

# CONNECTIONS

## NADAP

Volume 6 Number 1 Spring/Summer 2003

## TURNING POINT

### An arrest set one woman on the path to overcoming chemical dependency, getting a job, and finding a new life.

Jacqueline Early clearly loves her job. Her enthusiastic descriptions of the most routine tasks and the relish with which she describes mastering the job's challenges convey the energy she brings to it and the satisfaction it returns.

The job comes as a long-awaited second chance, ending an 18-year struggle with substance abuse.

"For years I didn't accept responsibility for what I did, and never thought of changing," she recalls. "Then, in 1999, I was arrested for possession – I should say I was rescued."

She was arraigned in the Bronx Treatment Court and presented with a choice between incarceration and treatment. She entered a treatment program for what would be a 14-month stay.

NADAP employment specialists assessed Jacqueline's job readiness while she was in treatment and began to equip her with the basic skills she'd need to join the world of work.

Just before graduating treatment, she landed an internship at JPMorgan Chase.

"I just needed an opportunity. I didn't know what to expect, but I wanted to try," she recalls of her first days in the internship. She proved herself, and was approved for a training course that led to a part-time position.

The new environment helps her maintain sobriety and productivity. "I have a new crowd. I enjoy my co-workers' company now," she says. "I was afraid to trust people at first, but they all turned out to be so special and caring. They're full of life."

Of course, there are still challenges, but Jacqueline now approaches them differently. "Perseverance and determination are what I live by today," she says. "I feel free now, I feel human. I make my own choices, and I'm the one who will suffer or benefit because of them."

Determination, along with the support of her co-workers and the



*Jacqueline Early*

treatment community, is very important now, as Jacqueline was recently diagnosed with a serious illness. Although treatment will require her to take a month or more off of work her employer is accommodating and her co-workers encouraging.

"Taking care of this illness has to be my focus now. But when that's done, I'm going back to work," she says resolutely. "I'm going back to work."

## INSIDE: Changing Sentences, Changing Lives

Many people in not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, public offices, and the voting booth are working to change the way substance abuse offenses are handled. New approaches like drug courts provide the necessary opportunities for lives like Jacqueline's to change.

Current sentencing practices in many

places leave little room for an offender to make a change in one's life. Even a first-time, minor non-violent offender can be sentenced to a prison term in New York State, for example. With few prospects on the outside and without the necessary support to become a productive participant in the community, one might soon end up in jail again.

Some waste years of their lives in this dreadful cycle.

Alternative sentencing practices, which utilize vocational rehabilitation services like NADAP's help people to release themselves from the cycle of chemical dependency and incarceration. This issue is dedicated to exploring these alternatives.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NADAP takes on the Economic Downturn & Criminal Justice Issues


As we move into 2003, stagnant job growth is one of the most significant challenges facing our city.

While businesses struggle to gain ground, many individuals struggle to maintain equilibrium, especially those moving into the employment mainstream for the first time. Just as their need is at its greatest, there are decreased resources available to create programs that help improve and empower individuals in the communities where they live and work.

NADAP has always taken on the challenge of working with people who have serious barriers. From our history working with at-risk populations, we recognize that the current economic uncertainty increases people's vulnerability and often triggers a return to negative life habits. Those in alternative sentencing programs, as discussed in this issue, are no different as they work to overcome serious obstacles and become employed.

While recent reforms in the welfare system stress the value of work, NADAP has had vocation as a focus since the beginning. Rehabilitation programs are shifting their focus, because regardless of the population – defendant, substance abuser or welfare recipient – success is measured in employment. NADAP is utilizing its expertise in assessment, case management, employment and professional training to develop innovative responses to this historic problem. We are meeting the challenge of harsher economic realities by expanding our services to remove barriers that preclude ex-offenders, among many others, from having legitimate and stable employment.

In this newsletter, you will hear from two people, traditionally opposing forces, who have independently contributed to ground breaking changes in the criminal justice system. One through leadership and advocacy and the other by becoming a success story, clearly demonstrating that with motivation and opportunity even the most improbable of dreams can be achieved.



John A. Darin  
President



## INSIGHT: Valerie Raine, Esq.

As director of drug treatment programs for the Center for Court Innovation, Valerie Raine assists the Hon. Joseph J. Traficanti in developing drug courts throughout New York State. From 1996 to 2000, she was project director of the Brooklyn Treatment Court, New York City's first drug court. He has a J.D. from the University of Virginia.



