



ALUMNI
GROUP



TURNING POINT

Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities

Presiding Judge Joy Malek Oldfield



SUMMIT COUNTY TURNING POINT PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP

PRESENTER JUDGE JOY MALEK OLDFIELD

TURNING POINT PROGRAM SUMMIT COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, GENERAL DIVISION



Judge Joy Malek Oldfield graduated from the University of Akron School of Law after obtaining a bachelors degree in sociology from John Carroll University. Before entering public service, she was recognized throughout the State of Ohio as a plaintiff’s trial attorney.

Judge Oldfield started her legal career with Scanlon & Gearing Co., LPA, and then as a partner at Hill Hardman Oldfield, LLC, where she practiced in the area of complex civil litigation and appeals. A persuasive and effective trial lawyer, she represented clients in state and federal courts throughout Ohio, as well as before the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Supreme Court of the United States.

The individuals whose causes she undertook suffered age, gender and race discrimination, sustained serious personal injury, and/or unfortunately lost loved ones due to professional or other negligence. The hallmark of Judge Oldfield’s practice as a lawyer was her work ethic, sharp courtroom skills and compassion for humanity. Drawn to helping people in a larger way, she left a successful career as a private attorney to serve as a magistrate for Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer in the Summit County Common Pleas Court. As a magistrate, Oldfield presided over bench and jury trials for civil cases.

In 2011, Judge Oldfield was elected to the Akron Municipal Court, serving until 2016. There, in addition to her duties as a trial court judge, the other judges elected her as the administrative/presiding judge from 2014–2016. And, in keeping with the philosophy of treatment in lieu of incarceration, she revamped and presided over the Akron Municipal Substance Use Docket from 2013–2016. Judge Oldfield joined the General Division of the Summit County Common Pleas Court in November 2016, and her colleagues immediately selected her as presiding judge of the Turning Point Program (the felony substance use docket).

The hallmark of Judge Oldfield’s judicial service has been her tireless work to impact and educate individuals on the disease of addiction and the beauty of recovery. Through her years on the bench, Judge Oldfield spearheaded various initiatives to try and meet all needs – physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual – for those suffering from the disease of addiction. Her innovations in this field have been widely recognized. Judge Oldfield Founded Faith in Recovery – designed to provide interested participants a spiritual connection along their recovery journey; and, Y-STRONG, designed to provide participants with access to area YMCA facilities for physical wellness. Also under her leadership, the Turning Point Program obtained Summit County’s first specialized docket therapy dog, “Tank.” With Tank’s help, participants can relax, reduce their level of stress and feel more comfortable in the court setting.

In addition, Judge Oldfield works to educate others – locally, state-wide and on the national level. Two national entities, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) invited Judge Oldfield to present in a national expert panel to develop guidance for providers. She also presented “Trauma in Specialty Court Settings” for SAMHSA’s National Center for Trauma-Informed Care and Alternatives to Restraint and Seclusion and GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation. The session was part of a five-part series and provided information on how treatment courts can provide a trauma-informed approach to support recovery. Since then, SAMHSA’s GAINS Center continues to partner with Judge Oldfield as a leader and expert in the field of recovery.

In 2019, Judge Oldfield taught Pretrial Advocacy to second and third year law students at the University of Akron School of Law. Judge Oldfield continues to teach that course today, designed to instruct students on the skills, standards and ethics required for civil litigation. A Summit County resident, Judge Oldfield has three daughters.

PRESENTER BEN RICH

TURNING POINT PROGRAM SUMMIT COUNTY ALUMNI COORDINATOR



Benjamin Rich is a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Group Therapist at IBH Addiction Recovery in Akron, Ohio. Born and raised in Akron, he has dedicated his life to helping others overcome addiction and embrace lasting recovery. Drawing from both clinical training and personal experience, Benjamin creates a safe, compassionate environment where individuals can explore their challenges, build resilience, and rediscover purpose.

Benjamin's own sobriety, which began on April 6, 2022, has been a defining part of his journey. He emphasizes the importance of cultivating genuine connection—with self, with others, and with community—as the foundation of sustainable healing. His approach combines therapeutic expertise with a deep belief in the power of vulnerability, honesty, and shared growth.

