

How to Create and Sustain a Treatment Court Alumni Group

National Treatment Court Alumni
Association



Overview:

- **Meet the Presenter**
- **Autonomous Alumni Group**
- **Court Sponsored Alumni Group**
- **Contact info and Resources**



Carlos F. Gonzales, CPSW, BA, LADAC

- 2001 Adult Drug Court graduate (New Mexico)
- Certified Peer Support Worker
- Licensed Alcohol & Drug Counselor
- NM Statewide Program Manager(AOC)
- NTCAA Board of Directors(Chair)
- AllRise Faculty Trainer
- Subject Matter Expert-SAMHSA Gains, National Center for State Courts, Policy Research Associates

There's no better way to show continuing support for your treatment court participants than creating a treatment court alumni group. An active alumni group allows your participants to “start with the end in mind” by interacting with people who have completed the program and “have walked in their shoes.” The shared lived experience gained through the treatment court provides valuable insight that will benefit your program and increase the success of its participants.

“If it weren't for an active alumni in my court program, I would not be sober today.”

- Carlos Gonzales, 2001 Treatment Court Graduate





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How to Start an Court Sponsored Treatment Court Alumni Program



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Step-by-Step Guide to a Court Sponsored Alumni

- NM Administrative Office of the Courts- NM Treatment Court Standards signed by the NM Supreme Court April 2026
- Establishes an appendix (J) which describes in detail the requirements of an Alumni to represent the program and support participants and fellow Alumni.
 - Alumni required Training:
 - Ethics and Boundaries
 - Confidentiality



Step-by-Step Guide to a Court Sponsored Alumni

- Peer and Cultural Competence
- Peer Engagement
- Alumni Coordinator Training has certified 210 Alumni for 34 Programs
- Contract/Compensation/Oversight
- In April of 2022, guides were developed to initiate the process for programs to start Alumni groups
 - Program Guide to Starting an Alumni Group-Revised 04/01/2026
 - Alumni Member Guide-Revised 04/01/2026



Overview-Just Start Something

Checklist and Overview

- **Stage 1:** Plans & Permits, the basics for beginning the process
- **Stage 2:** Construction, building from the ground up-a a good foundation and solid framework
 - Step #1: Make a List of alumni graduates
 - Step #2: Connect
 - Step #3: Gather Alumni Graduates to Organize-Agenda
 - Step #4: Gather Alumni Graduates to Strategize-Agenda (Principles of Peer Core Competencies-SAMHSA)



Overview-Just Start Something

Checklist and Overview

- **Stage 3:** Finishing & Furnishing, finalizing the details and making it sustainable
 - Step #1: Organize the decisions you've made based on your preparation and planning meetings and include these decisions in your policies and procedures
 - Step #2: Ask the judge to review your policies, procedures, and plans
 - Step #3: Schedule a kick-off meeting-Agenda



Overview-Just Start Something

Checklist and Overview

Stage 4: Occupation-interaction and engagement

Location, location, location-safe and controlled environment-court or treatment facility

- Step #1: Enjoy the familial space of a supportive alumni group.
- Step #2: Continue to make it your own
- NTCAA/All Rise Toolkit:
<https://allrise.org/publications/how-to-start-a-treatment-court-alumni-program-toolkit/>



Content of Guides

Resources in the Program Guide

- ✓ Checklist and Overview
- ✓ Alumni Selection Criteria
- ✓ Principles of Peer Core Competencies-SAMHSA
- ✓ Sample Policy and Procedure Manual
- ✓ Sample Agenda for Organizational Meeting
- ✓ Sample Agenda for Strategy Meeting(s)
- ✓ Sample Agenda for Kickoff Meeting
- ✓ Sample Agenda & Topics for Ongoing Alumni Meetings

Alumni Member Guide

- ✓ Description of each training and helpful hints
- ✓ Description and process for Mandated Reporter Laws
- ✓ Principles of Peer Core Competencies-SAMHSA
- ✓ Group Process
 - ✓ Alumni and Participants
 - ✓ Alumni Only
- ✓ Sample Agenda for Alumni with Participants
- ✓ Sample Agenda for Alumni Only





How to Start an Autonomous Treatment Court Alumni Program



BASICS

CREATE DESIRE

Dreams create desire. Desire
creates determination.
Determination creates distance
between you and failure.

