

2023-24 Annual Report



Prepared by
Jodi L. Severson, Executive Director
Jessica Strobusch, Media Specialist

Donations to WATCP are tax deductible, as WATCP is operating as a 501(c)(3), formal recognition pending.



Table Of Contents

Vision and Mission

President's Report -Carol Morack

Executive Director Report - Jodi Severson

Financial Report - Abigail Ziebell, Treasurer

2024 Wisconsin Treatment Courts Map

Outreach

Net-Webs

WATCP Initiatives

Board of Directors

Legislative Update

Awards and Recognition

Corporate Sponsorship

Contacting WATCP





Vision And Mission

Vision

- WATCP is a professional organization representing the interests of treatment courts in the State of Wisconsin. WATCP's multidisciplinary membership includes judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, court administrators, treatment providers, probation and community corrections officers, social service caseworkers, and other stakeholders in the field of treatment courts.
- WATCP commits to encouraging equity in all treatment courts or all participants or potential participants and identifying disparities.

Mission

- The core mission of WATCP is to empower and inspire Courts and Communities to deliver transformative Justice. Our goal is to reduce substance abuse, crime and recidivism by promoting and advocating the establishment and funding of treatment courts and providing for collection and dissemination of information, technical assistance, and mutual support to association members.
- It is the design of the WATCP to associate with and/or work closely with other Wisconsin criminal justice or treatment organizations focusing on improving local justice system management and community corrections alternatives.

President's Report

CAROL MORACK, MSW, CSAC, ICS

WATCP PRESIDENT



After serving on the Board of Directors of WATCP for nearly 10 years, I was happy to accept the position of President-Elect in April 2023, secure in the knowledge that I would have two years to grow into the President role. However, as many of you know, change can occur quickly in our world. In May, 2023, our then President, Emily Nolan-Plutchak, who had been elected to serve a second, non-consecutive term as WATCP President, was promoted within the Public Defender's Office and had to step down as President. Thus, I was installed as the President in May, 2023. While that change was sooner than I expected, my experience with the Board and even more time as a treatment provider to the participants of the Winnebago Treatment Court, gave me a solid footing in the treatment court world and with the Association I now lead.

2024 marks 20 years since WATCP was formed for the purpose of expanding, sustaining, and representing the interests of treatment courts in Wisconsin and the members who serve on them. Included in this annual report are highlights of our past year. During this time, the biggest change to our Association has been hiring Jodi Severson in November, 2023 to be the Executive Director of WATCP. Jodi started as a volunteer in 2011, and she was an independent contractor charged with organizing and executing our conferences and other administrative duties since 2015. The Board is confident that Jodi has the skill set to help guide WATCP to the next level. Working with our Treasurer, Abigail Ziebell, she has initiated some fiscal changes that will help grow and sustain WATCP's activities. She works hard to keep the conferences we sponsor to be well organized, high quality events while keeping costs in line so that the training remains accessible to those who need it.



Barron Wisconsin native and NBC's The Voice finalist Chris Kroeze sings his hit single 'Tie a Knot' during the 2024 Statewide Conference.

Our State Conference is our largest training event. In 2022, we had 630 registered participants, 30% who were virtual. Combined with vendors, staff, and speakers, our numbers were 681. In 2023 we continued the Hybrid model and had 563 in person (639 counting vendors, staff and speakers) and 42 virtual participants (roughly 7%). This year, we elected to double the number of break-out sessions from three to six, but as a result, we decided to go back to 100% in person. While we understand the appeal of a virtual component, the number of staff and cost of the equipment required to deliver a seamless virtual experience is just not feasible for an organization staffed by 1.5 FTE and volunteers and the relatively low number of virtual participants.

The 2023 State Conference featured speakers included Dr. Ken Robinson presenting on Motivational Interviewing for Judges, MRT, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Dr. Elizabeth Salisbury-Afshar presented on MAT, Guy Wheeler gave an overview of HEAT (Habituation Empowerment Adaptation Therapy), and Cliff Jacobs presented on Equity and Inclusion. We honored Judge Carl Ashley with the 2023 Jack Aulik Award for his career-spanning work to establish and promote treatment courts in Wisconsin. Additionally, we honored Judge David Reddy, Cassandra Baacke, and Judge Todd Ziegler with Hero Awards for their outstanding work within their local treatment court communities.

