

Benton County Drug Court Awarded BJA Expansion Grant

by Michelle Barrett, CADC

The 19th Judicial District Drug Court received a Drug Court Discretionary Grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for expansion of their current program. The grant award of \$199,983 will allow the drug court in Benton County to serve more clients, as well as provide more services. The team will be expanded by two members, an additional counselor and an administrative assistant. The counselor will allow the program to grow to serve at least 120 clients. The administrative assistant will work with the three counselor to maintain client files and information and assist with case management. They maintain information on program statistics such as recidivism, inpatient treatment and dual diagnosis.

The increased staff and decreased load per person will allow the program to expand its current services. The Benton County Drug Court will implement a family education component to help the client support network better understand addiction and recovery. The counselor will be able to meet more frequently with individual clients to foster better outcomes in the program. Finally, since the Benton County Drug Court currently has a licensed mental health professional on the staff, it will be able to add some mental health services to the program. This will bring services to those participants with dual diagnosis without adding to the number of professionals involved in their treatment.

Judge Jay Finch stated "Drug Court, more than any other court belongs to the community, because we help people become healthy (continued on page 2)

\$500 Awarded to Logo Contest Winner Darrell Nicholas !



On Thursday, December 18, 2008, Tara Sharp, Treasurer of the ADCPA, presented Darrell Nicholas of the Walnut Ridge Drug Court with a check for \$500.00 as the winner of the ADCPA logo contest. Darrell's entry was selected over ten others by the ADCPA Board. The logo will be used for stationery and in future publications. Membership pins will be given to all registrants at the statewide conference in April. Congratulations Darrell! All of ADCPA is proud of you!



REMINDER: The Spring Statewide Drug Court Conference dates are April 16-17, 2009. Watch the web-site for hotel and registration information. The registration fee of \$30.00 includes membership in ADCPA for 2009.

(Benton County cont.)

members of the community and make the community better." As a part of the grant, the court will also be increasing its community interaction. The court requires all of the drug court clients to complete 60 hours of community service as part of their recovery process to learn to give back to others. The staff would like to also give back to the community that supports them. The counselors and officers will be increasing the number of presentations and educational experiences they share with both schools and community organizations.

Lastly, the staff will be able to attend the 2009 National Drug Court Conference in June. The team will use this as an opportunity to learn new and better ways to support its clients in their journey to recovery.

The Benton County Drug Court motto is "Finding pride in myself, my family and my community through recovery." The team plans to use this grant to give its clients an better chance to achieve those goals and to allow the community to gain pride in a program designed to help our county be an even better place to call home.



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Happy New Year!



Pictured above is the Benton County Drug Court Team with a smiling Judge Jay Finch.