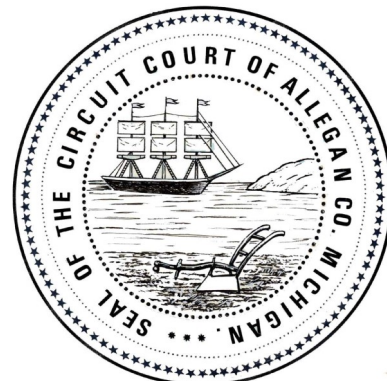


48TH CIRCUIT COURT

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

CRIMINAL AND CIVIL,
FRIEND OF THE COURT,
FAMILY DIVISION



THE JUDICIARY

**HON. MARGARET ZUZICH BAKKER,
CHIEF CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE**



**HON. ROBERTS KENGIS,
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE**



**HON. MICHAEL BUCK,
PRESIDING FAMILY COURT JUDGE**



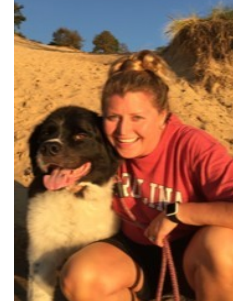
CIRCUIT COURT STAFF



Hon. Margaret Zuzich Bakker
Chief Circuit Court Judge



Hon. Roberts Kengis
Circuit Court Judge



Erin Stender
Circuit Court Administrator



Chris Dulac
Court Financial Officer



Preston Pietszak
Law Clerk



Bart Buxton
Staff Attorney



Anne Lange
Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary



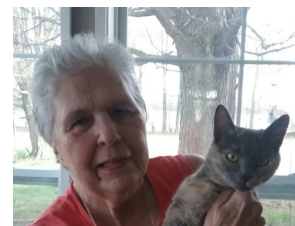
Carley Dalke
Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary



Chris White
Assignment and Scheduling Clerk



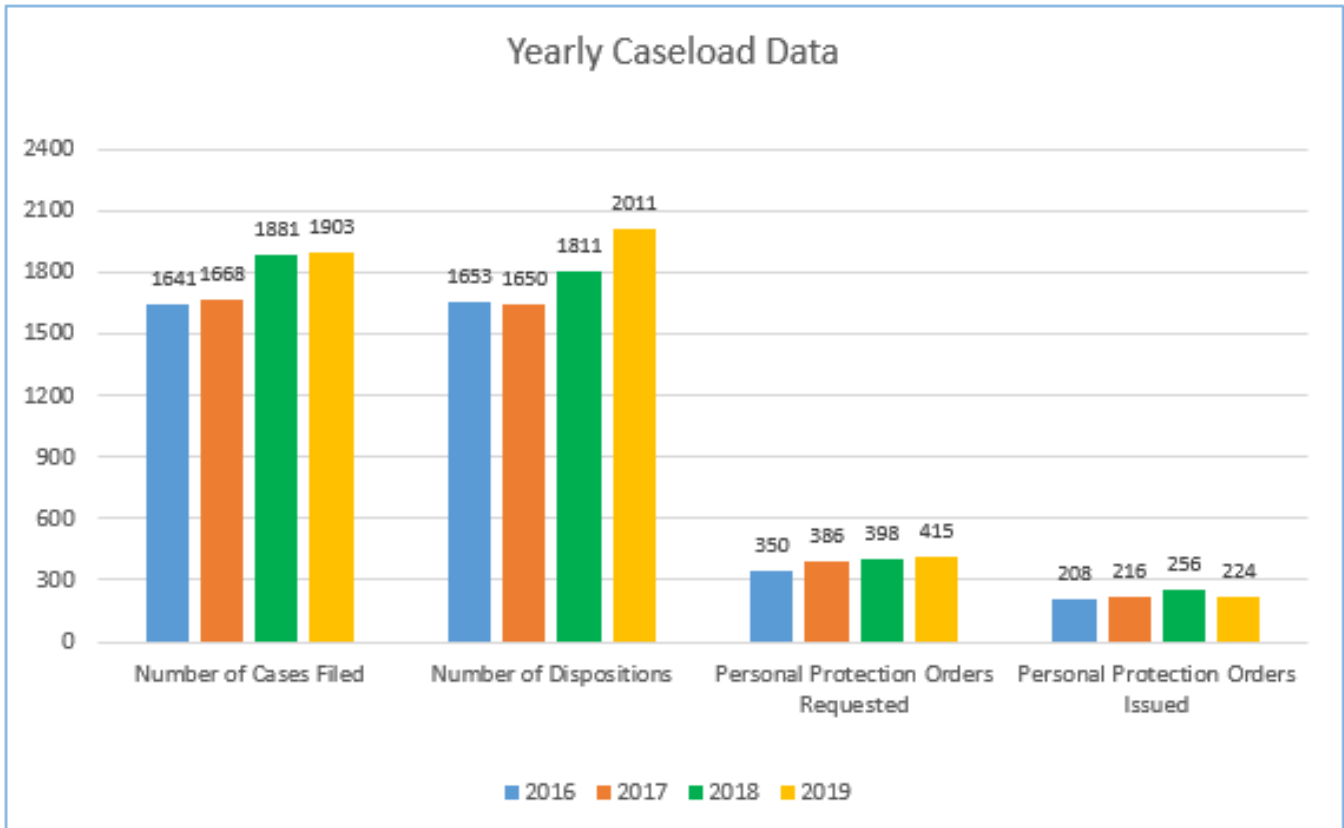
Aaron Arredondo
Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program Coordinator



Carol Visser
Secretary/Receptionist

CIRCUIT COURT

STATISTICS



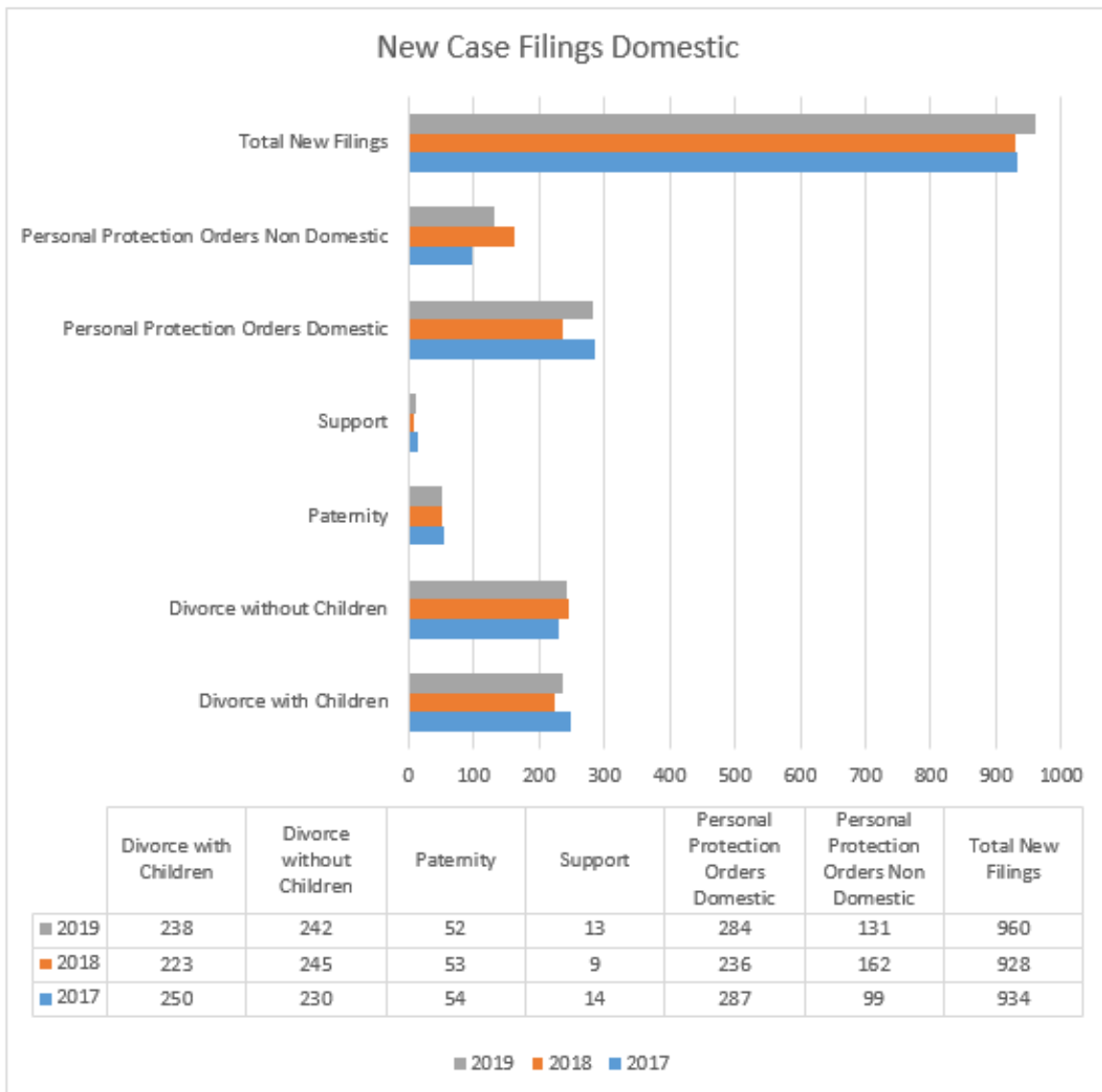
The Circuit Court continues to see an increase in case filings and case dispositions. The court is currently analyzing all of its processes from scheduling dockets to jury summons in an effort to maintain our high standards for service levels and accommodate the increased caseload.