In June, 2023 WATCP hosted a Wisconsin State Membership meeting at the NADCP conference in Houston where 42 participants from Wisconsin treatment courts were treated to lunch by JusticePoint. They gathered to discuss issues relating to Wisconsin and share trainings they attended which they felt would be beneficial topics to bring to Wisconsin. A similar event for those attending the AllRise conference in Anaheim, CA in May, 2024, attended by nearly 50 WATCP Members.

In October, more than 115 people from 49 counties and three tribal nations gathered for our annual Coordinator/Case Manager Conference at Marriott in Madison, WI. For the first time, we had a small graduate panel kick off the conference. Other sessions included, the Role of the Coordinator, Case Management for Justice Professionals, Ethics, Understanding Toxicology Reports, How to support LGBTQIA+ clients, how to navigate the WI BAAID Rule Change, and How to address Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Treatment Courts.

In response to requests from the membership looking to have a forum to meet up and discuss issues as they arise in their courts instead of waiting 6 months to a year for a conference, WATCP initiated NetWebs in March 2023. These hour-long zoom meetings are hosted by WATCP and organized by discipline with Board Members serving in those roles and the Evidenced Based Program Manager for the State Courts moderating the sessions. Since their inception, there have been nine Coordinator/Case Manager NetWebs with an average of 30 people per session, four judicial Netwebs, three DOC NetWebs and two SPD meetings.

This past March, the members of the Board, most of our Advisory Board gathered in Fond du Lac for a strategic planning meeting. For a day and a half we reflected on the past 20 years of WATCP and the achievements and growth of Treatment Courts in Wisconsin, and then brainstormed ideas to formulate goals for the next chapter. A word that we kept circling back to was "collaboration". WATCP was organized and is structured in the same way treatment courts are, with varied disciplines collaborating toward the ultimate goal of delivering transformative justice. This is not accomplished by one branch of the CJS or one group of people, but rather through the collective voices and work of multiple disciplines and organizations. It is only through collaborative work with the State Courts, Statewide CJCC, EJS, DOJ, SPD, DOC, DHS and most recently with the newly formed WATHWC (WI Association of Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts) that treatment courts have been able to expand both in numbers and in type in Wisconsin. Twenty years ago, there were 34 drug courts in Wisconsin. Today there are more than 107 problem-solving courts, nine different types, covering 61 of Wisconsin's 72 counties. That didn't happen through one voice.

The evidence shows that treatment courts work, as long as they are organized and follow the Standards and remain faithful to the treatment court model. With AllRise releasing their updated Standards, WATCP brought Dr. Doug Marlowe to provide training at the 2024 State Conference on these updates, and we have organized our Standards Workgroup to review and update Wisconsin's Standards that were originally published in 2018. The use of Peer Support in treatment courts is growing, and WATCP supports this initiative because of the value that positive peer support and mentorship can provide for those going through the treatment court process. It is our goal to work with our partners at DHS to bring training to both the Peer/Recovery Support/Mentors serving on treatment courts and those who work with Peer Support Specialists so that they are utilized properly within the treatment court arena.

Finally, there was discussion on pre-trial diversion programs for low risk/low need justice-impacted individuals. WATCP supports the expansion of diversion programs and will assist those who work in the pre-trial area as they organize their efforts in whatever manner we can.

I look forward to serving as your President through April, 2025 and beyond, and I wish you to join me in celebrating 20 years of WATCP, 20 years of collaboration, and 20 years of helping to change lives.

