



FRIENDS OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE
DRUG COURTS

DRUG COURTS WORK
- THEY TRANSFORM LIVES



FRIENDS OF NH DRUG COURTS 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The past three years have been an exceptionally stressful time for non-profits and the New Hampshire citizens whom they serve. Like most New Hampshire non-profits, the Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts likewise struggled to survive and meet its mission throughout the pandemic. With the help of many volunteers, our organization re-tooled and doubled down to sustain itself and to support the participants in the Drug Courts of the Granite State.

During this time we have been fortunate to partner with New Futures, which now provides critical administrative support as our fiscal manager. As a result, we have enhanced our fundraising and communication efforts and we ended the 2022 fiscal year with sufficient reserves to sustain our efforts of providing grants, incentives and micro-loans to the Drug Court participants most in need heading well into 2023.

During the past year we have endeavored to educate the public at large regarding the important work being done by the professionals who serve citizens through the Drug Courts: judges, court personnel, drug court coordinators, law enforcement, probation and counseling personnel. To support the professionals working in this field, we were pleased to co-sponsor the Treatment Court Conference held at the Grand Summit Hotel at Attitash in Bartlett on September 21 and 22. Spending time with 175 professionals committed to the work of drug and treatment courts was inspiring!

In early 2023 we expanded our scope of service by partnering with the United States District Court to support the federal court's Drug Court through its LASER Docket. We hope this new collaboration will enhance our ability to support additional New Hampshire citizens suffering with substance use disorders and to help them break the cycle of dependency and to reintegrate successfully into our communities.

As a wholly volunteer-driven organization, I am proudest of the work of our Board members who are committed to the mission of the Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts. As citizen servants, they bring out the best in each other and are fine examples of our Granite State volunteer spirit. Thank you to them and to all who are joined with us in addressing head-on opioid dependency and substance use disorder through New Hampshire's Drug Courts.

-Ovide Lamontagne, President

YEAR IN REVIEW

A Year of Growth for the Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts

The Friends traditionally has served drug court programs in 10 of the state's 11 Superior Courts. In spring 2022, it launched a partnership with Sullivan County Family Treatment Court. This first-of-its-kind pilot program hosted in the Claremont and Newport district courts is a collaboration of the NH Division of Children, Youth and Families, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and other community organizations and serves parents facing abuse and neglect charges that involve substance use. Rather than undergo incarceration, participating parents can work with social workers to access substance use and mental health treatment, among other supports and services, in an effort to achieve accountability, recovery, and increase the likelihood of family reunification.

Since the partnership began, the Friends have provided several hundred dollars to help cover moving costs for participants of Sullivan County Family Treatment Court. We look forward to offering further support in the years to come.

“Funding from the Friends of NH Drug Courts has supported needs of parents getting into recovery and helped families with open abuse and neglect cases work towards stability,” said Jacqui Baker, the Family Treatment Court coordinator. “It has provided the FTC team the flexibility to access sustainable funding that is not otherwise available in the community. We are appreciative of how this funding has supported families in FTC in Sullivan County and look forward to continuing to partner as we look towards expanding FTC in New Hampshire.”

Following the success of the Family Treatment Court collaboration, the Friends in January 2023 further expanded our services to participants of the federal drug treatment program known as the LASER Docket.

“Thanks to FNHDC, federal LASER Docket participants now have access to important resources to help them succeed in recovery and maintain the LASER requirements to be law-abiding, sober, employed, and responsible,” said U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrea Johnstone, who oversees the program.

Neither of these partnerships - nor the overall work of the Friends - would be possible without the ongoing help of FNHDC's many supporters and donors. Over the last year, the organization has once again benefitted from generous grant support. With the help of these and many other supporters, the Friends has been able to break new ground over the past year and provide more than \$27,000 in support to nearly 50 drug court participants. With your ongoing support, we look forward to helping transform even more lives in the year to come.

"A DIFFERENT KIND OF HERO"

The Robert Gasser Memorial Fund furthers the legacy of the 'Father of NH Drug Courts'

Former New Jersey prosecutor Robert A. Gasser is known as the "Father of New Hampshire Drug Courts."