In addition to 2019, being the busiest year on record for Circuit Court, the pandemic has added an increased delay and backup in jury trials. As of mid-May 2020, Judge Bakker had 48 jury trials to schedule and Judge Kengis had 40 jury trials to schedule. A large challenge for 2020, and beyond, will not only be trying to schedule these among an already full court docket, but providing a safe and efficient way to gather jurors, interview jurors, and select a jury for each trial.

The Supreme Court Administrator's Office (SCAO) has also mandated courts have a 4 phase reopening plan. Each phase has a very specific documented plan that must be approved by SCAO before the local court proceeds in very gradual steps to returning to full capacity. The Circuit Court has put together a strategic planning team to work on this detailed task which is all dependent on segmented 14 day gates from the Allegan County Health Department's local pandemic numbers.

CIRCUIT COURT

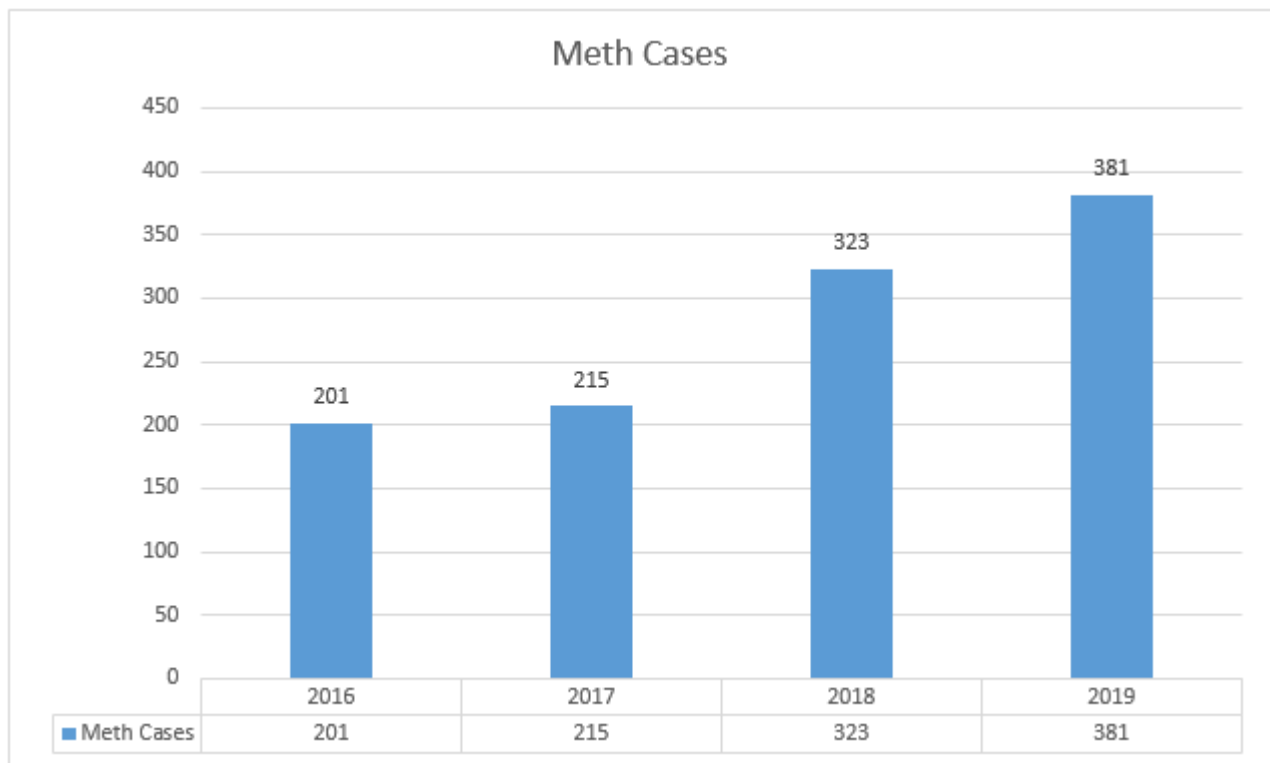
STATISTICS



CIRCUIT COURT

STATISTICS

In 2019, there were 1,420 Felony Cases charged overall. Of the 1,420 total cases, 970 cases were bound over from the 57th District Court. 505 of the 1,420 were drug cases, of which 381 were methamphetamine specific cases. The following graph demonstrates the increase in methamphetamine cases. This only reflects situations where a defendant is charged with a crime involving methamphetamine, but there are many situation where the underlying cause of a crime is related to the use of methamphetamine. Methamphetamine use destroys families and communities, and it is the most destructive drug this Court has seen.



SWIFT AND SURE SANCTIONS PROBATION PROGRAM (SSSPP)

- SSSPP slows the prison pipeline.
- SSSPP is completely grant funded.
- SSSPP is a joint effort between the Allegan County Sheriff, Prosecuting Attorney, Circuit Court Judges, and Michigan Department of Corrections.
- In 2019, the SSSPP Coordinator presented to the office of the Public Defender and other defense attorneys. This presentation increased program awareness and function.
- In 2019, there were multiple graduations and personal victories for the probationers including treatment breakthroughs and maintaining and/or securing employment.
- A future goal for the Swift and Sure Program is to set up a day treatment program for the participants. The SSSPP Coordinator and circuit court judges met with the Northwest Initiative in Ingham County to learn from them and discuss how the success of their "Day Treatment Program" can have a positive impact on Allegan County.

ALLEGAN COUNTY LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (ACLAC)



The Legal Assistance Center helps self represented litigants with a variety of types of civil cases including divorce, child support, parenting time, custody, paternity, personal protection orders, guardianships, landlord-tenant, small claims, court-fee waivers, and judgment collection. Assistance includes providing tools, information, and forms to assist an individual in the advancement of their civil case. If you have an attorney, you do not qualify for assistance from ACLAC.



ACLAC

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

In 2019, **2,996 residents** of Allegan County received zero out of pocket cost legal assistance. 1,611 were repeat customers and 1,385 were first time visitors. On January 2, 2020, ACLAC changed their patron sign in process to Google Sheets. This new process allows them to gather more information, specifically where the patron lives and which municipality is served, specific reason for their visit (this helps staff and volunteers know the patron's needs before meeting with the patron). This improved process allows for more detailed reporting that can include: age, income, race, and municipality. These reports can be generated in total or specific to each municipality.

Testimonials

A man came into the Allegan County Legal Assistance Center, on January 6, 2020. At the time, he was residing in Charleston, West Virginia; however, had previously resided, in Allegan County, where his divorce was granted. The patron explained that he had been directed to the ACLAC offices by Friend of the Court staff to ask for assistance. His daughter was 15 years old and had been involved in a domestic situation with her mother. The girl was placed in a safe placement until the father could obtain permission to take his daughter to West Virginia to live with him. That patron came into our office three days in a row for assistance with filing an ex-parte motion to change custody and a motion to request change of domicile for his daughter. He was very appreciative of the assistance we provided and said "I could not have gotten through this without the assistance of ACLAC staff." The father was able to take his daughter with him when he returned to West Virginia and at a later hearing the motion to change her domicile was approved, at a Circuit Court hearing.

A couple came in to the Allegan County Legal Assistance Center requesting assistance filing for divorce. They had determined they would do it together. A divorce packet for a divorce with minor children was purchased. Through the entire six months, they came in together for each step of the process. Together they had determined to opt out of Friend of the Court services, which is another set of paper work and additional child support calculations. They spent time working on ACLAC's public computer to complete the Uniform Child Support Order and Uniform Child Support Deviation Addendum. After their divorce was final, they came to the ACLAC office to thank ACLAC staff and volunteers for their assistance during the six months that their divorce was pending. They said that they could not have gotten through all of the various steps and completed all of the paper work without the assistance of ACLAC staff and volunteers.

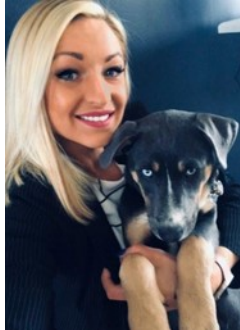
FRIEND OF THE COURT (FOC)

As you may recall, in 2018, the Friend of the Court (FOC) welcomed the Friend of the Court Bureau (FOCB) into the office to review all practices and procedures. This review was initiated by a request from the Honorable Margaret Zuzich Bakker, after learning about the option for assistance from the State Court Administrator's Office. Throughout 2018, analysts from FOCB met with all FOC staff members, interviewed local attorneys, and examined all office procedures. Following completion of this review, a detailed 140 page report was provided which outlined all recommendations.

Throughout 2019, the FOC spent much time dedicated to reviewing, prioritizing, and implementing these recommendations. One of the biggest accomplishments in 2019 was the completion of position modifications based on these recommendations. The FOC is very grateful for the cooperation from the Commissioners during this time, and is also very appreciative for all the help and guidance from the County Administrator, Rob Sarro. Due to this teamwork, the FOC is officially back to full staff for the first time in over two years. The restructuring has helped allocate more resources to some of the most pressing areas of need in the office.