**CAROL MORACK,
WATCP PRESIDENT**

Executive Director's Report

JODI L. SEVERSON
WATCP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 2004 a group of activists involved in treatment courts formed WATCP to help educate and expand treatment courts in Wisconsin. By design, they organized the Board of Directors to be made up representatives of every discipline that serves on treatment court teams. And like treatment courts...no one voice...no one role...is louder than the others. It's this collaborative design that makes treatment courts work, and it's the same principle that guides WATCP.

Since 2011 it has been my privilege to work behind the scenes with the dedicated Board of Directors, first as a volunteer, then an independent contractor, and now as their first Executive Director. WATCP is constantly evolving because the organization itself represents change ... a change in thinking and a change in perspective. Members of our board and advisory board met in March, 2024 for strategic planning. On the 20th anniversary of WATCP, we spent time reflecting on how far we've come and planning for the future. WATCP founding member and past-president Judge Elliott Levine, stated at that meeting, *"20 years ago, the CJS...judges in particular...were not thinking about treatment at the time of sentencing. Prosecutors and defense counsel were not thinking about treatment. But through treatment courts and the educational efforts of WATCP their thinking has changed. Their perspective, when facing justice impacted individuals who have a SUD or MH issues or served in our military, has changed for the better."* Along that same line, 20 years ago trauma informed care was a concept largely left up to those in the medical and therapeutic services, but now it's being utilized in the court rooms. Concepts of Equity and Inclusion are no longer just catch phrases, nor are they only believed to be just a "Milwaukee" or "Madison" problem. At the 2021 State Conference, WATCP leadership reminded the membership of some important statistics.

"Across the State of Wisconsin, jail and prison populations are rising at astounding rates. While specialty courts work tirelessly to advocate a reduction in the use of prisons and jails, progress has been uneven. The over representation of Black people in Wisconsin jails and prisons is well documented. Accounting for only seven percent of the state's residents, Black people make up 29% of the people in our jails and 41% of the people in our prisons. Native American people are incarcerated at 6.8 times the rate of white people in both state jails and prisons. Latinx people represent 6% of the state's residents, but 9% of our jail and 8% of our prison populations respectively So, why does equity and inclusion matter? Put quite simply because people deserve better. The capacity of restorative justice practices in addressing the emotional and relational needs of those who commit crimes, while engaging the citizenry when doing so, are key to achieving and sustaining healthy communities."

These changes in thinking and perspective didn't happen overnight. I thought my perspective on these things couldn't be changed because I spent my whole career over the past 30 years working for social and criminal justice organizations. But recently, I had the opportunity to attend a Peer Support Conference, and while having a conversation with a group of peer support specialists, I said that parts of the criminal justice system were broken ... that they need fixing. I was corrected by an individual who spent 15 years of his life behind bars. He said, that the CJS wasn't broken. It is working EXACTLY as it had been designed to work. It's just a flawed design that needs to be re-imagined. And suddenly my perspective was changed. When the war on drugs didn't work and a new way of dealing with SUD and MH issues was needed, folks got around the table and collaborated...worked together to design a new approach. And 30 years later, that evidenced-based model has proven to work to help high risk/high need individuals change their life.

Twenty years ago there were 34 drug courts in WI and now there are more than 107 treatment courts and eight different types of courts covering 61 of Wisconsin's 72 counties and serving five of the 11 tribal nations. That is worth celebrating! However, coloring in the squares on our county map may demonstrate progress, but it means little if those in charge of operating the courts are not trained on how to properly do their job, or if the court does not consistently adhere to the Standards and remain faithful to the treatment court model. It's not enough to just establish courts, it's imperative that they be sustained and consistently operated using evidence-based practices to run an effective court that helps, not harm its participants.

If there is anything that the past 20 years has shown us, it's that when you gather folks around the table who have the drive, the desire and the expertise to address an issue or change a system...great things can happen... transformative justice can happen! I look forward to collaborating with our local partners in the State Courts, DOJ, DHS, SPD, DOC and the WI Association of Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (WATHWC) as well as our national partners in AllRise, Justice for Vets, NDCI, NCSC, and TLPI to continue to bring top-notch training to the more than 750 members of treatment courts in WI. I am excited to be a part of the change the next 20 years of WATCP can help to bring about.



