

# MMC

## Moments

MISDEMEANOR MENTAL HEALTH COURT NEWSLETTER



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## UPCOMING

MMC TEAM MEETING  
8/4/2023 - 10AM

MMC JUSTICE  
PARTNERS MEETING  
9/22/2023 - 10AM

Amidst a flurry of activity, months have flown by and the Fulton Misdemeanor Mental Health Court begins the second half of 2023. 11 new participants joined over the past six months and the team celebrated its 16th Graduation Class in March. We were honored to host special guest speakers and new partners as well as implement more training and offerings to assist our participants. The needs of the community are vast but MMC continues moving forward in its fourth year as a certified program. For graduation in March, MMC was honored to welcome guest speaker, Zeus Luby, the Programming Director for RED Inc. Mr. Luby's keynote address was encouragement for all in attendance as he shared his story of living as a convicted felon, leading to his journey of evolution and growth into the leader and inspiration he is today. This graduating cohort was our youngest yet and were truly excited to receive an expunged record from Fulton County Solicitor General Keith Gammage.



This year the resource fair grew and MMC took May Mental Health Awareness Month outdoors with its 2nd Annual Mental Health Resource Fair. With speakers, activities and nearly 30 local service providers participating, MMC was able to emphasize Mental Health America’s message, *#LookAroundLookWithin* while sharing the resources and expertise available in the neighborhoods and beyond. The fair was interactive with speakers providing quick yoga stress relievers, food tips for mental well-being and of course, the benefits art, music, and journaling can provide. Georgia Representative Esther Panitch, District 51, updated the crowd on Georgia’s 2023 legislative actions and what lies ahead. Special guest speakers The Dharma Project, Artist Miss Ji, The Missionary, and Singer/Songwriter JA’DAKU provided so many exciting and varied options to address mental health. Georgia’s DBHDD, MHA of Georgia, NAMI, Northside Atlanta, Silence the Shame, Automotive Training Center and so many other dedicated partners, including the Fulton BOC and Justice Partners, worked together to make the event a success.



Pictured Above:  
Rep. Esther Panitch, District 51

Collaborating through a CACJ/CJCC Grant, Fulton County MMC, Fulton County Accountability Courts, and Fulton Recovery Treatment Court (previously DUI Court) hosted H.E.A.T. (Habilitation Empowerment Accountability Therapy) Facilitator training for a week in May. The 20 attendees trained also included teams from Athens/Clarke County Accountability Court, Clayton County Veterans Court, and Hall County Accountability Court. H.E.A.T. is a holistic, afro-centric, strength-based, trauma informed model that emphasizes a positive and engaging approach to treatment targeting African American/Black males, aged 18-29 involved in the criminal justice system. Darryl Turpin and Guy Wheeler, the developers of H.E.A.T., traveled from Kentucky to deliver the training that is the only culturally responsive intervention of its kind in the country. The HEAT curriculum is used in over 16 states and recognized by NADCP as a culturally responsive intervention for African American males. The MMC is excited to have four members of our clinical team trained as facilitators of this innovative curriculum.



Training continued with no downtime for the summer. Clinical Team Lead Phillip Famber received training for ASAM Criteria, Thinking for a Change, and the LS/CMI Assessment Certification. As a whole, the team is receiving bi-weekly technical assistance through the Bureau of Justice Assistance and American University on topics related to racial and ethnic disparities in treatment courts as a part of American University's Racial Ethnic Disparities (RED) Initiative project. The MMC team previously completed the RED Assessment Tool and will work with American throughout August in receiving free, individualized assistance to support our program and assure we are reducing disparities and promoting equitable outcomes through the MMC. So many great things are happening for the program allowing the team to continue to meet the needs of the community.

# GRADUATION HIGHLIGHTS



Pictured Above: (Left to Right) Graduate, Deborah Melnick, Asst. Public Defender, Phillip Famber, Clinical Team Lead



Pictured Above: (Left to Right) Chief Magistrate Judge Cassandra Kirk, Director of Fulton Judicial Behavioral Health Services Frederica McClary-Myers, Rep. Kim Schofield D-63, Com. Natalie Hall, D-4, State Court Judge Patsy Y. Porter



Pictured Above: (Left to Right) Chief Magistrate Judge Cassandra Kirk, MMC Graduation Speaker Zeus Luby, Program Coordinator Georgee Corley and State Court Judge Patsy Y. Porter