

Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) 2022-23 Program Summary

Mental Health Diversion Court 2022-23 CCP Funding Summary

CCP Funds: \$748,548.96

Treatment:

- Communicare: \$273,397
- Probation: \$152,000

Innovation: \$323,151.99

Other Funding: \$0

CCP Strategic Plan Outcome/Strategy(s) Supported

Goal C: Build individual competency, support community reintegration and reduce recidivism.

Use of Funding	Program Description
<p><u>Treatment:</u></p> <p>1. Communicare (CBO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .075 Associate Director \$7190.02 • 1 FTE Supervising Clinician \$69,185.12 • 1FTE Case Manager \$52,000 • 1 FTE Peer Advocate \$39,520 • Benefits .25 \$41,973.78 • Operating Expenses \$22,047.70 • Incentives \$10,000 • Administrative Costs \$31,480.34 <p>2. Probation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 FTE Probation Officer \$147,000 • Operating Expenses Probation \$5,000 <p><u>Innovation:</u></p> <p>1. 1 FTE Deputy District Attorney III \$155,151.96</p> <p>2. 1 FTE Deputy Public Defender III \$168,000</p>	<p>Mental Health Diversion (MH-Div) is a minimum one-year court-based treatment and monitoring system for adult offenders with mental illness and/or a substance use disorder (SUD) and those behavioral health issues were a significant factor in the commission of their criminal offense. The program is designed to increase the treatment engagement of the participants while reducing the number of arrests, jail bed days, acute hospital bed days and number of long term or state hospital bed days both during and following graduation from MH-Div. This program is a collaborative effort between the Probation Department, CommuniCare Health Centers, Yolo County Superior Court, the Sheriff’s Department, the Public Defender, and the District Attorney.</p> <p>The intention of the intensity of the program is to provide adult offenders with support in their journey through the MH-Div Program. This program requires supervision status with the Yolo County Probation Department. Depending on the needs of the individual, treatment consists of substance use treatment and/or mental health treatment. Substance use treatment could be residential or outpatient services. Contact between the treatment provider, Communicare, and Probation is approximately 4 to 5 times a week. Additionally, participants are required to be present the first and third Wednesday of the month for Mental Health Diversion court. Currently, court is by Zoom, but it may be in person in the future. The goal is to address the criminogenic factors and reduce recidivism. When participants are</p>

Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) 2022-23 Program Summary

close to graduation, they participate in a Restorative Justice conference where feasible.

The treatment engagement for 2022-2023 included the following:

- 38 participants engaged in treatment.
- 30 participants currently enrolled (30 max capacity)
- 13 participants have successfully completed outpatient SUD treatment
- 4 participants have successfully completed residential treatment
- 2 participants have graduated
- Jail beds before enrollment (1 year prior) = 2,218
- Jail beds while enrolled = 166 (9 participants)
- Acute hospital bed days = 1
- Long-term or state hospital bed days = 0

Participants say it best when it comes to what it would mean not to have this program:

- "I am fixing myself spiritually and mentally every day with MHD guiding me on the way to be a light in the darkness for the next person that gets the opportunity to be in MHD."
- "I now have the tools to be a better me."
- "I learned the value of accepting help from those that have proven to be patient enough to guide me along this road which has given me the strength and courage required to escape the clutches of darkness."
- "I never thought recovery was possible until I came to this program."
- "Thanks to this program I've begun to see the light and experience true happiness like never before."

**Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership (CCP)
2022-23 Program Summary**

The MH-Div future goals are:

- To create and fund an Alumni program where we implement aftercare programs and services to follow up with clients and support them in their continuing recovery.
- Expand the services offered by having some housing component funded to increase the stability of clients who are or in danger of homelessness.

PM# 1: How much did we do?

- 119 Referrals
- 86 CCHC completed assessments
- 38 participants engaged in treatment.
- 30 participants currently enrolled (30 max capacity)
- 13 participants have successfully completed outpatient SUD treatment
- 4 participants have successfully

PM# 2: How well did we do it?

- Jail beds before enrollment (1 year prior) = 2,218
- Jail beds while enrolled = 166 (9 participants)
- Acute hospital bed days = 1
- Long-term / state hospital bed days = 0

Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership (CCP) 2022-23 Program Summary

completed residential treatment

- 11 discharges
- 2 participants have graduated

PM# 3: Is anyone better off?

As of July 5, 2023 there were:

- 4 participants in Phase 4
- 10 participants in Phase 3
- 13 participants in Phase 2
- 3 participants in Phase 3

All phases have requirements for advancement that include minimum number of days with negative drug/alcohol tests, medication compliance, lack of unexcused absences for treatment, scheduled services, probation visits and court appearances and a written essay.

County's mental health diversion court celebrates first two graduates

- By Anne Ternus-Bellamy – Davis Enterprise

-

Mar 17, 2023



Adrian Rodriguez receives his certificate of completion from Judge Janet Gaard after a year in Yolo County's Mental Health Diversion Court. Courtesy photo



Joseph Rodriguez receives his certificate of completion from Judge Janet Gaard after a year in Yolo County's Mental Health Diversion Court. Courtesy photo

Wednesday was a big day for Adrian Rodriguez.

He'd taken time off of work, watched a YouTube video that morning to learn how to tie a tie, and was now sitting in a courtroom at the Yolo County courthouse, wearing that tie with a matching suit jacket and listening as a judge asked him if he had anything to say.

He did.

"I want to, first of all, apologize publicly to my mom," Rodriguez said.

"Sorry it took so long to become me. The real me," he told his mother as she sat in the back of the courtroom, wiping away tears.

"My mom's always done the most she could for me," Rodriguez told the court, "and I just couldn't do it."

But in the end, he did.

A year after entering Yolo County's Mental Health Diversion Court following many years of alcohol addiction that led to criminal DUI charges, Rodriguez was one of the first two graduates of the program, having completed all of the steps required of him, including maintaining his sobriety.

Also receiving a certificate of completion that day was Joseph Rodriguez (no relation). Both men were the beneficiaries of a program started a little over a year ago thanks to the work of Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven and Public Defender Tracie Olson.

In addition to the District Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office, other partners include the Probation Department, Yolo County's Health & Human Services Agency, CommuniCare Health Centers and Judge Janet Gaard, who has overseen the program from the start.

"We tried to figure out how we could create a program for a different segment of individuals who are having some mental health issues or substance use disorders, or both, where we could try to use the court system to decriminalize and try to help people get well, and keep them out of the system," Raven told the court Wednesday.

Among the requirements of the program: maintaining sobriety, being medication compliant, attending all required appointments and court hearings and obtaining employment, vocational training or education.

"This is an amazing day," Raven said, "because we have our first two graduates here."

Along with the two graduates in the courtroom on Wednesday were some two dozen individuals still participating, each in a different phase of the program, but all working on their sobriety, mental health and other requirements of the program.

Several thanked Adrian and Joseph for their inspiration.

“Our struggles are really hard on a day-to-day basis,” said one participant. “It’s encouraging. I want more of this.”

Said another: “Seeing them... I’m just proud to see both of them go through the program and be the first ones through. It’s not always easy.”

Both graduates offered their own words of encouragement.

“I know it takes time,” said Joseph Rodriguez. “Just don’t give up. You will get there. And know that you’ve got good people on your side, good people who will help you.”

Added Adrian Rodriguez: “To my peers, the changes on your faces is noticeable. Just keep it up.”

The Rodriguez men didn’t just inspire their fellow Mental Health Diversion Court participants during their journey to graduation. Those who assisted them along the way were also moved by their efforts.

CommuniCare case manager Romney Sears told Adrian and Joseph their graduation “is kind of personal for me because both of you are single fathers and I’m a single father, too.

“So to see two single fathers that have had perfect attendance and have been the first to graduate from our program is such an honor. And I am

humbled to be able to stand here and witness this. Thank you for being great examples.”

Sears added that “above everything else, you want to make sure your child is proud of you and I think you guys showed them that no matter what mistakes you make in life, you can always recover from them and that you can have the life you deserve.

“So I hope that you know that you are worthy of it. You absolutely are not the mistakes that you made. You are way bigger than that.”

Both men had entered the diversion court with a desire to be better and to do better. It wasn't easy — Adrian's father was an alcoholic and Adrian himself has been struggling for more than 15 years, while Joseph had his first drink at the age of eight. But they persevered.

“You guys have showed up every time you needed to and you have both worked really hard to get where you're at today,” said CommuniCare social worker Julie Santiago.

In therapy, she said, Adrian worked through “some really tough things.”

“You really addressed some things that have come up in your life,” she told him.

Joseph as well.

“Joseph has incredible focus,” said Deputy District Attorney Martha Wais. “He focuses on his family, on caring for his son, on his classes and actively engaging in every phase. Joseph has focused on his sobriety and his journey throughout this program.”

He did more than what was asked of him, said Wais, “and has become a better man, a better father.”

“You are a wonderful example,” she told Joseph.

Of Adrian, she said, “with every struggle, it seemed like he would just double down and find a way forward to figure it out. He has dedicated himself to turning his life around and the reality is, that is exactly what he did.”