Save the Dates!

2024 Coordinator/Case Manager Conference

October 23-25th, 2024

Radisson Hotel
200 Harborview Plaza
LaCrosse, WI 54601

2025 State Conference

April 23-25, 2025

Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells
Pre-Conference session on April 22, 2025
TBD.

2025 Coordinator/Case Manager Conference

Sept. 17-19, 2025

Madison Marriott West
1313 John Q Hammons Dr.
Middleton, WI 53562



Financial Statements

ABIGAIL ZIEBELL
WATCP TREASURER



For fiscal year ending June 30, 2023:

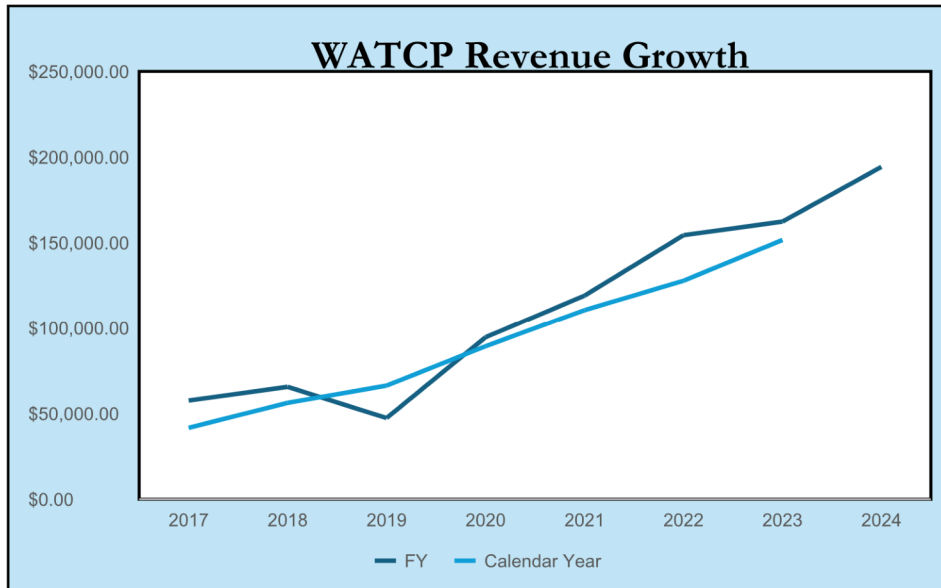
	Budgeted	Actual YTD	% of Budget
Total Revenues	\$228,530	\$247,762	108%
Total Expenditures	\$202,814	\$239,219	118%
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$25,716	\$8,453	
Total Assets = Liabilities:	\$164,984.59		