"He believed in drug courts passionately. He believed in the humanity of minor drug offenders and recognized that they deserved help, understanding and a chance to better their lives," Jennifer Gasser says of her father, who died in May 2022.

Bob was instrumental in establishing a drug court in Grafton County and helped implement treatment and recovery courts in other counties. Drug courts offer non-violent offenders with a history of substance use disorder an opportunity to participate in an intense, court-supervised treatment program instead of going to prison or jail.

In addition to the success of the drug court model in New Hampshire, Bob's legacy lives on with The Robert Gasser Memorial Fund. The fund was created in 2022 from a \$25,000 bequest from Bob and the Gasser family. It continues to grow from individual gifts made in Bob's memory. The fund is managed by the not-for-profit Friends of New Hampshire Drugs, which awards grants to support participants of all county, state and federal drug treatment courts in New Hampshire and helps fund court incentive programs.

"The Robert Gasser Memorial Fund will further his legacy by continuing to provide support to participants with the tools they need to be successful," Jennifer Gasser says. "Our hope is that, with this fund, no participant will be turned away from a request, and that it can be used to prove that kindness and understanding can change people's lives."

When Bob joined the Ocean County, N.J.'s prosecutor's office in 2000, he found his "true calling" as implementor of the first drug court in Ocean County. After retiring to the Upper Valley in 2006, Bob championed the drug court model here and persuaded area law enforcers to establish a drug court in Grafton County. Bob's efforts contributed to New Hampshire becoming the first state in the nation to establish a statewide drug court program in 2016.

Jennifer says her father was a huge Superman fan. "His passion was helping people in any way he could – that was his superpower." Her father's most cherished possession, she adds, was a plaque given to him with the inscription: "A different kind of hero."

FNHDC BY THE NUMBERS

May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023



72

TOTAL
GRANTS



\$27k

TOTAL
AMOUNT



46

INDIVIDUALS
SUPPORTED



27

GRANTS
SUPPORTING
TRANSPORTATION



21

GRANTS
SUPPORTING
HOUSING



11

GRANTS
SUPPORTING
HEALTH/DENTAL
CARE



13

OTHER
GRANTS

"I am writing you this letter to express my gratitude for the scholarship that paid for my sober living these past few weeks. **The opportunity you provided me will not be forgotten and allowed me to establish stability in my early sobriety.** I was honestly fearful, not knowing what to expect coming out of Belknap County Department of Corrections. I spent years in the same cycle of pain of addiction, and I have been giving this my all, I refuse to go back to that life, and I will continue to fight. **The gift you gave me was a foundation, a starting point on my new path forward,** and I am blessed to have been given this. I hope that the others you help in the future take hold of their chance and that they see a future for themselves because it is possible. I cannot wait to see what is in store for me."

-Holly Solans, Belknap County Drug Court Participant, April 21, 2023

OUR MISSION

The Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts is the first in the nation statewide drug court support organization. As a statewide non-profit, the Friends is dedicated to supporting the activities and participants of New Hampshire's drug courts. The Friends, which first formed in the early 2000s as the Friends of the Grafton County Drug Court, officially expanded into a statewide organization in 2015. Since that time, the Friends has raised and contributed more than \$150,000 to participants of all drug treatment courts in New Hampshire. With your support, the Friends will continue to support these critical diversion programs and help their participants complete drug court and maintain long-term recovery.


BOARD MEMBERS

Ovide Lamontagne (*President*), Kathryn Marchocki (*Vice President*), Edward O'Reilly (*Treasurer*), Jake Berry (*Secretary*), Dr. Thomas Andrew, Daniel Goonan, Peggy Gilmour, Rick St. Hilaire, Jon Morgan, Anthony Naro, Dr. Jennifer Jones, John Kacavas and Ed Rajsteter

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS



Thank you to all of FNHDC's many supporters, our dedicated Board of Directors, community partners around the state, and individual donors who helped us expand our reach across the Granite State.

Friends of New Hampshire Drug Courts
100 North Main Street, Suite 400, Concord, NH 03301
www.friendsofnhdrugcourts.org  @FNHDC

DONATE

Scan a QR code to donate to FNHDC.



VENMO



PAYPAL