The FOC was also able to survive the Circuit Court Administrator's maternity leave during the summer of 2019 and we are so happy to have Erin back in the office! She has played a vital role in the positive changes to the office culture of the FOC over the past year, along with the other key roles she fulfills.

FRIEND OF THE COURT STAFF



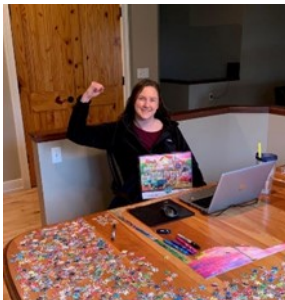
Jennifer Brink
Friend of the Court



Jaclyn Jelsema
Attorney/Referee



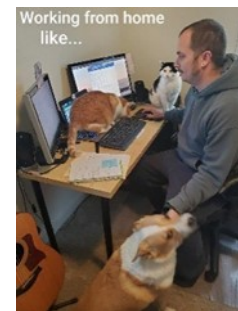
Jesse Bergwerff
Office Coordinator



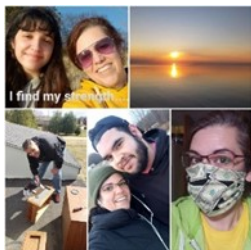
Aimee Kamphuis
Facilitator



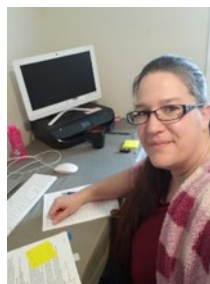
Kelsey Hooker
Facilitator



Brandon Bastien
Enforcement Officer



Jessica Guzman
Specialized Enforcement Officer



Shawn Shaw
Court Support Specialist

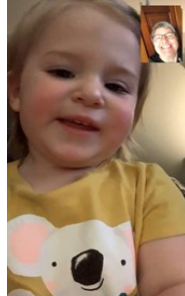


William Tange
Enforcement Officer

FRIEND OF THE COURT STAFF



Candy Adrianson
Enforcement Officer



Stacy Todd
Enforcement Officer



Jenny Curry
Support Investigator



Gina Cole
Support Investigator



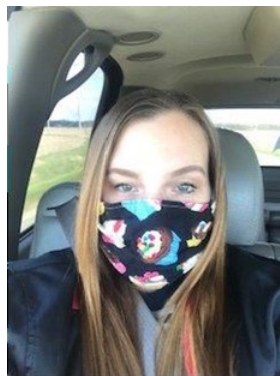
Jody Leonard
Support Investigator



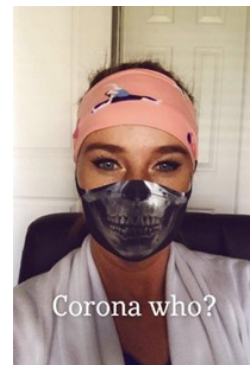
Brynne Ebels
Clerk II



Laura Calvillo
Client Financial Services Clerk



Nicole Bakri
Receptionist



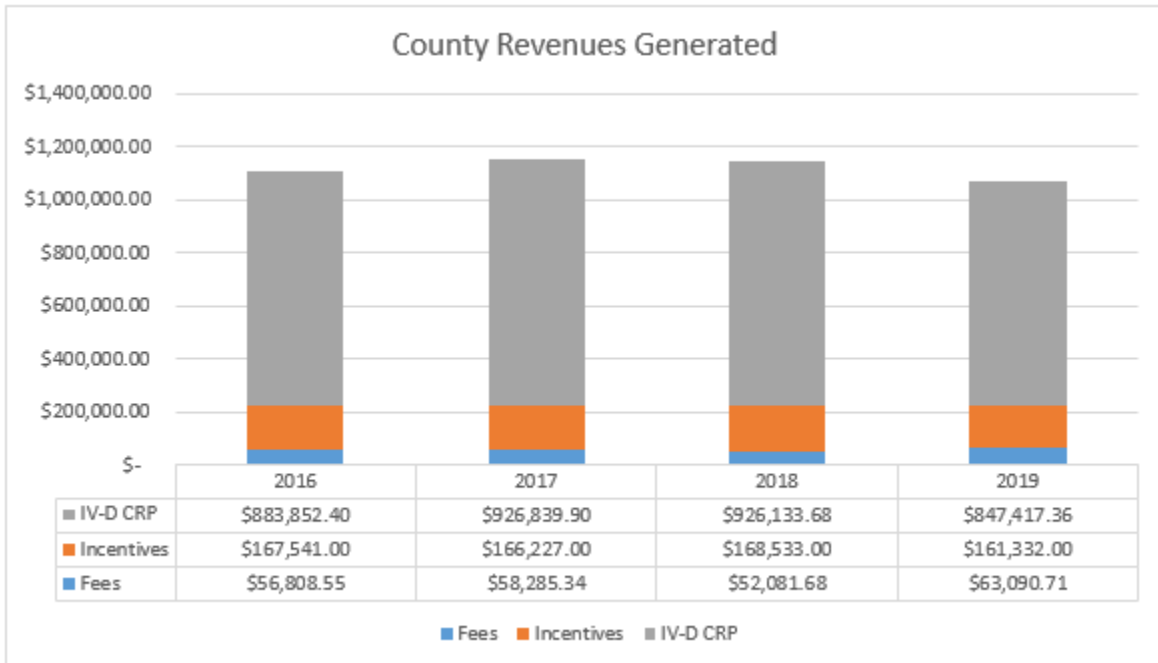
Missy Risner
Receptionist

FRIEND OF THE COURT ALTERNATIVE CONTEMPT TRACK (ACT) STATISTICS

- 43 referrals were made. 17 individuals were admitted into the program.
- 9 successful discharges. 18 unsuccessful discharges.
- Participant feedback:
 - “Best program ever.”
 - “I never thought the court would actually try to help me.”
 - “I’m excited to tell the Judge about my progress.”
 - “This is the first time the court system really helped me.”
 - “This is the first time I have a support system.”
- Services received based on qualifying factors
 - 7 participants received counseling
 - 4 participants received MI Works referrals
 - 2 participants received adult education services
 - 4 participants applied for and received Medicaid
 - 4 participants applied for and received food assistance
 - 1 participant received permanent housing after being in a domestic violence shelter
 - 4 participants received temporary emergency shelter at a homeless shelter
 - 2 participants received substance abuse counseling
 - 1 participant had their driver’s license reinstated
 - 2 participants were approved for services with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)
 - 2 participants applied for and were approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - 4 child support orders were modified
 - 4 participants were referred to the Allegan County Homeless Assistance Program (HAP)
- \$23,665.92 in support collected from ACT participants in 2019

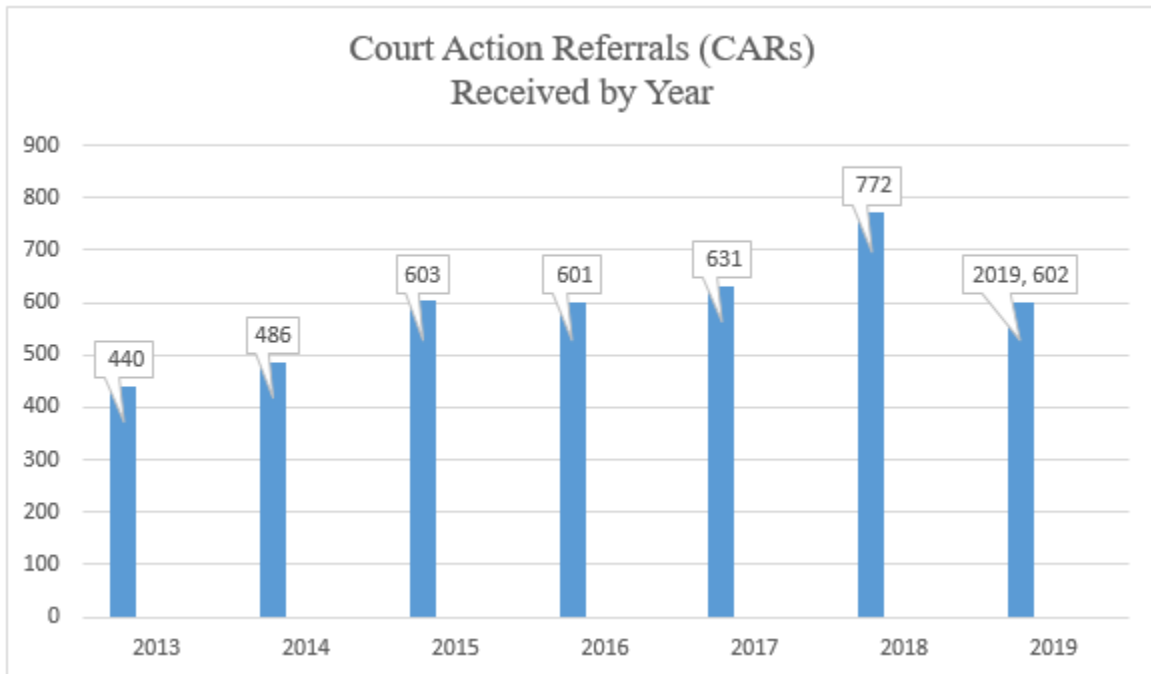
FRIEND OF THE COURT

REVENUES



1. **IV-D CRP** reflects the revenue for IV-D services. It is the total amount received under the Cooperative Reimbursement Program (CRP) contract. The CRP is a federal payment allocated to the county general fund. This amount is directly related to the amount of expenditures by the FOC office.
2. **Incentive** reflects the performance-based federal payment allocated to the county general fund. It is the total amount of incentives received pursuant to the federal IV-D program. 42 USC 658A, 45 CFR 305.35.
3. **Fees** reflects the statutory collections allocated to the county general fund. It is the total amount for semiannual service fees, which is \$2.25 received by the county treasurer and not the service fees collected and sent to the state treasurer. MCL 600.2538(1).