Jean Charest

quotelancy

LOCATE PLAYERS

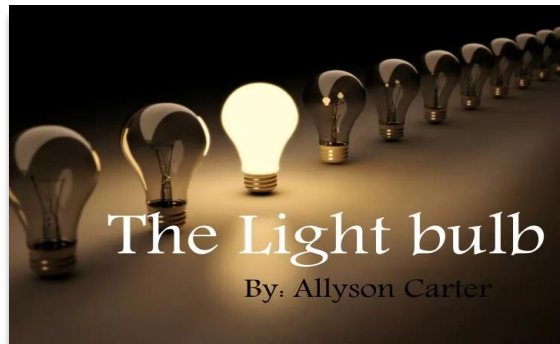


STABILIZE



NTCAATM
NATIONAL TREATMENT COURT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Elements of a Successful Alumni Program



Ideas



Support



Ownership



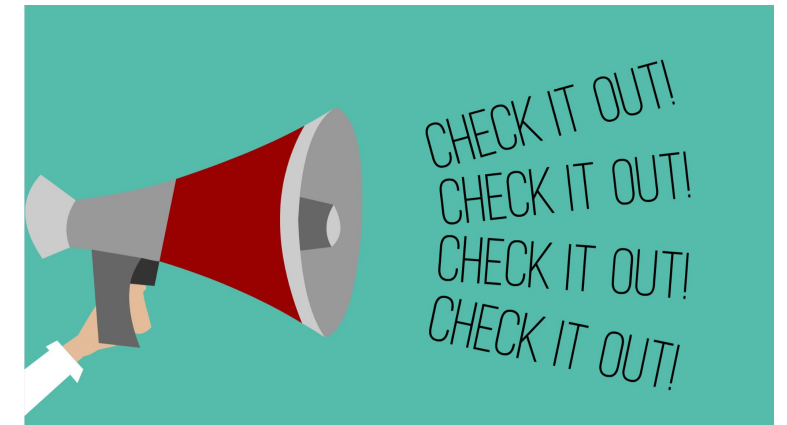
Autonomous Alumni Program Success & Growth



**Partnerships
Relationships &
Collaboration**



**Community
Leadership**

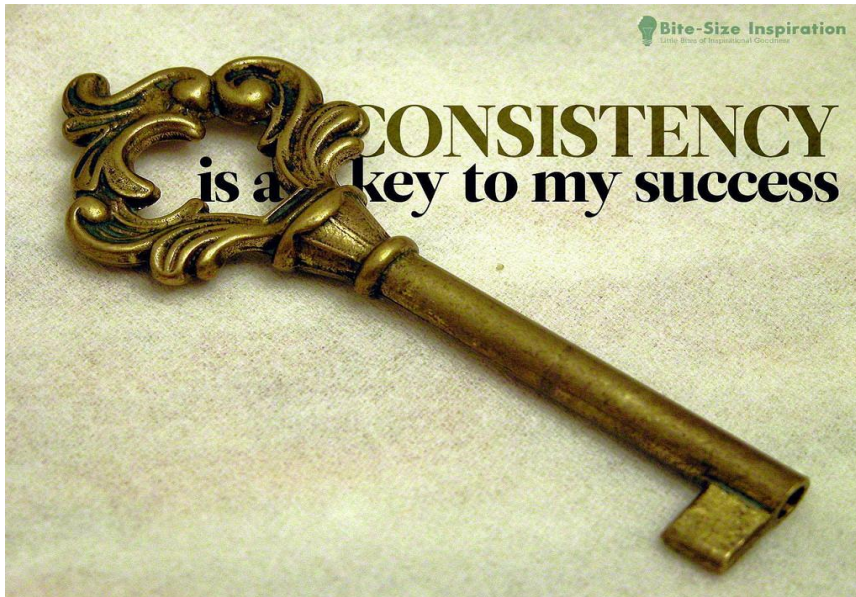


Promotion



Foundations of a Successful Autonomous Alumni Program

► Consistency



► Funding



Stretch it Out!



What to do?

**Wave your
hands in the air
like you just
don't care!**

Oh Boy! What is this?

**Wiggle it just a
little bit!**



How to Sustain an Alumni Group



What do they want to be?

- Continued Sober Support
- A Purposeful Platform
- Autonomous vs. Court-Sponsored (Non-Autonomous)
- Community Engagement
- A Vehicle For Change

Continued Recovery Support

- Meet For Coffee, Breakfast or lunch
 - Either at restaurants or fellow alumni homes
 - Or weekend BBQ's/cookouts
 - This builds and foster relationships
- Monthly or Bi-monthly check in meetings:
 - This offers continued support as well as increased connections.

“I knew that I would have to stay connected with like-minded people to sustain the gain I received in Treatment Court.”