There were many in the court Wednesday expressing similar sentiments, including representatives from all of the participating agencies.

But perhaps there was no one more proud and thankful than Adrian Rodriguez’s mother.

“This is a miracle that I have been waiting for and praying for, for years,” she told the court and the diversion court’s participants.

She recalled seeing her son driving home drunk, an altercation with police, “and to go through all that pain, you can imagine how happy I am now. I don’t have to worry about him any more.

“I’m just so thankful for everybody that’s involved in this program, that you have taken an interest in helping others to come out of such a dark, dark place that they’re in. And as a mother, I’m thanking you for the mothers of all these young men and ladies that are up here.

“I hope that you all have the success in this program,” she told them.

— *Reach Anne Ternus-Bellamy at aternus@davisenterprise.net. Follow her on Twitter at @ATernusBellamy.*



COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

Gerardo Pinedo
County Administrative Officer

625 Court Street, Room 202 • Woodland, CA 95695
www.YoloCounty.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 27, 2023

Contact: Dwight Coddington

Email: PIO@YoloCounty.org

Phone: (530) 908-0186

Mental Health Diversion Court Celebrates Graduations

(Woodland, CA) – With a full courtroom at the Yolo County Superior Courthouse on Wednesday, July 19, officials, program participants, and members of the community came together to celebrate two graduates of the Mental Health Diversion Court program (MH-Div). Launched in January of 2022, this groundbreaking initiative is aimed at addressing the needs of individuals with mental health disorders in which their behavioral health issues were a significant factor in the commission of criminal offenses. The ceremony was opened by the Honorable Judge Janet Gaard and featured emotional speeches by the dedicated public servants and CommuniCare staff who played a vital role in guiding the graduates to this important achievement.

Funded by the Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership, the MH-Div program is a collaborative effort, bringing together key stakeholders including the District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Probation Department, Sheriff's Office, the Court, and CommuniCare Health Centers. The MH-Div program was established to support individuals who do not require as intensive treatment as those who qualify for Mental Health Court but with the same intent to increase treatment engagement and reduce arrests, hospitalizations, and incarceration.

“A graduation from one of our collaborative courts is always cause for celebration,” said Yolo County Superior Court Judge Janet Gaard. “The ceremonies demonstrate that, with hard work and commitment on the part of the participants, and with the support of an amazing team, people who are involved in the criminal justice system can change their lives in so many positive ways. They can repair family relationships, get jobs, go to school, get off drugs and alcohol, obtain housing, and mentor others. They make us proud, but more importantly, they make themselves proud.”

The MH-Div program operates on a minimum 1-year court-based treatment and monitoring system for adult offenders, specifically tailored to address the growing number of defendants struggling with mental health and cycling through the courts and jails. Currently serving 30 participants who facing felony or misdemeanor charges, the MH-Div program provides individualized treatment plans that address participants' specific needs, interests, and capabilities, focusing on physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

The graduation ceremony featured heartfelt speeches from the two graduates, a man and a woman, who shared their remarkable journeys of personal growth and recovery. The male graduate was the first to successfully complete the MH-Div program, he proudly announced 451 days of sobriety at the ceremony, a testament to his dedication and hard work. He expressed gratitude to CommuniCare staff for their unwavering support, highlighting the program's significant impact on his life. The female graduate's transformative journey was equally compelling, as she spoke passionately about the program's role in rebuilding her life, finding a career,

and strengthening family bonds. She emphasized the invaluable insight gained through the trust developed with the CommuniCare team, enabling her to address her struggles effectively.

“It’s inspiring to watch the transformation and evolution of individuals in this program who have been given a second chance by the criminal justice system. Our collaborative team provides incredible support, but it’s the motivation and dedication of the individuals that really make the difference,” said Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig. “My hope now is to find additional funding to expand the program, which currently has a waitlist, so we can help others who are struggling.”

The MH-Div program is currently at its full capacity with 30 participants enrolled. 13 participants have successfully completed outpatient substance use disorder treatment, and 4 have successfully completed residential treatment. The MH-Div program's success was passionately emphasized by a representative from the Public Defender's Office at the ceremony, who praised the graduates and the program's commitment to supporting individuals on their path to healing and flourishing in society.

“The Mental Health Diversion graduation stands as a testament to the transformative power of collaborative efforts, compassionate support, and a dedicated commitment to helping individuals with mental health issues reintegrate into society with strength and resilience,” said Tracie Olson the Public Defender of Yolo County.

For more information about the MH-Div program and Yolo County Community Corrections Partnership, please visit YoloCounty.org/CCP

###