FRIEND OF THE COURT STATISTICS



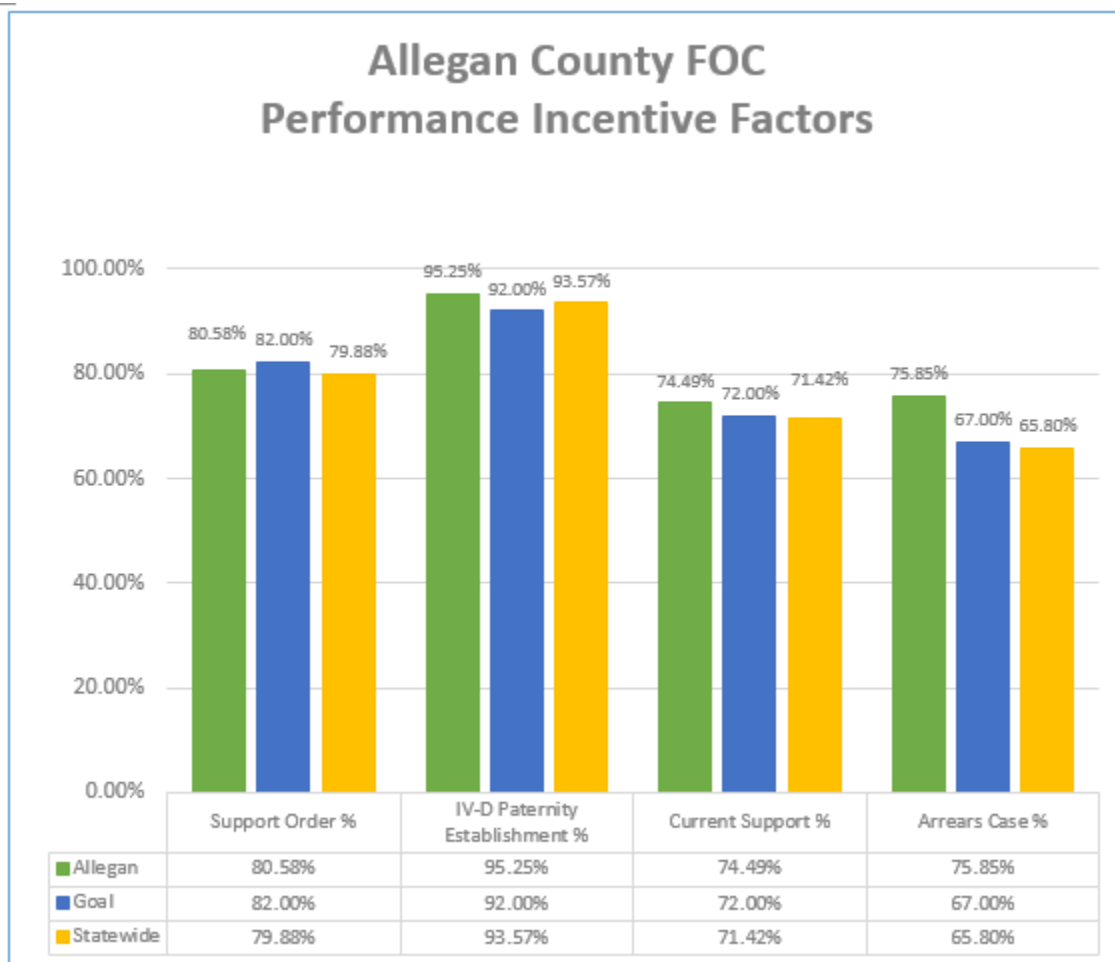
The Establishment unit of the FOC received 602 referrals to begin paternity and child support actions in 2019. Future incentive payments will be based upon meeting separate Contract Performance Standards:

- 1) 75% of the referrals must be worked within 14 days,
- 2) 75% of cases must meet the federal expiration date for service, and
- 3) 75% of the cases must have a final order within 6 months.

The Establishment unit consistently meets and exceeds standards #1 and #3, but needs assistance with standard #2, serving the complaints within the given timeframes.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

STATISTICS

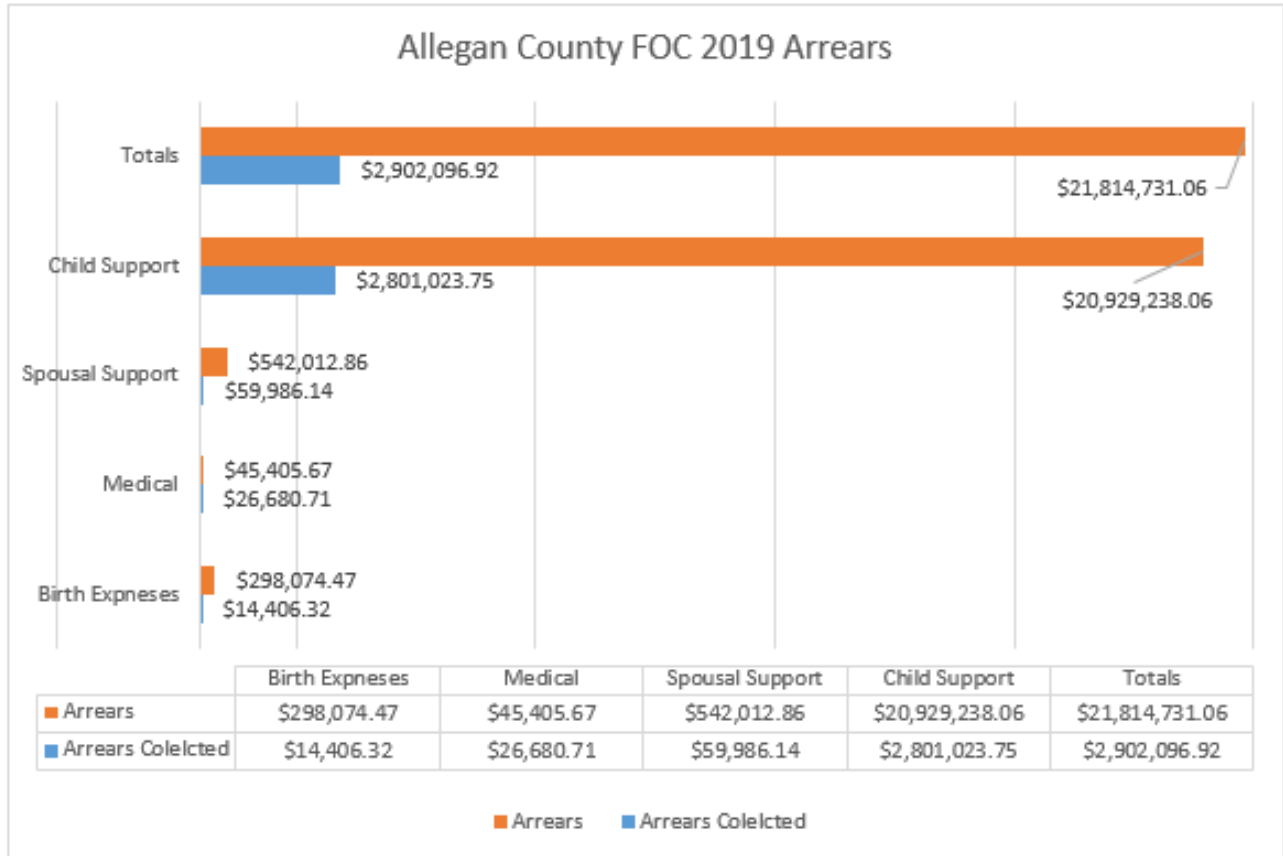


This year the FOC met 4 of 5 performance measures. Although the FOC has worked to reorganize positions to allocate resources to areas of need, the FOC is missing out on additional incentive payments which could be met with additional resources.

The above graph compares Allegan FOC to statewide performance and also the goals for performance set forth by the state. Ultimately, each individual county FOC office needs to meet the goals in order for the state to maximize its incentive dollars, which are distributed to the counties.

These numbers are provided through a tracking system implemented by the state called the Dashboard. These numbers can be accessed through Business Objects in the Michigan Child Support Enforcement System.

FRIEND OF THE COURT



In 2019, Allegan County FOC cases had a total of **\$21,814,731.06** in arrears, which is money that is past due.

464 bench warrants were issued in 2019.

701 support show cause hearings were conducted by the Circuit Court Judges.

As of January 24, 2020:

There were **256** active bench warrants for payors with an address in Michigan. The bond payments alone total **\$681,686.00**.

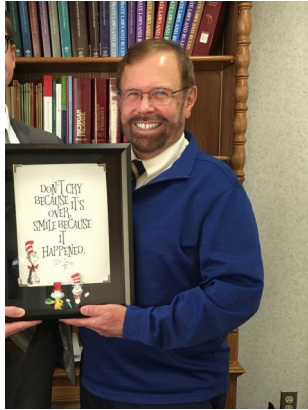
There are another **134** active bench warrants for payors with a bad address.