For fiscal year ending June 30, 2024

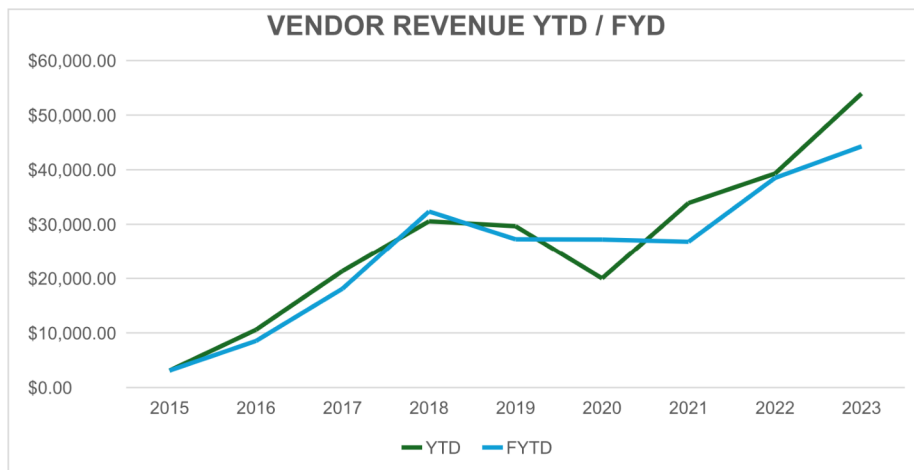
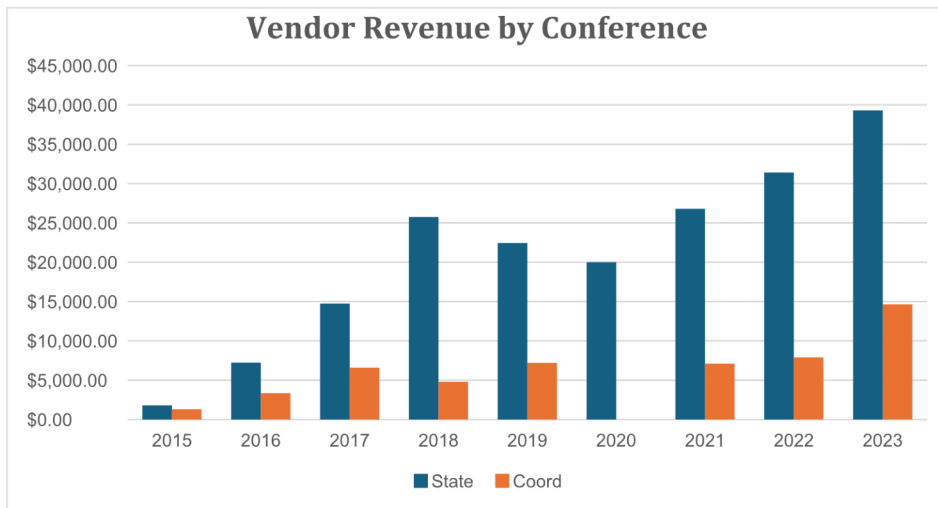
	Budgeted	Actual YTD	% of Budget
Total Revenues	\$269,195	\$256,544	95%
Total Expenditures	\$280,452	\$229,854	82%
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$34,850	\$26690	
Total Assets = Liabilities:	\$194,309		



Financial Statements, Cont'd



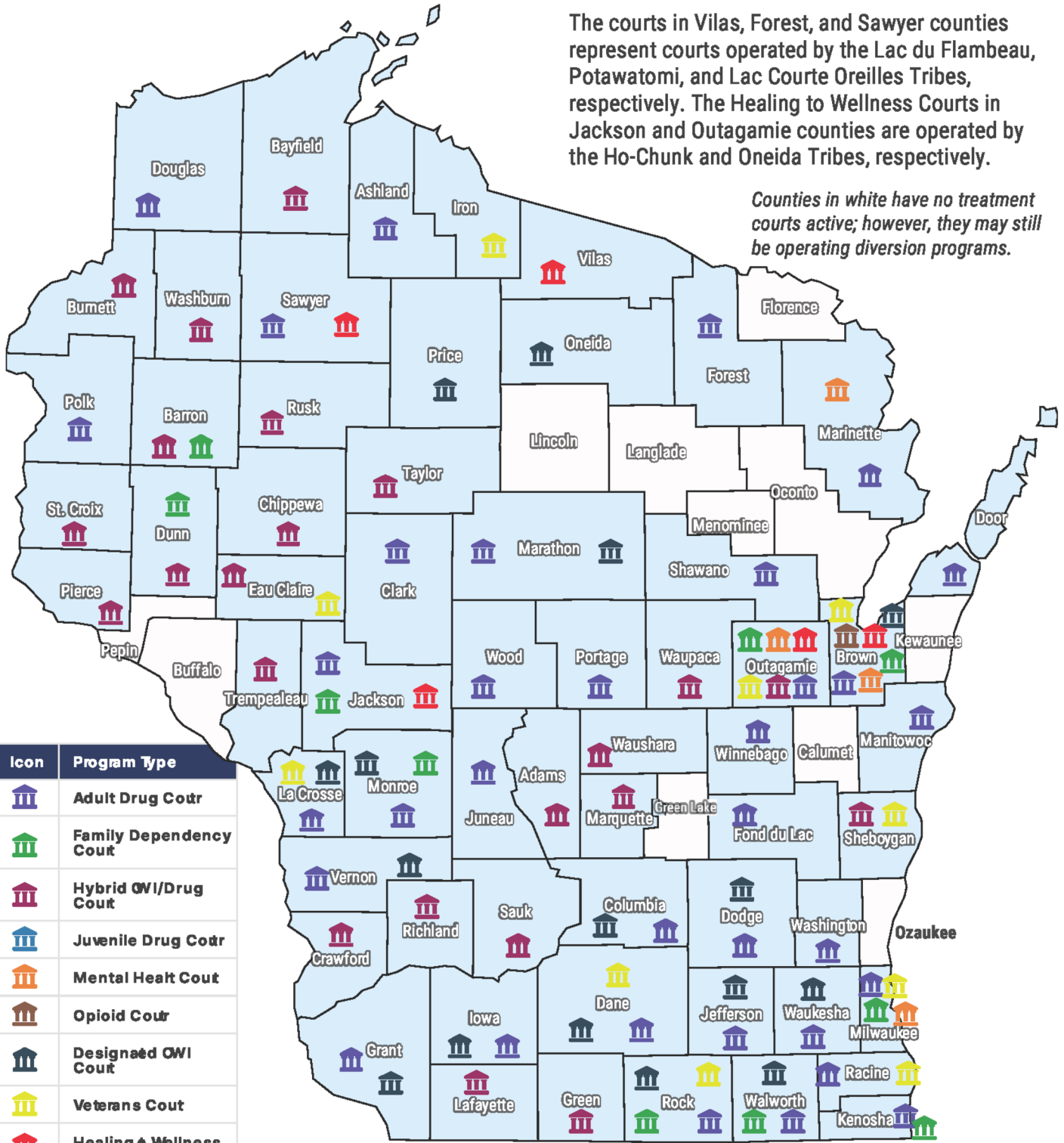
The above reflects a steady growth in revenue over the past seven years. An average of 19% by Calendar Year, and 13% by Fiscal Year.



2024 Wisconsin Treatment Courts

The courts in Vilas, Forest, and Sawyer counties represent courts operated by the Lac du Flambeau, Potawatomi, and Lac Courte Oreilles Tribes, respectively. The Healing to Wellness Courts in Jackson and Outagamie counties are operated by the Ho-Chunk and Oneida Tribes, respectively.

Counties in white have no treatment courts active; however, they may still be operating diversion programs.



Icon	Program Type
	Adult Drug Court
	Family Dependency Court
	Hybrid OWI/Drug Court
	Juvenile Drug Court
	Mental Health Court
	Opioid Court
	Designated OWI Court
	Veterans Court
	Healing & Wellness Court



Outreach Efforts

WATCP has exhibited at the following conferences over the past year. We enjoy our partnership with these organizations and the opportunity to spread the word about WATCP, its initiatives and the efficacy of Treatment Courts to reduce recidivism, change people's lives, and make communities safer.

- June 2023 - WATCP State Association Meeting, Houston, TX AllRise National Conference
- October 2023 - WI Correctional Association Annual Conference
- November 2023 - State Public Defender Annual Conference
- February 2024 - WI Police Leadership Foundation Winter Conference
- April 2024 - WI Annual Peer Support Recovery Conference
- May 2024 - WATCP State Association Meeting - AllRise National Conference

Net-Webs

In March, 2023 WATCP began hosting Netwebs for the various Roles on Treatment Courts. We've had 10 Coordinator/Case Manager netwebs attended on average by 30 participants.

These virtual gatherings have been graciously moderated by Heather Kierzek from the State Courts and Kristin Schier, Grant County Coordinator and WATCP Board Member. The State Courts also hosts judicial Netwebs for Judges serving on Treatment Courts. DOC has had 4 Netwebs and the SPD has had 2 Netwebs. These are an opportunity for those serving in particular roles on a treatment court to get questions answered by their peers and experts in the field, and help bridge the gap between our annual conferences.



