



## **Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County**

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## **Drug Court Programs Receive National Acclaim**

### *Adult Probation Department programs designed to support sobriety*

PHOENIX (July 21, 2021) – Two Drug Court programs offered through the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department, part of the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County, have received national honors for supporting members of the community seeking ongoing resources to make positive life changes.

Project HOPE (Housing Outreach and Peer Engagement) and the Drug Court Alumni Association were recognized by the National Association of Counties with 2021 Achievement Awards. Both programs are designed to provide ongoing resources to Adult Probation Department clients who seek additional assistance through peer-support networks.

“Recovering from addiction is a challenging process, especially if people don’t have the resources and supports they need. Both the HOPE program and the alumni association offer on-going support and assistance for individuals participating in Drug Court and help individuals to maintain their recovery during and after their time in the program,” said Melissa Monahan, clinical supervisor for Drug Court. “The counselors, peer navigators and probation officers involved in these programs work tirelessly to help support the participants through the process while celebrating successes along the way.”

Project HOPE is a collaboration among Adult Probation, Community Bridges and Axiom Care. The program provides peer navigation and sober living for individuals sentenced to probation and participating in the Drug Court program. The peer navigators meet the participants and assist with a variety of things including benefit acquisition, enrolling participants in treatment or housing, and providing support and reminders for court and probation appointments. Up to 90 days of sober living at Axiom Care or another approved sober-living facility is provided through the program to assist participants with gaining the stability needed to resist using substances.

The objective of the Drug Court Alumni Association is to bridge the gap for those who have exited the Drug Court Program with continued mentorship and peer support. It also provides current participants in the program a way to connect with those who have completed the Drug Court Program to provide support and encouragement in their recovery journeys. Not only does the alumni association target Drug Court alumni and current participants, but also their families as well. The alumni association creates a supportive network by hosting voluntary events that help foster rebuilding of family relationships, which are often impacted by substance abuse.

“Project HOPE and the alumni events have helped me tremendously in my recovery from my drug addiction! I am so thankful to have been a part of such a great program. I am now 339 days sober because of Project HOPE. My probation officer, group counselor and alumni never gave up on me,” said Leslie E., a Drug Court participant who is set to graduate from the program in late July. “They helped me get my life back! From the start with a halfway house that they paid for, I wasn’t homeless anymore. That was a great feeling!! I attended group, which is a way for all of us to help and support each other. The program helped me gain the trust back from my family. The program is here to help us get our lives back and be HAPPY again. Project HOPE and the alumni are great stepping stones in our lives.”

In operation since 1992 and considered a national model, Drug Court is a specialized program providing counseling and close substance-abuse monitoring for clients assigned to probation for certain drug-related offenses. Drug Court teams include a Superior Court judge, probation officer, public defender, county attorney and counselor. The program is designed to support lasting behavioral changes using an incentives/sanctions model combined with close supervision and monitoring.

“Having an alumni group is important. When I was in jail, all I heard were negative things, like Drug Court was set up for failure. I learned through experience that it wasn’t,” said Shayna M., a 2019 Drug Court graduate. “At the events, I get to see how people are doing that I went through this with, but there’s also a lot of new people who I don’t know and can offer my support to. It’s a great way to keep in contact with everyone.”

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