There are another **145** active bench warrants for payors residing outside of Michigan.

Total of **535** outstanding warrants.

Allegan FOC is not currently able to utilize other permitted enforcement remedies, such as booting vehicles or placing liens/seizing/selling property.

FAMILY COURT STAFF



Hon. Michael L Buck
Presiding Family Court Judge



Craig Sewell
Attorney Referee



Jolene Clearwater
Attorney Referee / Director of Juvenile Probation



Amy Cornell
Judicial Secretary



Meagan Scofield
Client Financial Services Clerk



Alicia Nevenzel
Client Financial Services Clerk



Cyndi Krug
Assignment Clerk / Court Recorder

FAMILY COURT PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE



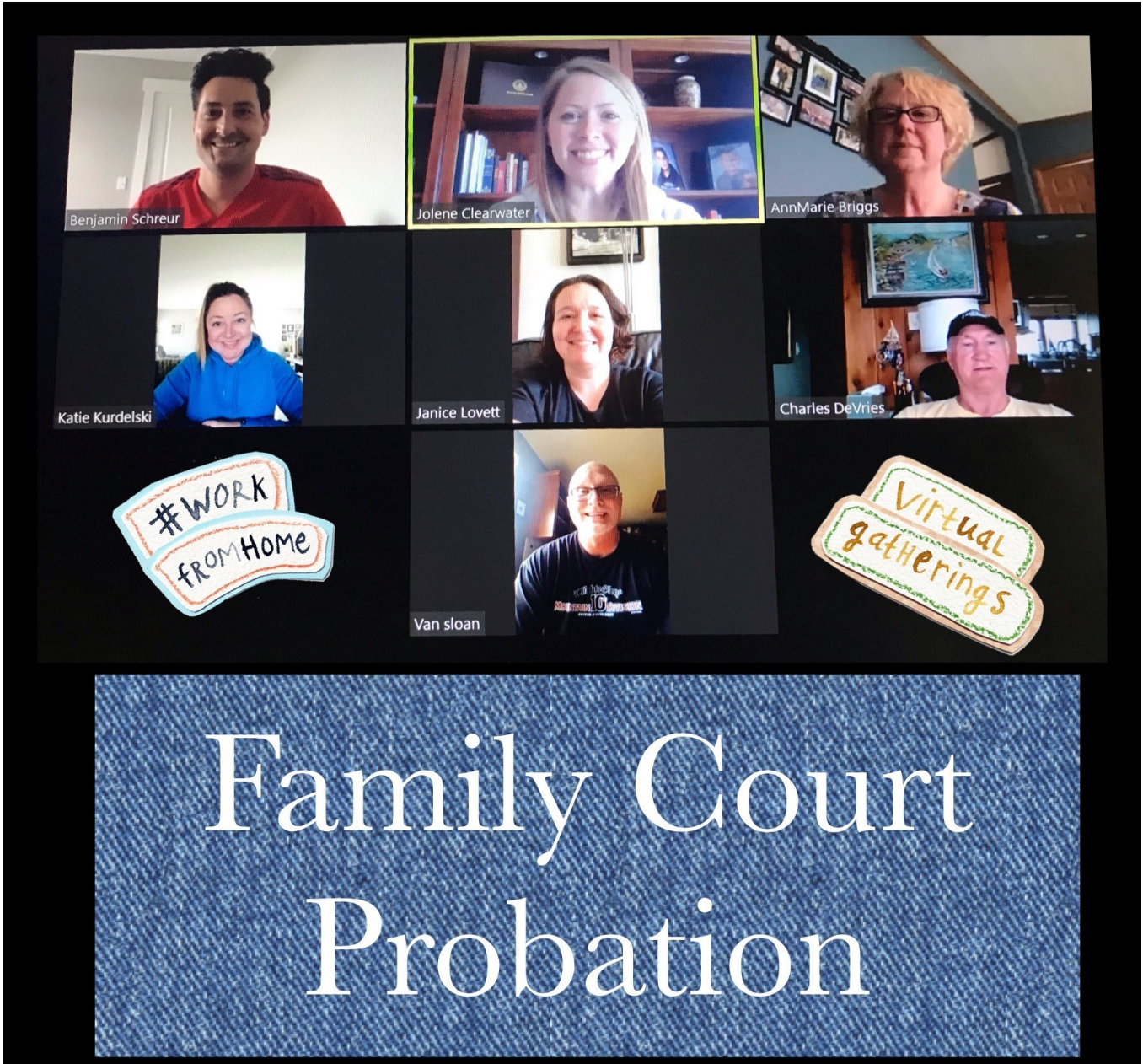
Safe Harbor
Children's Advocacy Center

"Providing a lifeline to victims of child abuse and neglect."

The 48th Circuit Court Family Division has had a long standing relationship with Safe Harbor Children's Advocacy Center for Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (CASA). The CASA program is a zero cost program for Allegan County. In 2019, 27 children and families were assisted by 14 CASA workers resulting in 3 reunifications with families and 6 adoptions. In addition to the CASA program, Safe Harbor provides counseling services and forensic interviews for neglect and abuse youth.

Safe harbor has currently outgrown it's downtown Allegan space and they plan to renovate a 14,000 square foot building donated by the Perrigo Company for the health of the children and families in our community. Changes to Safe Harbor's facility will allow multiple children to participate in essential services simultaneously. These renovations will enhance the services currently being provided by taking the agency from 2,400 square feet to 7,000 square feet. This transformation will create multiple traditional counseling rooms, art and play therapy spaces, age appropriate interview rooms for young children and teens, a CASA office with space to train 2-3 volunteers, a dedicated medical suite, team and community training rooms, a functioning conference room, and individual staff offices. These improvements will enable Safe Harbor and the team partners to better support children and families experiencing trauma.

COMMUNITY PROBATION AND JUVENILE DIVERSION



Ben Schreur, Probation Officer; Jolene Clearwater, Director of Juvenile Probation; Ann Marie Briggs, Probation Officer; Katie Kurdelski, Probation Officer; Janice Lovett, Probation Officer; Charlie DeVries, Probation Officer; and Van Sloan, Diversion Officer

COMMUNITY PROBATION AND JUVENILE DIVERSION COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A key component of family court probation is the community involvement of probation officers. Every probation officer is encouraged to participate in a community-based group, and as a result, probation staff sit on committees such as the Multi-Agency Coordinating Council, Allegan County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Allegan County Suicide Prevention Coalition, Allegan County Coordinating Council on Domestic Violence, and the Ottaway County Gang Taskforce. Probation officers are volunteers with 4-H, church-based youth groups, and are actively encouraged to attend client's school and community-based events such as sporting events, concerts, and awards assemblies. In coordination with local churches, family court probation also assists with long-standing traditions involving giving back to the community. This year Probation Officers reached out during the public health crisis.

During the public health crisis surrounding the spread of COVID-19, Family Court



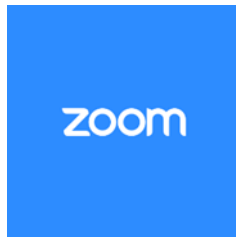
probation officers were severely limited in their ability to continue operations “as normal”, with face-to-face contacts suspended to slow the spread of the virus. In this time, probation staff got creative with ways to continue to support and serve court-involved families. During this outbreak, probation staff was able to provide food assistance to families in need by way of non-perishable groceries, frozen meats and meals, and fresh

vegetables by reaching out to local churches and food pantries, and creatively utilizing special project funds. Additionally, probation officers were able to challenge clients with creative tasks, such as answering their probation officer's “question of the day” and submitting videos with responses. Any client who participated consistently and met the probation officer's challenge was able to receive a small gift card to a local restaurant as an incentive. While these means are no substitute for face-to-face contact and case management, probation staff has worked very hard to continue their roles as public servants, reaching out in creative ways to serve those who come into contact with the court.

COMMUNITY PROBATION AND JUVENILE DIVERSION

Family Court Goes Virtual

The COVID-19 health crisis limited the court’s ability to conduct hearings in person. As a result, the Family Court (and all the courts) seized the opportunity to utilize a virtual courtroom via Zoom, which is an internet-based teleconferencing application. Zoom courtrooms allowed the court to continue to conduct hearings remotely, giving the public continued access to the courts and ensuring that litigants were afforded their due process rights. Zoom technology allowed both judges and referees to ensure their safety, as well as the safety of all court staff and parties to the case.



Raise the Age Legislation

On October 31, 2019, Governor Whitmer signed a package of bills commonly referred to as “Raise the Age” into law. This new law will change the age of Family Court jurisdiction from 17 to 18, meaning that 17 year-olds, who were previously considered adults in the criminal justice system, will now fall within the definition of a “juvenile” and will be subject to the juvenile justice system. Michigan is one of 46 states that consider 17 year-olds juveniles rather than adults. While this law does not take effect until October 21, 2021, the Family Court has been busy reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure that we are ready for this change when it occurs. Caseloads may be affected by this change, and so the court is reviewing the possibility of expanded staffing and diversion programming, as well as the potential for additional community-based services that we can provide to better serve older youth.