### How did you become involved in drug treatment courts?

I worked for many years in criminal defense, and I loved the work. But I think there are many cases where you feel a personal frustration that you're not really doing anything for the defendant. A lot of folks come to the courts with a panoply of needs. Not just substance abuse, but housing, domestic violence, poverty, lack of education, a whole catalog of problems. I felt that it was possible to protect a person's fundamental constitutional rights and still take a more holistic approach to their needs. There

are substantial philosophical questions about whether that's the role of a defense attorney, but that's another area. As long as there are careful procedures and systems set up so that it doesn't become overly paternalistic, you can both protect defendants' rights and deliver much-needed services.

### How do problem-solving courts and drug courts differ from "criminal justice as usual"?

People are still prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges, and they still have their respective courtroom roles. But what's different about problem-solving

## COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES LAUNCHES The Career Learning Center

At a time when getting a job increasingly depends on excelling as a candidate, NADAP has launched the Career Learning Center. The Center offers more intimate services to clients, and presents the first opportunity for many to explore their personal and professional potential, learn crucial skills and gain the confidence to get a job.

As part of NADAP's initiative on workforce preparedness, the Center augments Comprehensive Employment Services, a program that places people in competitive private sector jobs

throughout the city. Its expanded work scope offers employment enhancement seminars, occupational evaluations and a newly outfitted computer lab.

Successful placement in competitive employment depends on being job-ready. Many clients simply fall short in a few crucial areas – having a well-composed resume, strong interview skills and a can-do attitude. At the Center, clients are encouraged to identify their strengths and examine how their life's experiences can be used to advantage. Through a combination of workshops and their own initiative, clients receive a structured continuum of services.

Already, the first signs of success are evident. Candidates are acing their interviews and getting jobs more quickly. New employees enthusiastically talk about their jobs, show a steady optimism for what is down the road and a sense of purpose as they continue to use our services to build on their existing skills. With their newfound independence comes a real sense of possibility.

Sponsored in part by a generous grant



Verizon Computer Lab, Career Learning Center Evening Session. March 2003

courts – certainly about drug courts – is that they are able to focus on common goals, such as abstinence, recovery, and preventing any further criminal behavior. There may be disagreement about points in the process, but the goal is the same. So, the roles become less adversarial and much more focused on a common outcome than on the process of the case.

### **Do you find the work rewarding?**

It's great. It's not at all what I expected to do when I got my law degree. I loved doing criminal defense work, but it does become frustrating to see one wrecked life after another. And then to see the same wrecked life recycling through the system over and over again. The best way to sell drug courts is to see the profound change that occurs in people's lives – you'd have to be pretty tough not to buy in. One treatment court graduate, for example, recently received both a

culinary arts degree and EMS training. And one of my very favorite moments involved two young women at their mother's graduation from the Brooklyn Treatment Court. They stood up and very movingly thanked the judge for giving their mother back to them. She's still doing fabulously. They are all just wonderful, wonderful stories.

### **What developments would you like to see take place in the criminal justice system in the years ahead?**

One of the things that the Center for Court Innovation tries to do is to build the concept of the problem-solving court into the DNA of the system, so that it is no longer just a boutique court down the hallway, viewed from afar as a sort of experiment. A real accomplishment would be for all judges and courts to be willing to adopt and apply the tenets of the problem-solving court philosophy,

using the court as a coercive force that can actually help change the lives of the people who come there.

### **What is the importance of work in ensuring successful outcomes for drug court participants?**

It's wildly important. Work not only has economic benefits, but it provides self-respect and structure. Getting people sober is important, but treatment's long-term effects are certainly diminished if someone can't work or participate in something that is the moral equivalent of work. If you can't find something for people to do that rewards them personally, economically, or psychologically, then the chances of lasting success are minimal.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:  
Center for Court Innovation  
520 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10018  
[info@courttinnovation.org](mailto:info@courttinnovation.org)**

## **JUSTICE THAT WORKS:** Innovative Courts Offer Solutions for Offenders, Communities, and Taxpayers

*Alternative sentencing for low-level and non-violent offenders is gaining support and recognition as an effective option to traditional sentencing methods. As it gains momentum throughout the states, it promises tremendous opportunity for both taxpayer savings and improved outcomes for offenders, their families and communities.*

A recent study on substance abuse and America's prison population reported that of the nearly \$30 billion spent on adult corrections, over \$24 billion of it was on substance-involved offenders. It found that 80 percent of all adults incarcerated for felonies were regular users of drugs, had been convicted of a drug violation, were under the influence of drugs at the time of their crime and/or committed a crime to support their habit.

