ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA COUNTIES ANNOUNCES 2019 COUNTY ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Winners include programs in Anoka, Stearns, Traverse, and Washington Counties.

(St. Paul, MN)—Four outstanding programs from counties across Minnesota were recognized with Association of Minnesota Counties’ (AMC) 2018 ‘County Achievement Awards’ for exhibiting excellence and innovation in their counties. 2019 AMC President Scott Schulte, an Anoka County commissioner, presented the County Achievement awards at the association’s annual conference December 11 in St. Cloud. The recipients were nominated by their counties and selected by a committee of county officials.

About the Award Winners:

Substance Use Outpatient Treatment Project
Traverse County

Traverse County Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Outpatient Treatment Program opened in January 2019. This is the only SUD program in Traverse County and until the county stepped up to provide the treatment services, the county residents had to commute 35-40 miles several times per week to obtain them. The distance was a barrier because of the transportation options, as well as clients lacking drivers licenses due to DUI/DWI. The 2020 SUD reform was the impetus for establishing the program, allowing direct access to Traverse residents. The county supported education for their staff to obtain Licensed Addiction Drug Counseling (LADC) certification as well as Peer Support Recovery certification. The county also obtained their 245G Outpatient Treatment License. The program has provided outpatient treatment to 12 clients through the first six months of being open and has generated substantial revenue for the county. They have also offered a weekly peer support group for the community as a whole. This program has created efficiencies for the courts, probation, and child protection systems in Traverse County as well as offered an opportunity to integrate outpatient treatment with Drug Court treatment and outpatient mental health services. Local service delivery is optimal and achieved.
Human Services Leadership Mentorship Program
Anoka County

Access to critical leadership support in the first year can shape a supervisor’s success during the transition and development of necessary management skills. A recognition of these challenges led to the development of the Anoka County Human Services Leadership Mentorship Program. In 2016, the Advisory taskforce, composed of leaders from the five departments in the Anoka County Human Services Division, worked with a consultant to determine the goals and structure of the leadership mentorship program. A 12-month mentorship program, based on research and best practices, started in October 2018. New and seasoned supervisors, managers and directors interested in participating in the Leadership Mentorship Program completed interest forms and identified individual expertise as well as areas to expand professional growth. Mentors and mentees were paired based on this information, with final approval made by the division directors. Our inaugural year saw nine mentor/mentee matches with each committed to meeting at least one and a half hours each month. Seventy-seven percent of the initial pairings were still meeting by the end of the first year with the majority planning to continue past their one-year commitment. The program averaged a four out of five in overall satisfaction.

Dosage Probation
Washington County

Washington County Community Corrections is one of two sites in the nation creating a new way to deliver probation services to adult offenders, called Dosage Probation. The model was first developed through a collaboration with The Center of Effective Public Policy and a judicial district in Milwaukee, Wis. Dosage probation relies on an offender’s internal motivation to change behavior. Probationers may shorten the time they are under probation supervision by actively participating and completing programming to reduce the likelihood of future criminal behavior. It is more efficient and cost-effective than the traditional model of supervision in which probationers are sentenced to years of supervision with or without behavior change conditions.

Mental Health Steering Committee
Stearns County

In Stearns County, the Mental Health Steering Committee has impacted lives in the community in a way that is cutting edge, impactful, and cost-effective. This unique collaboration is transforming delivery of health and human services and building well-being in the community. These efforts have closed the gap between visioning an effective delivery system to implementing effective strategies for those with mental health and/or substance use issues. All efforts have moved from simply reacting to crises to prevention and reduction of trauma. This program is truly a success story worth sharing.