



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

Date of Release: 10/28/10
Point of Contact: Victoria A. Rossetti
Diane Flory
Telephone: 847.377.4500
847.377.3818

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

Lake County Probation Officers and Lake County's Cognitive Outreach Groups (COG) receive Awards

"Lake County's cognitive outreach program and adult probation officers received several honors recently at the annual meeting of the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association (IPCSA)," said Chief Judge Victoria A. Rossetti. "The 19th Circuit is extremely proud to have a staff who continues to make ingenious and noteworthy contributions in the probation field that are ultimately recognized and implemented by other jurisdictions throughout the state."

The recipients of the awards included:

Jeff Ross, Principal Probation Officer, was the recipient of the Robert E. Burdine Award. This award is presented to a member of IPCSA who, in the opinion of the award's committee, is the Officer of the Year. Ross, who has been an adult probation officer for over 17 years, is the team leader for the Intensive Probation Unit and has been co-coordinator of the Cognitive Outreach Group (COG) Program since its inception in 2001. The COG Program is based on the National Institute of Correction's "Thinking for a Change" Program. Ross is a certified trainer for Thinking for a Change and he has conducted several statewide certification trainings in Illinois for the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) and many Illinois county probation departments. In 2005 he was the recipient of the 19th Judicial Circuit's Leadership and Excellence Award. Ross is a 1992 graduate of Western Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science in Law Enforcement Administration. In 2010 he received his Master Degree in Counseling from Argosy University. He is also a licensed professional counselor.

Bob Geidner, Principal Probation Officer, was the recipient of the William C. Albertson Award. This award is presented to a member who, in the awards committee's opinion is dedicated in the field of achievement to the profession. Bob has been a probation officer with Lake County since December 9, 1988. He spent his first 12 years as a juvenile probation officer and the rest of his career as a principal probation officer in the Adult Sex Offender unit. Bob co-facilitates Cognitive Outreach Groups for sex offenders and is a member of the Lake County Sexual Assault Council, as well as a member of the Treatment Standards Committee. Bob is an active member of IPCSA and is on the sex offender committee. He has been recognized locally for his work by the Lake County State's Attorney's Office and by Community Youth Network. Bob is a 1988 graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice.

Deborah Norman, Principal Probation Officer, was the recipient of the S. William Ettinger Service Award. This award is presented to the member who, in the opinion of the awards committee, has

demonstrated excellence in dedication and service to the Association. Deborah has been a probation officer for over 12 years with adult probation. Currently she is a Principal Probation officer in the Special Caseload Unit. With her recent promotion to Principal Officer, Deborah is responsible for recruitment and training of college interns. In 2009, Deborah trained multiple interns who completed approximately 1000 hours of work for their internship. Deborah has been a member of IPCSA since 2004 and is co-chair of the substance abuse committee. Deborah was instrumental in assisting with the coordination of the Spring 2010 IPCSA Conference. She received the IPCSA Distinguished Service Award in 2007 and in August 2008 was the 19th Judicial Circuit Employee of the Month. Deborah is a 1998 graduate from Western Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Work.

Keith Coopridier received an award from the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association in recognition of his service and dedication as co-chair of the IPCSA Pretrial Committee. Coopridier is a pretrial services practitioner for over twenty-six years. He is the Unit Coordinator, and Principal Probation Officer of the Pretrial Services Unit of the adult probation division. Besides overseeing day-to-day operations in the Pretrial Unit, Keith collects and analyzes pretrial-related data. His research focuses on the policy and procedural implications derived from the data analysis and patterns of change over time or trend analysis of pretrial-related activities. His research has been published in the Journal of Federal Probation. Keith completed the Division's Management Mentoring Program in 2009. He is actively involved in the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA) and he also teaches part-time at the College of Lake County. He was selected Employee of the Year in 2009. Mr. Coopridier earned his Master's Degree in Sociology from Loyola University of Chicago in 1985.

The Lake County Cognitive Outreach Program was the recipient of the Institute for Legal and Policy Studies Innovative Leadership Award. The award is presented annually to the Program in Probation or Detention that exemplifies innovation and leadership in offender program development with demonstrated evidence of effective outcomes. The Lake County Adult Probation Cognitive Outreach Group Program began in January 2002 and is a cognitive thinking restructuring program firmly based on the National Institute of Corrections Thinking for a Change Program. The goals in implementing the program are to: increase the number of clients who successfully complete probation, reduce recidivism, and improve clients' abilities to take control of their thoughts, behaviors and lives.

The concept of the program is based on the belief that our thinking controls our behavior and by taking control of our thinking we can take control of our lives. The purpose is to effect change in offenders' thinking patterns so that their behaviors are positively impacted.

The three main components of the COG Program are *Social Skills, Cognitive Self-Change and Problem Solving*. To date, 43 different staff members have facilitated a total of 85 COG groups. As of May 2010, 1,142 probationers entered the COG program and 821 of those probationers completed the program successfully. This is a completion rate of 72%.

In June 2008, an outcome study conducted by Robert Verborg, Program Research Analyst for the 19th Judicial Circuit, determined that 62.5% of high-risk probationers who completed COG had a successful probation termination (as compared to a 25.8% success rate for a high-risk comparison group that did not receive COG). In addition, 56.3% of the COG group graduates remained arrest free after they completed probation (whereas only 28.2% of the comparison group remained arrest free after their probation ended).

Lake County Adult Probation has six officers who are trained as trainers in the National Institute of Corrections Thinking for A Change Program. These officers include Jeff Ross,

Frank Morelli, Rose Gray, Kathy Grzanich, Bob Geidner and Rob Zastany. In conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, these officers have assisted in the training for probation staff and treatment providers throughout the State of Illinois in facilitating Thinking for A Change. Several probation departments within the state have since implemented cognitive programming in their jurisdictions based on Thinking for a Change.

The annual meeting of the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association was held last week at Embassy Suites in East Peoria.

###

www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us