



SUMMER 2019 Newsletter

*Hello, from Jersey City Community Solutions in the Jersey City Municipal Court!
Check out what's been happening at JCCS!*

Message from...

Hon. Cynthia Jackson, Community Court Presiding Judge



I bring you greetings as the presiding judge in Jersey City's Community Court. We have been in operation for approximately one and a half years and I can proudly say that we are truly ecstatic with our results. Operating under the auspices of Jersey City Community Solutions, we offer low-level offenders an opportunity to complete community service and fulfill social service mandates as a way of resolving their matters instead of the traditional fines and/or jail. One of the unique aspects of our community court is that a risk needs assessment is completed for each participant. This in turn allows the staff to recommend mandates that matter and are unique to the individual as opposed to one-size fits all. This is a new and innovative approach to criminal justice and can more aptly be called restorative justice. In an attempt to help our participants get their lives on track, we aim to address the risks, including unemploy-

ment, homelessness, and addiction, that would most likely keep them involved in the revolving door of the criminal justice system.

I must conclude by saying that it is an absolute joy to have the opportunity to witness transformation in the life of a community court participant. To date we can boast a 75% rate of completion. It is my hope that that more courts will adopt this model of dispensing justice. We are looking forward to growing and expanding and our thankful for the support of all who made this court possible.



Current JCCS Community Service sites.

\$26,760

*Valuation of 2,450 hours
of community service given
back to Jersey City*

415

*Individuals connected
to community resources*

13

Community Service Sites

IN ALL 6 WARDS

Jersey City Community Solutions is dedicated to creating restorative solutions for low-level, non-violent offenders that promote growth and strength in the community.

Staying Active in the Community

JCCS' ongoing community engagement has helped to develop an extensive awareness of all the community work taking place throughout the city. This knowledge has broadened relationships with community stakeholders, resulting in the expansion and diversification of our community service offerings. The added capacity at sites including Maureen Collier Senior Center and at events like the 4th Annual Great JC Clean-Up, allow the program to match participants to the best situation to succeed. JCCS will continue to look for innovative ways to invite the community to help its residents in any way they can.



JCCS' AmeriCorps VISTA, Lance Taylor, presenting at a community meeting.

JCCS Presents to NADCP and NJ Court Leadership about Community Court Model

JCCS' community court model is an emerging approach to criminal justice, an approach that is steadily being implemented in courts across the country. With an increasing interest for community courts, more information and expertise on the subject is needed. As one of only two community courts in the state, JCCS was invited to present at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals Annual Conference and to the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts: Access and Fairness Committee on the innovative approaches being used to serve our community. JCCS is honored to be a model for new court initiatives and we are excited to see more interest in restorative justice practices.



JCCS Program Director, Stacey Dix, participated in a panel discussion about innovative court approaches at the NADCP Annual Conference.

JCCS Providing Opportunities for Participants

The focus of JCCS is to guide participants on a path to success, as well as develop a sense of responsibility in their community. We are very proud to note that several JCCS alumni have continued to volunteer at the community service sites they were assigned to as participants. We are even prouder to mention that several of our alumni have been hired at their assigned community service sites. These collaborations are everything JCCS could have hoped for and we are eager to create more!

