

## Middlesex County Drug Court Holds Graduation

Hundreds of people recently packed the Freeholder Meeting Room of the county administration building to watch 20 family members and friends participate in a graduation ceremony from the Middlesex County Drug Court program. This was the fourth graduation since the intensive probationary and drug treatment program began six years ago as an alternative to incarceration for drug offenders.

The program is offered to those who plead guilty to drug offenses. Enrollees are required to follow strict procedures to assess their progress including making weekly visits to Drug Court and to probation officers. Participants also undergo drug treatment and counseling, and must have jobs or attend school full time. They are regularly tested to ensure they remain drug and alcohol-free during probation.

According to keynote speaker and state Supreme Court Justice Barry T. Albin, "It is far less costly to rehabilitate those who are suffering the scourge of drug addiction than to warehouse them in prisons." Superior Court Judge Lorraine Pullen, who presides over the weekly Drug Court sessions at the courthouse and monitors the progress of the 260 individuals currently enrolled in the program, offered encouragement to current program participants who were in the audience assuring them that they, too, can accomplish what the graduates have.

Judge Albin also noted that Drug Court graduates are more likely to stay drug-free and be employed, and more likely to give birth to drug-free babies and re-gain custody of their children. They are also less likely to be arrested for new offenses.

Each graduate addressed those in attendance after receiving their plaques and graduation pins. Many thanked Court staff for providing them with a fresh start. Some graduates noted that they would likely be dead without the program. One graduate noted with irony "I thought you guys were setting me up to fail, but you were really setting me up to live."



*Keynote speaker and state Supreme Court Justice Barry T. Albin addresses Middlesex County Drug Court graduates.*



*Superior Court Judge Lorraine Pullen, who presides over Drug Court sessions, addresses Middlesex County Drug Court graduates, as well as hundreds of family and friends and other Court personnel.*

# An Update On at PATHWAYS' P.A.L.S.

The P.A.L.S. (Partnering, Achieving, Leading, Supporting) club is currently one of the largest at Carteret High School, with a total of 75 active members. This club is a community service initiative that provides students with volunteer opportunities.

P.A.L.S. meetings are held monthly during the school year, and students have the opportunity to share ideas and plan future events. Students have already participated in several different volunteer opportunities this year and have much in store for 2011.

The first event that P.A.L.S. members participated in this year was a walk for breast cancer. The turnout was staggering, as 45 students volunteered their time and completed a three mile walk to raise money for breast cancer awareness.

Students also volunteered at the FoodBank of New Jersey, the state's largest food bank located in Hillside, New Jersey. While at the FoodBank, students had an opportunity to help package and sort various fresh and packaged goods to be donated to various food banks and organizations throughout the state.

P.A.L.S. members also implemented and ran a food drive of their own within Carteret High School. The donations they received were used to make holiday food baskets that students worked together to organize and decorate. These baskets were then donated to needy families within the Carteret community at the annual community-sponsored *Angel Tree* event.

At the principal's request, both P.A.L.S. and Students Against Destructive Decisions (S.A.D.D.) program participants volunteered at the school's annual Thanksgiving Day luncheon for older adults.

Last but not least, students had the opportunity to participate in two separate trips with Habitat for Humanity. During these trips students assisted in building a home in Plainfield, including putting up sheet rock, landscaping outside, and many other tasks.

With several new ideas for next semester, P.A.L.S. members are excited and eager to continue to participate in new volunteer opportunities that help better their community. They've learned that not only do they feel good about helping others, it also adds to the value of their own lives as well.



*Picture taken at a PATHWAYS/P.A.L.S. sponsored Thanksgiving Day Luncheon for senior adults held at the Carteret Senior Center. Participating for P.A.L.S are Stephanie Elliott (left) and Daija Green (right)*

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**Upcoming Health Observances**

February 2011

- **February 13 - 19 Children of Alcoholics Week**  
 National Association for Children of Alcoholics  
[www.nacoa.org](http://www.nacoa.org)

March 2011

- **March 6 - 12 Problem Gambling Awareness Week**  
 The National Council on Problem Gambling  
[www.npgaw.org](http://www.npgaw.org)
- **March 23 - Kick Butts Day**  
[www.kickbuttsday.org/](http://www.kickbuttsday.org/)

April 2011

- **Alcohol Awareness Month**  
 SAHMSA's Health Information Network  
<http://sahmhsa.hhs.gov>
- **April 4 - 10 National Public Health Week**  
 American Public Health Association  
[www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org)

May 2011

- **May 8 - 14 National Alcohol- and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Week**  
 National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.  
[www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org)
- **May 8 - 14 National Women's Health Week**  
 U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
[www.womenshealth.gov/whw](http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw)
- **May 31 World No Tobacco Day**  
 Pan American Health Organization  
[www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/en](http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/en)

**Training @ NCADD**  
**CADC C405 Class at the Middlesex Fire Academy**



**“Addictions Recovery & Family Psychological Education”**

Alcoholism and drug addiction can leave a lasting impact on families. When the individual is addicted to alcohol or drugs the entire family is also “addicted.” This course focuses on how alcoholism and drug addiction affects families. The course explores the role of the co-depend in the family. In addition, the course explores the emotional imbalance that addiction creates in families and the ‘survival roles’ that family members embrace in order to cope with the addiction. Class C405.

**February 16, 2011 from 9am to 4pm**

**\$60 per course**

Class is held at the Middlesex County Fire Academy  
 1001 Fire Academy Drive, Sayreville, NJ

**Instructor: James Harris, LCADC, MS**

For more information and to register, go to:

<http://ncadd-middlesex.org/training/cadc-classes/>



NCADD is an approved provider for the Addictions Professionals Certification Board of New Jersey (APCBNJ) and the New Jersey Department of Education/ Professional Development (Provider #1417).

We respect your right to e-mail privacy. If you are not interested in receiving periodic messages about NCADD course offerings, please e-mail your request to [ezra@ncadd-middlesex.org](mailto:ezra@ncadd-middlesex.org).

To register for NCADD’s CADC or CPS classes, just go to [www.ncadd-middlesex.org/training](http://www.ncadd-middlesex.org/training)

**Training @ NCADD**  
**RECERT Class at NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.**



**“Prevention Professionals in Schools: Navigating the System”**

The Good News: During trying times, prevention organizations are fortunate enough to report that they continue to be invited to implement evidence based programs to school aged youth in private and public schools across the state of NJ. The Challenging News: State wide budget cuts have led to significant district reorganizations; as a result, our prevention professionals are delivering structured curricula with less time, with more or less than the expected audience numbers and oftentimes in less than adequate settings. Although agencies continue to provide program specific training to their staff, this course will provide an overview of what to expect beyond the delivery of the curriculum in a school setting. It will also provide an overview of NJ Public School Policies and Procedures that impact the Prevention Professional; we will review issues of liability and professional responsibility for non-school personnel and the limitations of certification and licensure in our field. You will be presented useful tips and techniques for managing the day to day challenges of “coming from the outside in”; learning to navigate the school system, developing a support network, establishing professional lines of communication and developing and nurturing healthy boundaries. You will also review basic “classroom management” techniques for non teachers.

**March 9, 2011 from 9am to 4pm**

**\$60 per course**

Class is held at NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.  
 152 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816

**Instructor: Alexandra Lopez, MA, LCADC, SAC, CPS, CCS, DRCC**

For more information and to register, go to:

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