JUVENILE DETENTION

The Detention Program is designed to provide a short-term, physically restrictive, safe and humane environment for youth, both male and female, ages 10-17 who are detained pending further court action. Youth under the age of 18 who are charged with committing a delinquent or criminal act are processed through the juvenile justice system. While similar to that of the adult criminal justice system in many ways—process includes arrest, detainment, petitions, hearings, adjudications, dispositions, placement, and probation. The juvenile justice process operates according to the premise that youth are fundamentally different from adults, both in terms of level of responsibility and potential for rehabilitation. In 2019, the juvenile center admitted 184 youth and the average length of stay was 24 days. Release from detention occurs only through posting of bond (if applicable), or by order of the court.

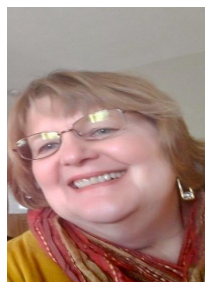
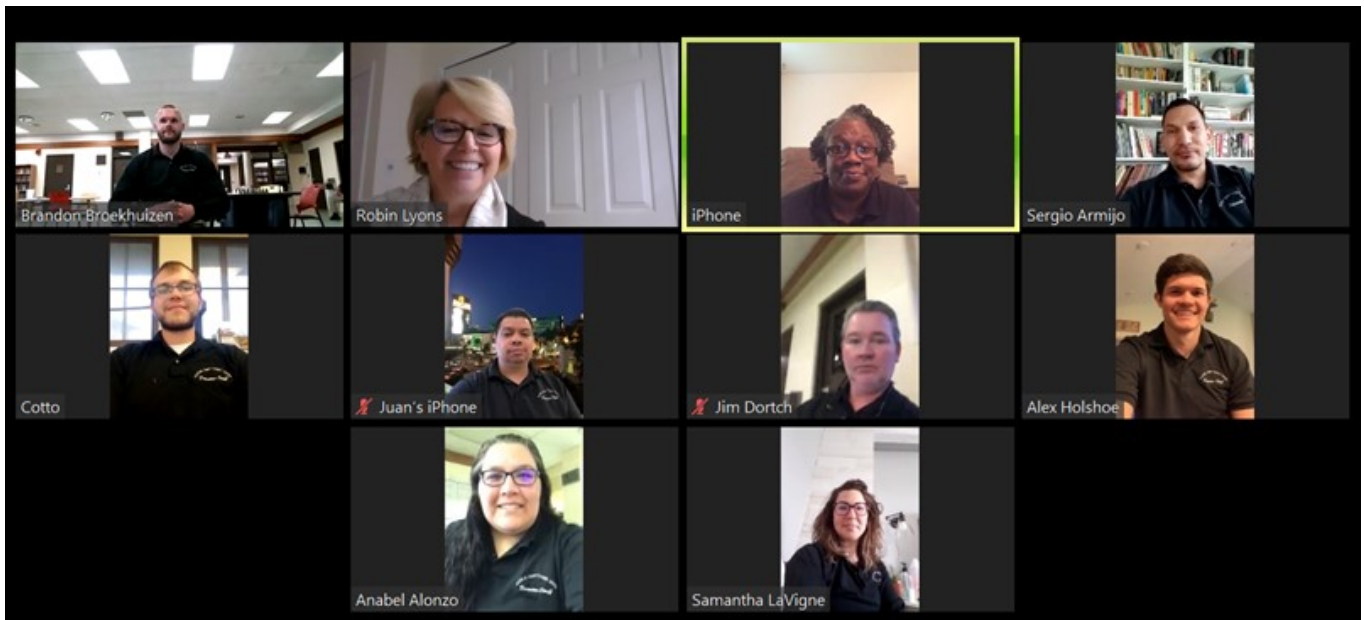
Although not a treatment program, the detention program offers daily programming and activities within the framework of a token economy system to help youth learn how to use more appropriate/positive behaviors.

Thinking of 2019, as it relates to secure detention is best described as a year in transition. Long time supervisor, John Morris, retired the end of August, but one does not need to look far to see his talent left behind with his gardening and woodworking skills. Scattered around the facility you can see John's special touches with the bird houses, picnic tables, benches, flower gardens and vegetable gardens. For 33 years John coached youth and mentored staff, with his stories that always left the youth and staff with a smile. John knew the importance of laughter when working in or living in a secure facility and most importantly he knew how to connect with kids. John helped give purpose to each and every day through his special projects and creative group initiatives whether it was the bucket buddy or push-ups for Jesus his creativity was limitless. One of the last projects John worked on with a couple of our youth was a Little Free Library which was donated to our music therapist Louie Morand.



Though John has left big shoes to fill, Brandon Broekhuizen has stepped into the role as supervisor. Brandon worked as a Youth Specialist for five years prior to taking this position. Brandon brings his own strengths as a natural leader and a passion for on-going education.

JUVENILE DETENTION STAFF



Brandon Broekhuizen, Supervisor; Robin Lyons, Director; Mary Robinson, Youth Specialist; Sergio Armijo, Youth Specialist; Connor Otto, Youth Specialist; Jaun Charo, Youth Specialist; Jim Dortch, Assistant Director; Alex Holeshoe, Youth Specialist; Alma Benavidez-Alonzo, Supervisor; Samantha LaVigne, Youth Specialist; Joan Laraway, Dietary Supervisor; Eric Essenburg, Youth Specialist; Cori Perkins, Youth Specialist; Deborah Arms, Juvenile Section Registrar; Wendy Dopp, Assistant Juvenile Section Registrar; Anna Cole, Dietary Aide

JUVENILE DETENTION

A Day in Detention, From the Lens of a Youth...

To get a glimpse into what a day in detention looks like from the lens of a youth, one may first notice what is missing. Missing is a gaming system, access to social media, and endless hours of screen time. What you will find is a structured day of education, with skill building activities beginning at 6:30 a.m. and winding down at 9:00 p.m. seven days a week.

Monday through Friday educational programming which offers classes in Math, Science, Language Arts, and History is provided by Outlook Academy. Detention staff play a vital role in supporting Outlook teachers by participating in the classroom, working with students on the G.E.D. and supporting high school youth with the on line credit recovery program.

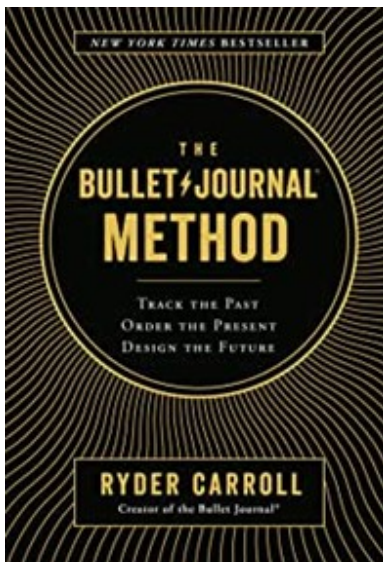
Learning does not stop when the teachers drive out of the parking lot. The work continues with creative writing through prompts, followed by an hour of staff lead book clubs. Book club is a time for small group interaction and a bit of relaxation before the evening meal. Staff and youth are divided into small groups to read aloud the same book. The book is discussed throughout, unfamiliar words are looked up and pronounced and at the conclusion of the book, reviews and ratings are written and shared. In an effort to help encourage literacy as a culture in detention the youth can purchase a “book themed” t-shirt to wear from the “detention store” and enjoy a little bit of originality rather than wearing the standard navy t-shirt provided as part of the detention uniform.

Additional programming interspersed throughout the week includes; twice weekly religious services scheduled through Barnabas Ministries, Why Try Groups facilitated by juvenile center staff, pottery classes by local artist, Jeff Blandford, prevention groups provided by Community Mental Health, music therapy by Louie Morand, job skills awareness and resume building by Kerrie Antelo through MI Works, cooking classes by our dietary supervisor, Joan Laraway, Highly Effective Teen curriculum facilitated weekly by Bruce Adams and gardening by detention center staff. Other daily activities include exercise either outside or in the multi-purpose room, daily living skills such as cleaning the unit and their rooms, tending to their laundry, and self-care.