Ron Wilson



Continued Recovery Support

- Engage in activities that promote good physical/spiritual health
 - Gym, hikes/walks, yoga
 - Camping, golfing, frisbee, rock climbing
 - Bowling, skating, dances
 - This allows alumni with common interests to have accountability and companionship with these activities.

“They helped me find structure and common ground in the community while I learned to live a life without substances and crime.” *Carlos Gonzales*



A Purposeful Platform

- **Mentor current participants:**

- Mentoring in general
- Mentoring struggling participants per requests of the court.

- **Begin collaboration w/court:**

- Start monthly court sober activities
- Engage in Alumni lead support groups
 - (great recruiting tool)

“They provided me with ways to share my voice with team members, attorneys, and other community people and this gave me a sense of purpose and belonging.” *Deena Davis*

A Purposeful Platform

- **Being an Ambassador:**
 - Having alumni attend court proceedings
 - Making announcements
 - Attending graduations, handing out swag and encouraging/inviting graduates into alumni



A Purposeful Platform

“Alumni has given me a purposeful platform, a means of giving back and helping others.”

Ron Wilson

- *Share stories*
 - Speaking at conferences,
 - Speaking at treatment programs,
 - Speaking at panels i.e. DUI panels w/ MADD



Community Engagement



- Service to the Community: Build relationships
 - Adopt a road for clean up, projects to offer homeless food (a meal), socks, small gift bags, etc...
 - Help current participants with Restorative Justice Projects

Community Engagement



- *Seasonal Recovery events:*
 - Alcohol Awareness Month (April),
 - Drug Court Awareness Month (May);
 - Recovery Month (September);
 - National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month (December).

“Recovery does not happen in a courtroom, it happens in community. I am a firm believer of this.” Abby Frutchey

A Vehicle For Change



- **Peer Work:**

- Help prepare and train graduate alumni with a means to work in the field.
- Help prepare alumni to work in the court programs as Peer Support/facilitator trainings
- Give guidance towards counselor trainings and etc....
- Find resources

“While I am so grateful for the high level of supervision, it was the engagement with my peers in recovery that helped me bloom.” Abby Frutchey

A Vehicle For Change



- *Network with other organizations:*

- Networking with community partners
- Seek out non-profit reentry programs for collaboration
- Network with RCO's

A Vehicle For Change



- **Legislative Change:**
 - Meet annually w/legislators to advocate for expansion of courts, and treatment programs
 - Advocate for funding for a continuum of care provided by alumni groups
 - Advocate for paid position to coordinate and help to sustain alumni groups.

A Vehicle For Change



- Legislative Change:

- Restoration of Felony Limited Licenses,
- Reduction of felonies upon completion of treatment court and
- Barriers which hinder employment and housing opportunities.

Autonomous vs Court Sponsored

- Autonomous

- Have more flexibility
- Can create their own standards
- May or may not want to create a relationship with the Court

- Court-Sponsored

- Must work directly with court to decide how the group will operate
- Must follow the standards(if applicable) of the court program
- The relationship is directly with the court





Join Us!

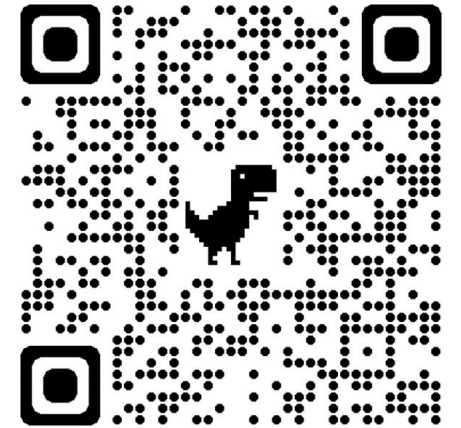
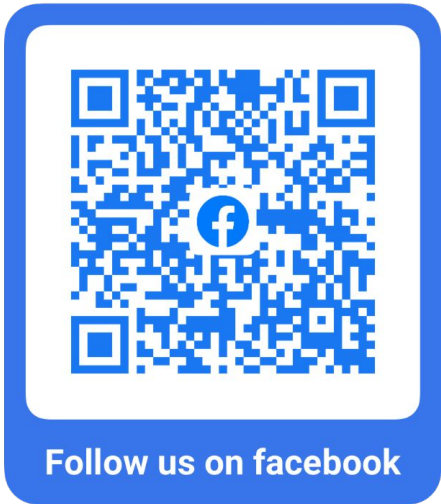
National Treatment Court Alumni Association

**Please visit us on our
website**

www.ntcaa.net

**Please submit all email inquiries to:
Info@ntcaa.net**

***Join the movement
#AlumniStrong***



NATIONAL TREATMENT COURT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION