight how these key stakeholders can be influential advocates for evidence-based alternatives to incarceration.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Understand Prosecutor Perspectives: Articulate the ethical, professional, and practical considerations that influence prosecutorial decision-making.
2. Identify Barriers to Buy-In: Recognize common challenges and misconceptions that may hinder prosecutor support for collaborative initiatives.
3. Develop Tailored Messaging: Craft compelling narratives that align reform objectives with prosecutorial priorities, emphasizing public safety, fairness, and resource optimization.
4. Engage in Collaborative Planning: Facilitate discussions that involve prosecutors in the co-design of programs, ensuring their concerns and insights are integrated into the planning process.

Ethical Obligations for Justice-Involved Individuals

This session identifies the ethical challenges faced by professionals working in treatment courts, emphasizing the importance of maintaining ethical standards while supporting justice-involved individuals. We will cover the importance of understanding ethical roles and clarifying the distinct ethical responsibilities of judges, attorneys, counselors, and probation officers within the treatment court framework. The session will reinforce the importance of confidentiality and informed consent by navigating the complexities of confidentiality laws, including 42 CFR Part 2, and ensuring informed consent is obtained from participants. We will also discuss dual relationships and boundaries and recognizing signs of professional impairment and how to implement self-care.

Learning objectives:

1. Define the ethical responsibilities of each treatment court team member.

2. Apply confidentiality laws and informed consent principles in treatment court settings.
3. Recognize and manage dual relationships and professional boundaries.
4. Recognize impairment of team members and establish self-care plans.

Ashley Pruen

Ashley Pruen is a dedicated advocate for criminal justice reform, specializing in evidence-based implementation of community supervision and treatment court initiatives nationwide. With over a decade of experience in leadership roles as a Parole/Probation Officer in both rural and urban counties, Ashley started her career by dedicating herself to understanding and training others on what works. In 2013, as the Lead PO in Multnomah County's treatment court, she played a key role in the implementation of new initiatives, including the measurement of key performance indicators (KPIs). After her success in treatment court, Ashley expanded her leadership skills in broader community supervision initiatives. In 2016, Ashley led operations of Multnomah County's training & coaching unit for Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS), increasing staff competency and enhancing program outcomes through evidence-based interventions. There, she became a recognized expert in the application of cognitive behavioral interventions, case planning, and motivational interviewing in corrections. She also led an initiative to improve sanction and incentive practices using concepts of proximal, distal and managed goals. In 2019, Ashley joined NADCP's former CEO, West Huddleston, at SCRAM Systems to support the development and customer implementation of a new evidence-based decision support software. As a Senior Engagement Manager and subject matter expert, she worked closely with corrections agencies to evaluate workflows, integration requirements, and training needs. Ashley also spearheaded several change initiatives, including redesigning an agency's supervision practices to focus strategies in a sequential order that supported client's individualized risk and needs and to move away from a one-size fits all approach. Currently, Ashley is the Quality Improvement Director at CODA Inc., one of Oregon's largest not-for-profit substance use treatment programs. CODA operates 14 programs including residential, outpatient, and opioid treatment programs. She has continued her work in KPI development, change initiative implementation, and staff training in this role. Ashley remains committed to advancing evidence-based practices in community supervision and treatment courts and joined the All Rise (formerly NADCP) team as a Faculty Consultant in 2023 to further that work. She is always seeking opportunities to collaborate with like-minded professionals dedicated to criminal justice reform.

Core Correctional Practices (CCP) in Treatment Court Settings

This training introduces treatment court professionals to Core Correctional Practices (CCP)—a set of evidence-based strategies shown to reduce recidivism and support positive behavior change. Grounded in the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) framework, CCP emphasizes effective communication, targeted interventions, and practical tools to address criminogenic needs. Participants will explore plug-and-play cognitive restructuring techniques, skill-building models, and the strategic use of role clarification, reinforcement, and disapproval.

By the end of the session, attendees will have a shared framework for implementing CCP within the treatment court setting—whether delivering direct interventions to participants or supporting their progress toward successful program completion.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the foundational principles behind Core Correctional Practices.
2. Create collaborative case plans based on criminogenic needs.
3. Learn structured techniques to build rapport and motivate behavior change.
4. Explore how CCP can be adapted and applied across roles within the treatment court team.

Lasheika Kassa

Lasheika Kassa has served in various roles within accountability courts including director, program manager, and treatment provider. Ms. Kassa has worked alongside state and national agencies for the past twenty years to assist with adherence to fidelity, policy implementation, evidence-based curricula, grant writing and programmatic support. She is a graduate of Clark Atlanta University, a certified alcohol and drug counselor (CADC-II), medication assisted treatment specialist (MATS) and has spoken and presented at several trainings and conferences. Ms. Kassa is the Chief Executive

Officer of Fanik Consulting Company, LLC and serves as a consultant with AllRise. She is the Vice-President of the Georgia School of Addiction Studies (GSAS) and works throughout the United States assisting problem-solving courts with any area that requires her expertise. She is a huge advocate for mental health initiatives in the workplace and uses her personal experience to help companies implement more mindful policies and practices to prevent employee turnover and burnout.