JUVENILE DETENTION

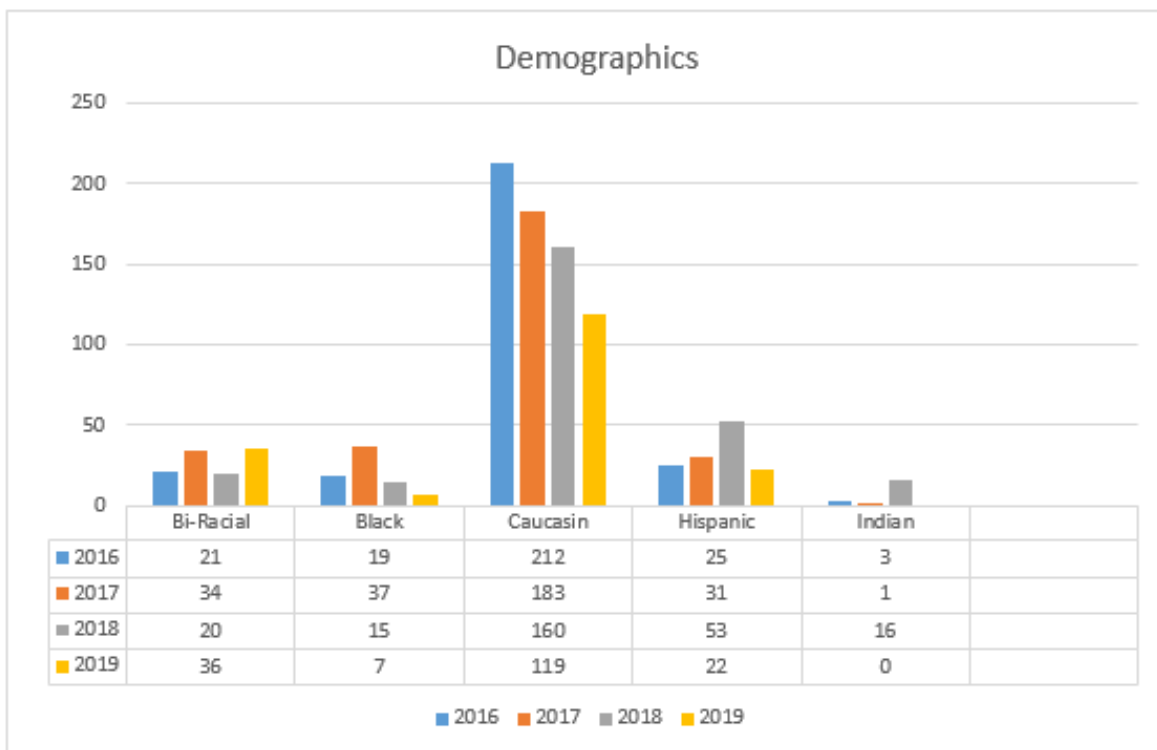
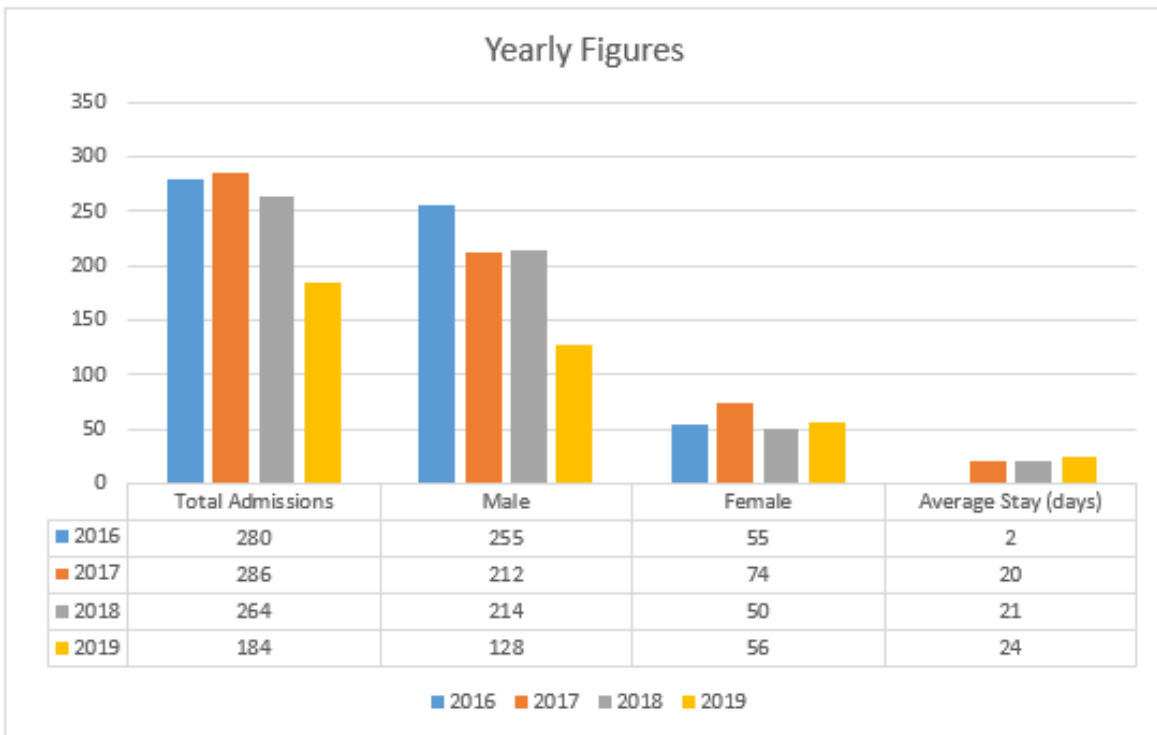
A Day in Detention, From the Lens of a Youth... (Continued)

Living every day with purpose in juvenile detention, although a difficult concept to wrap your head around, is made clearer with the use of The Bullet Journal Method. This method created by Ryder Carroll as a way to manage his life with ADHD was introduced as a pilot book club facilitated by reading interventionist, Lonna Schaap, with staff and generated enthusiasm as a way to support and organize our youth.

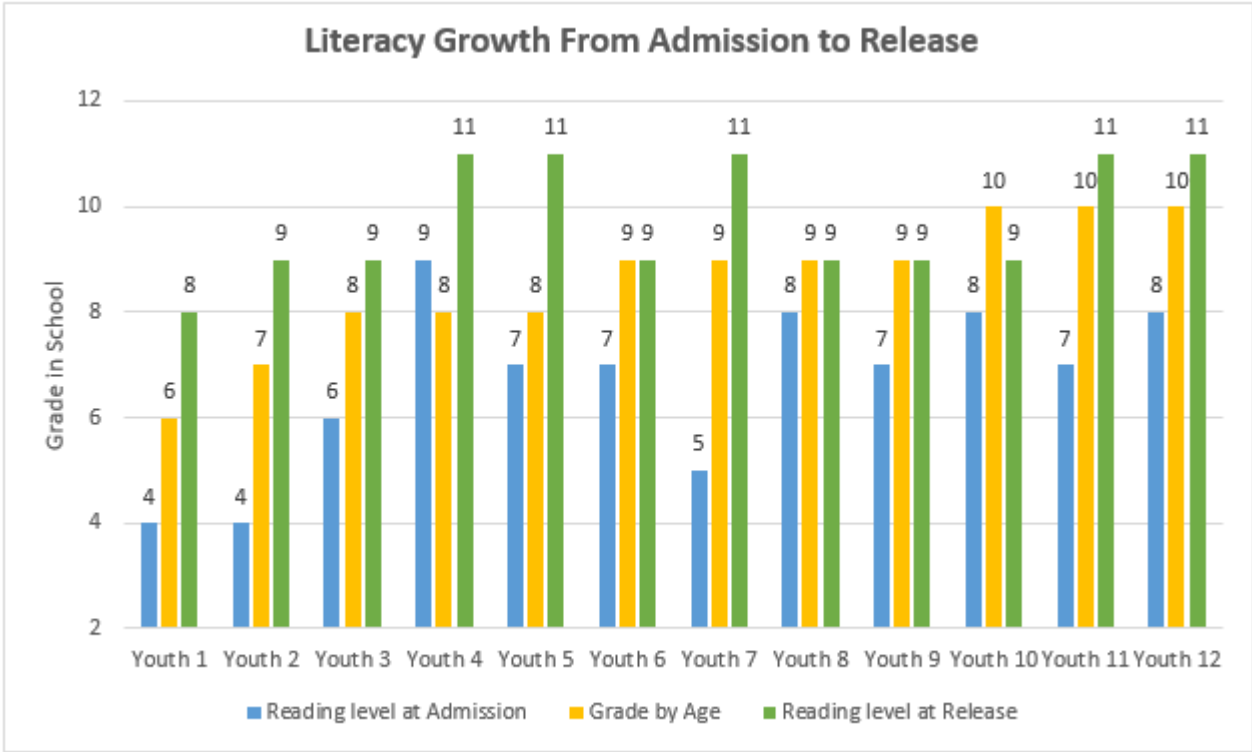
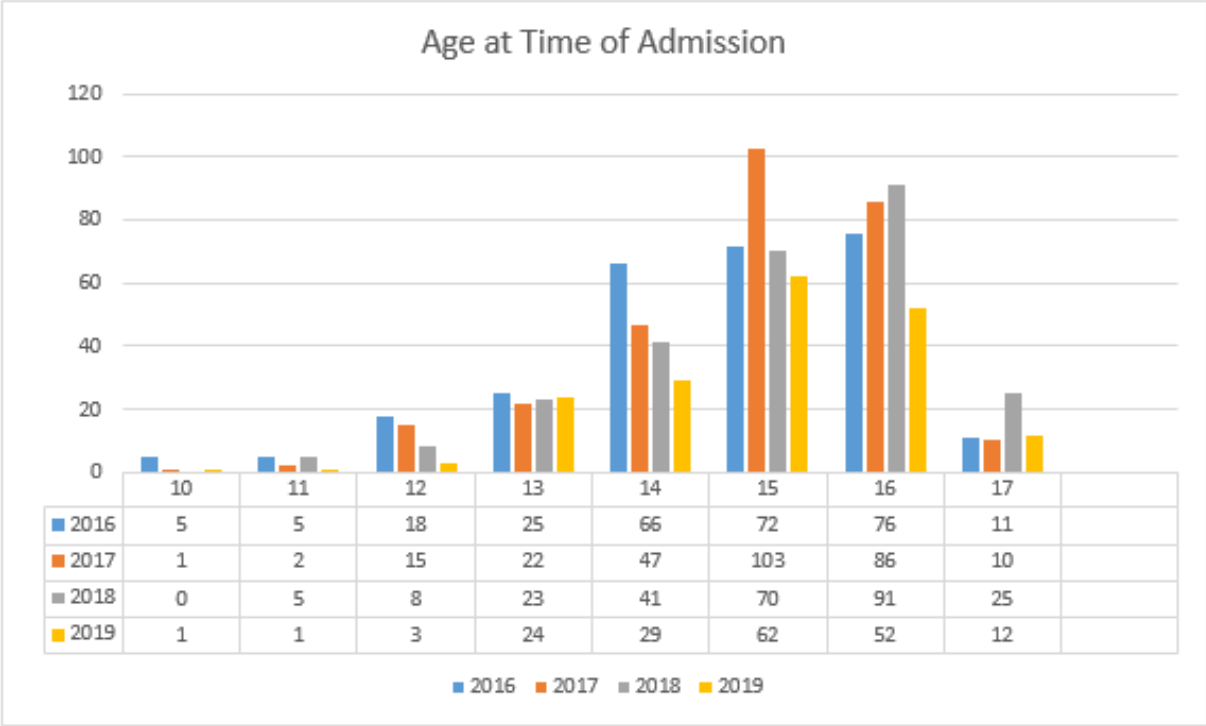