WATCP Initiatives



Graduate Scholarship Fund

WATCP has set the goal of providing scholarships to graduates of Wisconsin Treatment Courts who are pursuing higher education. How much and how many scholarships we can fund depends on the amount of donations we can raise through the generosity of our members and other supporters of this initiative. We hope to award our first scholarships later this fiscal year.

WATCP will be sponsoring a Silent Auction at the Coordinator Case Manager Conference with all the proceeds going to our Graduate Scholarship Fund. A wide variety of items will be up for grabs!

By-Law Update

The motion to amend the WATCP Bylaws to enable us to become a 501(c)(3) was unanimously approved by the Membership vote, and our lawyers have started that process. Once our non-profit status is officially approved, Cash donations made to WATCP's Scholarship Fund would then be tax deductible. Thank you to all the members who took the time to vote!

Lights, Camera, Action!

Video has become an increasingly important tool in helping promote treatment courts. Hollywood couple Bradley Whitford and Amy Landecker recently partnered with WATCP to produce "Making the Case for Treatment Courts," available on YouTube at https://youtu.be/ikXb9BNVX_8

Marquette County also produced an impactful video about engaging law enforcement in treatment courts. It can also be found on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/B36FzKdA57A>



Board of Directors



CAROL MORACK
PRESIDENT



AMANDA PARLOW
PRESIDENT-ELECT



ABIGAIL ZIBELL
TREASURER



REBECCA FOLEY-CRAMER
SECRETARY



KIMBERLY KITZBERGER
PAST-PRESIDENT



HON. JANE CARROLL
JUDICIAL



D.A. CRAIG LAMBERT
PROSECUTOR



HON. CHAD HENDEE
JUDICIAL



AMY PUCILOWSKI
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



ATTY. BRAD SCHRAVEN
PUBLIC DEFENDER



EMILY MILLER
LAW ENFORCEMENT



ATTY. JENNIFER KELLEY
PUBLIC DEFENDER



MICHAEL PETERSON
LAW ENFORCEMENT



**ELIZABETH POHLMAN
MCQUILLEN**
AT - LARGE

Board of Directors Cont'd



BOB BARRINGTON
AT- LARGE



J.C. MOORE
AT-LARGE



BRIDGET SMITH
AT-LARGE



AMANDA DELEON
TREATMENT PROVIDER



JEFF STYCKA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



TIFFANY MINGUEY
TREATMENT PROVIDER



JODIE MUTH
COORDINATOR



KRISTIN SCHIER
COORDINATOR



BROOKE ERICKSON
PROSECUTOR

Are You Willing To Serve?

WATCP Board members are critical to the longevity and success of our organization, filling a vital role in representing their respective colleagues throughout the state, and helping shape conferences that will help deliver timely and relevant training. If you have such a commitment to serve, consider becoming a WATCP Board Member.

Elections will be held **April of 2025** to fill all 18 Board Director positions for the next two-year term. Check your qualifications and apply here by **January 15, 2025** to get on the ballot.
<https://www.watcp.org/board-member-nomination>

Legislative Update

WATCP Supports SB 11



Jodi L. Severson
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Carol Morack, *President*
Amanda Parlow, *Pres. Elect*
Abigail Ziebell, *Treasurer*
Rebecca Foley-Cramer, *Secretary*
Kimberly Kitzberger, *Past Pres.*

DIRECTORS

Bob Barrington
Krista Buettner
Jane Carroll
Amanda DeLeon
Chad Hendee
Jennifer Kelley
Craig Lambert
Matt Lantta
Tiffany Minguey
J.C. Moore
Jodie Muth
Mike Peterson
Elizabeth Pohlman McQuillen
Amy Pucilowski
Kristin Schier
Bradley Schraven
Bridget Smith
Jay Williams

February 10, 2024

State Representative Paul Tittel
25th Assembly District
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53705