By 2003, New York was leading the nation in offering nonviolent offenders with substance abuse problems an opportunity to seek treatment in lieu of prison time, as part of a mandated-treatment policy that continues to be implemented system-wide.

Participants in the Drug Treatment Alternative-to-Prison (DTAP) Program in Brooklyn have been found to remain in treatment six times longer than the national average, with over 53% successfully graduating. Drug courts not only address the root causes of the crime, but significantly impact the future direction of participants – 92 percent of DTAP



participants were working after participation and it is estimated that 67 percent are less likely to return to prison. The average cost per participant is under \$33,000, as compared to an average cost of \$64,000 for incarceration.

Vocational services like those NADAP provides are an integral part of their continued success. With 30 years of experience as a vocational service provider, NADAP offers professional training, job preparation, placement, and follow-up support so that ex-offenders can fully complete their recovery. "In many cases, the best social service you can offer someone is a job", said Valerie Raine of the Center for Court Innovation (see interview). Courts like the Brooklyn Treatment Court, of which she was a former director, monitor their participants' progress and partner with other public and private organizations to provide a range of supportive services. As ex-offenders become productive and tax-paying workers, New York will fully realize the social and economic benefits of alternative sentencing.

# NADAP

355 Lexington Avenue  
 New York, NY 10017  
 (212) 986-1170  
 www.nadap.org

NONPROFIT  
 ORGANIZATION  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 PLATTSBURGH, NY  
 PERMIT NO. 254

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

### Are your clients really ready?

NADAP's *Professional Training* program is offered statewide to professionals who work with the substance abuse, criminal justice and other at-risk populations. Three one-day training sessions explore the vocational rehabilitation process and offer practical techniques on how to prepare people with multiple barriers for employment. This training informs participants on the issues involved in effective client rehabilitation and reintegration with employment as a key factor.

Training	Date	Region
<i>Strategies to Prepare Clients for Employment*</i>	May 7	New York City
	June 4	New York City
	June 12	Buffalo
	June 20	Elmira
<i>Assessing Readiness &amp; Planning for Employment*</i>	May 1	Rochester
	May 1	New York City
	May 15	New York City
	June 12	New York City
<i>Employment, Placement &amp; Marketing Techniques*</i>	May 13	Buffalo
	May 20	New York City
	June 19	New York City
<i>Vocational Rehabilitation Training for Drug Court Teams*</i>	June XX	Buffalo
	June XX	White Plains

NADAP's training can be customized with consideration of the region's labor needs and market composition, the role of the professional, the system within which they operate, and the profile of the population served.

**For further information, contact NADAP's Training Department at (212) 986-1170, ext. 189.**

*\*Trainings listed offer six vocational rehabilitation credits towards CASAC certification.*

## COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES LAUNCHES

### The Career Learning Center

*Continued from page 2*

from **Verizon**, this initiative will be funded primarily through corporate and foundation supporters. The Center, in its first phase of an extensive program expansion, provides essential services that help more clients use their current job as a foundation to a meaningful career.

**Treatment providers wishing to refer their clients to the Career Learning Center should contact NADAP's Comprehensive Employment Services program, centrally located in mid-town Manhattan, at 212-986-1170.**

**JOIN US AT**  
 NADAP's annual  
 "New York, New York" Luncheon  
 featuring the Lewis Rudin Award  
 April 29, 2003  
 The Essex House Hotel

*For further information, please contact  
 Margaret Brown at 212-370-5804  
 mbrown@abny.org*

## CORPORATE DONORS AND NADAP – DARING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

To find out how NADAP's corporate sponsorship program can reward your company by directly impacting individuals and the communities in which we live and work, contact Cathryn Krugman, Director of Development at (212) 986-1170 Ext. 145. Explore a variety of philanthropic partnerships and employer opportunities that will help make your business a leader in community relations and an important thread in the fabric of our city.

## NADAP EXECUTIVE STAFF

John A. Darin, *President*  
 Susan Zitter, *Executive Vice President*  
 Hannah Kates, *Senior Vice President*  
 Gary Stankowski, *Vice President*