In late 2019, youth were introduced to the bullet journal method and encouraged to track their daily activities, journal their thoughts and feelings, generate goals, and create task lists so they could help make sense of and organize the present. This method can be used with technology, but according to Ryder if used to help with ADHD the value is in putting pen to paper to help slow down thinking and organize thoughts. Reflection time is encouraged greatly with this method, and what better time than in detention, without the background noise of social media, screen time, and gaming systems to strategically plan for the future.

JUVENILE DETENTION



JUVENILE DETENTION STATISTICS



COMMUNITY JUSTICE STAFF



Community Justice Officers: Kendall Domeier, Director
Robin Lyons, Lisa Dortch, and Judy Skinner

The community justice officers' mission and purpose is to help support youth and families referred to them by the Court. Youth are referred for:

- Aftercare
- Surveillance
- Community Service
- Skill Streaming Groups
- Minimizing the number of days in out of home care



COMMUNITY JUSTICE

Surveillance/Bond

Youth out on bond awaiting adjudication, or youth on probation and in need of extra support in the home. Staff provide home visits, attend hearings, and coordinate services. This year eighty-three youth were involved with the surveillance program. When youth are unable to maintain in their home youth may be ordered into Cheever Treatment Center where support from Community Justice will continue. This year two of the youth received their GED and one transitioned into the Job Corp program.

Community Service

Community Service is used as a sanction by the Court and youth are sometimes referred to Community Justice for supervision. The majority of the community service hours were spent working in the garden located at the Juvenile Center. Produce is used by the kitchen staff to help supplement the food budget and what is not used in the kitchen is donated to the local food pantries. Other work sites for community service include the Fair Grounds as well as CMH and the DHHS building where youth participate in general clean up.

Group Work

Youth in need of additional skills to problem solve, and better manage their life can be ordered by the Court to attend the “Why Try” group facilitated by Community Justice Officers. The Why Try curriculum is built on ten metaphors that help youth break down how the choices they are making are affecting their life and how they have the power to make the changes needed to get what they want. This year the program had ten youth in the summer group program, and also worked with youth individually.

Elementary Truancy

The Community Justice Officers take referrals from elementary schools and in 2019 there were sixty referrals made from schools that identified kids in need of extra support to get to school. The Community Justice Officers facilitate “Why Try” Groups in elementary schools and this year eighty-eight kids participated in “Why Try” groups. The “Why Try” Program is a strength-based approach to helping youth overcome their challenges and improve outcomes in the areas of truancy, behavior, and academics. Emphasis include; basic problem solving, anger management, dealing with peer pressure, building a support system and working on future goals. Youth are taught social and emotional principles through a series of ten metaphors. These visuals are then reinforced by music, video and group activities.

CHEEVER TREATMENT CENTER

**“Strong people stand up for themselves,
but stronger people stand up for others” - unknown**

Every day when I open my eyes, I experience strong staff rising up to be stronger for the adolescents in our care. This support has not wavered since Cheever came to be, but the recent pandemic has made our need to rise up to be strong for others paramount. The dedicated staff of Cheever have continued to serve the residents with the same high level of care present prior to the pandemic occurring. I would even go as far to say that we are serving our residents at a higher level of care due to recent changes in our daily lifestyles.

Staff

Our staff bring a rich history of experience to Cheever. This variety of experience provides the foundation to develop quality personnel that teach, model, and care for the residents. The leadership of Cheever has utilized staff's skills and passions in creating opportunities for teaching and modeling to take place. Our staff have opened the residents' worlds to backpacking/hiking, physical fitness, arts and crafts, music, culinary skills, and sports. Staffs' knowledge and interests have created opportunities for learning new positive behavioral habits.

Cheever's Goal

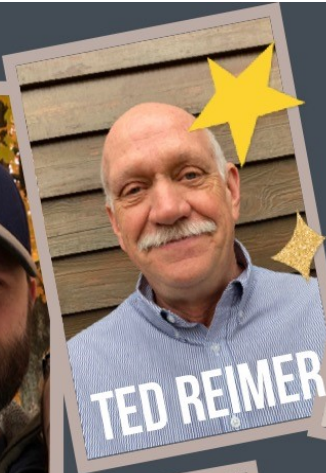
Our goal for the residents is to learn new strategies to utilize leading to more effective control of themselves. This more effective control leads to better relationships in their lives. Stronger relationships lead to the residents and their families making healthier behavior choices in an effort to prevent further court involvement.

Teaching

Staff use a variety of methods to provide the residents the ability to make healthy change in their lives. We have set groups that focus on the residents gaining skills to be in more effective control of themselves, individual therapy, family therapy, and community service opportunities that provide foundations for change. Outside of the consistently implemented formal teachings, staff provide opportunities for the residents to discuss and practice the skills informally, while engaging in prosocial activities.



JOHN ARENS



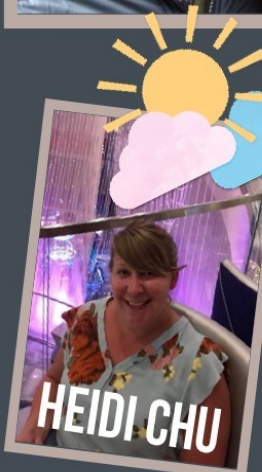
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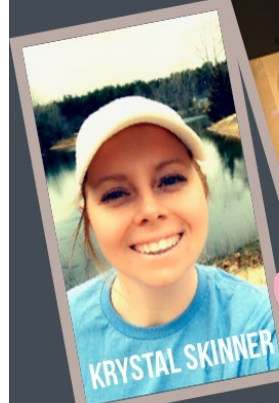
KEN COTE



**Tell me
CHARLES
AND I'LL TELL
WOLGAMOOD**

CHEEVER TREATMENT CENTER

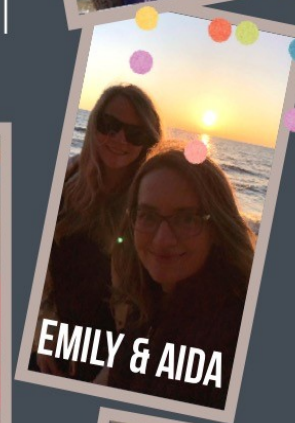
TERRI SHARRAR



KRYSTAL SKINNER



**JODI LANGLOIS/
KRISTEN SCHAUSS**



EMILY & AIDA



JESSICA DUGUID



AIDA CEFO



EMILY FRISBIE



DARRIN MEISTE

PIC•COLLAGE

CHEEVER TREATMENT CENTER

Various activities that staff often utilize for transferring skills include: taking walks, backpacking, going fishing, weight lifting, basketball, pickle ball, painting, drawing, making fly fishing lures, and playing board and card games. These activities provide avenues of discussion while also teaching the residents new ways to occupy their time in a positive and connecting manner.

The pandemic has made all of our teaching important. Our residents continue to learn and reinforce new skills which assists them in handling the emotions and thoughts brought on by additional stressors. As the residents continue to practice handling their thoughts and emotions effectively, they have the opportunity to build on patterns of success.

Modeling

A key method to reinforce our teaching is modeling. Staff model the proper use of skills we are teaching. The residents spend time getting to know us, resulting in them becoming more open to the information we are sharing with them on a daily basis. This process is typically followed by the residents being aware of staff members' behavior patterns. They want to see for themselves that staff just don't teach skills, but various ways the skills are implemented in different situations. The process of staff teaching and modeling the skills throughout the daily activity reinforces our hope for positive change from our residents. Since the pandemic has affected us, I believe staffs' modeling in handling their emotions and concerns so effectively has been instrumental in how well the residents have managed their own uncertainties. We have continued with life at Cheever by taking time to lead groups and activities. Normalizing life in the midst of the pandemic helps the residents maintain balance.

Staying Strong

The strength of our staff has always been an asset. The passion staff bring to their work is infectious. This difficult time we are facing has reinforced the skill set that each staff member brings to the unit. We have staff who are facing struggles and difficulties at home, due to recent events, but each person remains strong in spirit when on shift. Staff demonstrate empathy for our residents and their families. We are all in this together.