RE: 2023 Senate Bill 11/Assembly Bill 17

Representative Tittel,

The purpose of this letter is to express support for TAD expansion proposed in SB 11/AB 17. The Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals (WATCP) is Wisconsin's only professional organization for training and advocacy on behalf of over 100 treatment courts statewide including mental health courts. Our multidisciplinary membership is comprised of over 700 criminal justice stakeholders and treatment providers from across the state. WATCP also sits on the TAD subcommittee for the statewide Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

WATCP is a longstanding supporter of TAD. In April of 2021, WATCP was able to moderate a listening session for over 100 legislators, staff, and members of the community to express the importance of continued support for the TAD program. During this presentation, we emphasized the success of treatment courts measured in terms of reductions in recidivism (10-27%) and savings to the criminal justice system (\$4 saved for every dollar invested). We emphasized how these programs save lives, restore families, and strengthen communities. Finally, we lauded the considerable legislative support TAD has received over the last 15 years. When expansion of TAD eligibility to include programs focused solely on mental illness was last considered by the legislature, WATCP supported this expansion and testified before the Assembly Committee on Corrections in support of AB 815. Once again, WATCP supports efforts to expand TAD.

Because of TAD, treatment courts have enjoyed tremendous growth. TAD currently funds 90 pretrial diversion and treatment court programs located in 56 counties and three Tribal Nations; an eight-fold increase since TAD was enacted. The requirement however, that participants in TAD funded programming "abuse alcohol or other drugs" limits the growth of other similarly effective programs like mental health courts. Participants in mental health courts often present with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders, but not always. In turn, these programs are ineligible to receive TAD funding.

Studies have shown a variety of benefits for mental health court participants and the community including reductions in recidivism, incarceration, substance abuse and increased participation in treatment services and enhanced independent functioning.¹ Wisconsin, however, has only five mental health courts statewide, likely due to a lack of available funding. Much like drug treatment courts pre-TAD, their ability to assist with the criminal justice system's most challenging offenders is limited by small numbers and inadequate treatment resources.

Mental illness among justice involved persons is concerning. Data provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance reveals that as many as 16% of incarcerated persons suffer from serious mental illness; 4-8 times the general population. Wisconsin is no different. Department of Corrections data reveals that over 40% of state inmates are diagnosed with serious mental illness.²

Over the last several years, mental illness in our state has come under increased scrutiny. Legislation addressing much needed mental health related programs has been introduced by both sides of the aisle. SB 11/AB 17 will similarly allow counties to enhance existing mental health court programs and build new ones. It will give counties a valuable tool to address a significant concern in our justice system. WATCP appreciates the efforts of sponsors to introduce and promote these bills and looks forward to their passage.

¹ Council of State Governments Justice Center for Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Dept. of Justice, 2008, Mental Health Courts A Primer for Policymakers and Practitioners, found at https://bjia.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/Publications/MHC_Primer.pdf

² Wisconsin Dept. of Corrections, 2018, Agency Budget Request, 2018-2021 Biennium, found at <https://doa.wi.gov/budget/SBO/2019-21%20410%20DOC%20Budget%20Request.pdf>

Awards and Recognition

Now Accepting 2025 Hero & Aulik Award Nominations

The Jack Aulik Award is presented each year by the Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals (WATCP) to an individual or organization in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the advancement of Wisconsin's problem-solving court movement. The award is named in honor of Judge Jack Aulik, who is credited with starting Wisconsin's first drug court.

Hero Awards are WATCP's way of recognizing the extraordinary efforts of those working within a WI Treatment Court who go above and beyond to deliver exemplary service within their court.

Do you know someone worthy of these recognitions?

Nominate them today by completing a nomination form at www.watcp.org.



Congratulations to WATCP's 2024 Award winners:

Jack Aulik Award - Former Wisconsin State Public Defender, Kelli Thompson (pictured at left)

Hero Awards - Tara Nichols, Linda Knebel, Eric Ebbole, and Robert Mann

Corporate Sponsorship



Gold Level



Silver Level



Bronze Level





| Contacting WATCP



(414) 909-2827



Admin@watcp.org



www.watcp.org