Empowering Treatment Providers During Staffing

This session will help treatment professionals unlock their full potential as they collaborate with varying positions during court staffing. Attendees will dive into a dynamic and interactive presentation that will transform the way they understand the master minds of the treatment team using real-life scenarios. This session will discover how treatment utilize their expertise to guide critical decisions based on evidence-based practices, clinical stability, and treatment modalities. The presenter will utilize different modalities to assist the treatment team with empowerment. This session will not only empower treatment providers, but it will also highlight the benefits of self-care and ways to prevent burnout. The work of the treatment court professional is essential to those in need, as such, it is necessary to assist them with a healthy work-life balance.

Tara Kunkel

Tara Kunkel has served as the Executive Director of Rulo Strategies since 2020. Before founding Rulo Strategies, Tara served as a Senior Drug Policy Advisor at the U.S. Department of Justice, where she led the implementation of the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP). Under Tara's leadership, the COSSUP program grew from a \$27 million grant program in 2017 to \$187 million in 2019. Tara also served as a consultant for the National Center for State Courts for more than nine years, leading, managing, and evaluating projects at all points in the justice system, from diversion programs, pretrial supervision, courts, probation, and corrections. Tara has developed and overseen cooperative agreements and grants with various government agencies, including planning, designing, and implementing multiyear grant proposals. Tara received a Master's in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the University of Virginia.

Incorporating Peer Recovery into Treatment Courts

This presentation will explore the transformative power of peer support and its integration into treatment courts. The session will cover the fundamental principles of peer support, its implementation, and observed outcomes within the treatment court setting. By highlighting the All Rise Peer Support Practice Guidelines, we will examine effective strategies for embedding peer support into treatment court programs.

Additionally, the presentation will outline the roles and benefits of peer recovery specialists, emphasizing the positive impact of peer support on participant engagement and recovery outcomes. Attendees will leave with valuable insights and practical strategies for incorporating peer support into their own treatment court programs.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the fundamental principles of peer support in therapeutic courts.
- Identify practical strategies and best practices for integrating peer support into existing therapeutic court programs.
- Gain the knowledge and tools needed to advocate for and implement peer support initiatives within their own therapeutic courts.

Rural Treatment Court Initiatives

This session will delve into the unique challenges and innovative solutions associated with implementing treatment courts in rural communities. Participants will explore the distinct barriers faced by rural jurisdictions, such as limited resources, geographic isolation, and access to behavioral health services. The presentation will highlight successful models and creative adaptations that rural treatment courts have employed to overcome these obstacles and deliver effective justice and recovery support.

Through case studies and discussion, the session will examine strategies for building strong community partnerships, leveraging technology, and tailoring court practices to meet the specific needs of rural populations. Attendees will gain practical insights into fostering collaboration among stakeholders, maximizing available resources, and sustaining rural treatment court programs.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the unique challenges and opportunities facing rural treatment courts.
- Describe effective strategies for adapting treatment court models to rural settings.
- Apply practical solutions to enhance collaboration, resource sharing, and participant outcomes in rural treatment courts.

Cecilia Bliss

Cecilia Bliss has served as the State Treatment Court Coordinator at the State Court Administrator's Office since 2021. Prior to her role at SCAO, she worked in statewide criminal justice and crime victim services programs in Texas. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and Master of Social Work from Boston University.

Liz Willey

Liz is the Treatment Court Research & Evaluation Specialist at the Minnesota Judicial Branch. She has worked in various analytical capacities in nonprofit and government organizations. She gained a Master of Public Administration from the University of Washington – Seattle in 2020.

Karon White

Karon White currently serves as the MN Statewide Treatment Court Grant Lead. In this role, she is responsible for managing the MN Statewide BJA grant. This includes assisting the Strategic Planning Committee and coordinating the work that comes out of the MN Treatment Court Strategic Plan. She is also responsible for monitoring and executing all contracts within the BJA grant. This includes the Statewide Needs Assessment, Statewide Funding Formula review, and the development of 6 on-demand training videos. Previously, she was the Treatment Court Coordinator for Minnesota's Eighth Judicial District. She served in this capacity for 10 years. Karon was the initial coordinator and was responsible for developing and implementing the program. Prior to this position, Karon served with the Minnesota Department of Corrections for eighteen years as a felony probation and parole agent.

Shayla Russell

Shayla Russell received her MS in Mental Health Counseling from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and began her career as a Wraparound Care Coordinator for Milwaukee County, Wisconsin serving children with severe and persistent mental illness involved in the juvenile justice system. She discovered her passion for treatment courts as the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court Coordinator and Mental Health Court Coordinator for Outagamie County, Wisconsin, and was fortunate to continue her work as a Treatment Court Coordinator for the Minnesota Judicial Branch, first with the Fourth District and then the Second District. She is currently the Treatment Courts Program Specialist within the Minnesota Judicial Branch focusing on implementing and expanding treatment courts throughout the state of Minnesota.

Aleesha Ward

Aleesha Ward is the Training & Development Specialist for Minnesota Treatment Courts. As part of the Judicial Branch state office and Treatment Court Program, she focuses on creating, coordinating, and delivering training and education opportunities for teams and programs. Prior to this role, she spent 10 years as a coordinator for the Sixth District Hybrid

& MHC, working with community partners to implement the Range Mental Health Court, Cook and Lake County treatment court programs.