Beyond his professional role, Benjamin is a devoted husband and father of two. He is passionate about breaking generational cycles of pain and passing on healing, love, and hope to his children. Both personally and professionally, his mission is to walk alongside others as they reclaim their lives and discover the freedom that comes with recovery.

HISTORY OF THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM

THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM, ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED IN 2002 AS THE SUMMIT COUNTY COMMON PLEAS ADULT FELONY DRUG COURT, IS A SPECIALIZED DOCKET ESTABLISHED TO ASSIST SUBSTANCE USE DEPENDENT FELONY OFFENDERS IN SUMMIT COUNTY ON THEIR ROAD TO RECOVERY, BY PROVIDING SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING TO ADDRESS THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS. IN 2013, TO REDUCE THE STIGMA FOR PARTICIPANTS, THE PROGRAM WAS RETITLED THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT STATEMENT SUMMIT COUNTY IS A COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY THAT STRIVES TO SEE EACH CITIZEN THRIVE. THROUGH THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM, OUR AIM IS TO CREATE MEANINGFUL AND LASTING CHANGE. ADDICTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DISEASE. IT REACHES ACROSS AGE, RACE, GENDER, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, AND ACROSS ALL FACETS OF LIFE AND LIVED EXPERIENCES.

EACH DAY OUR FOCUS IS ON PEOPLE; BUILDING TRUST, PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SEEING PEOPLE FOR WHO THEY ARE WHILE SUPPORTING THEIR GOALS. TO ENSURE OUR SUCCESS, BEST PRACTICES IN EQUITY AND INCLUSION WILL BE CONSIDERED IN ALL WE DO – AT ALL LEVELS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THROUGH THE RESOURCES OFFERED TO ALL CLIENTS. THIS COMMITMENT ALLOWS US TO ESTABLISH POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT LEAD TO ACCESS, OPPORTUNITY, AND A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS.

THE TURNING POINT JUDGE, STAFF, AND ALL COMMUNITY PARTNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR INTENTIONALLY FOSTERING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE EACH INDIVIDUAL FEELS WELCOMED, RESPECTED, SUPPORTED, AND APPRECIATED. WE ARE COMMITTED TO USING OUR PLATFORM TO REMOVE SYSTEMIC BARRIERS THAT PREVENT FULL PARTICIPATION IN OUR PROGRAM. THIS CAN BE A “TURNING POINT” IN LIFE AND WE ARE HERE TO HELP.

DEVELOPING AN ALUMNI GROUP? IDENTIFYING NEEDS. EARLY CONSIDERATIONS.

- **IS THERE INTEREST WITHIN THE TREATMENT COURT TO DEVELOP AN ALUMNI PROGRAM?**
 - **CAN WE GET JUDICIAL APPROVAL?**
- **DO WE HAVE THE TIME AND AVAILABILITY IN OUR SCHEDULES TO COMMIT TO THE PROCESS?**
- **CAN WE SUPPORT THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ALUMNI GROUP?**
 - **WILL WE HAVE ENOUGH ENGAGED ALUMNI TO SUSTAIN THE PROGRAM?**
 - **ARE THERE ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO ASSIST WITH ALUMNI EVENTS?**

WHY DEVELOP AN ALUMNI GROUP?



There is no better way to show continuing support for treatment court participants and the program than creating an alumni group. An active alumni group supports the work of the treatment court team and highlights for participants that recovery is possible. Robust alumni groups can directly support current participants and provide the lived experience and “walked in their shoes” perspective and recovery support. Although the groups vary, depending on the skills of the alumni participating, in general they not only provide needed peer connections but can also offer group activities and structured events.

TOP 6 REASONS TO HAVE AN ALUMNI GROUP

01

Create peer relationships among current and former participants.

02

Provides the team with access to the expertise of the alumni's lived experience.

03

Creates opportunities for fellowship, engagement, and/or activities for participants in the program.

04

Keeps alumni engaged following commencement, offering connection and extended recovery support.

05

Creates opportunities for alumni to contribute to their community.

06

FUN

ENGAGING YOUR ALUMNI

Make a list of treatment court alumni. Go back as many years as possible. Create a spreadsheet that includes name, phone number, email address, and physical address. It is also important to check the current legal status of each alumni before including them in the group.

Encourage current participants to join the alumni group at their graduation. Ensure graduates have the alumni group contact information.

Once alumni information has been collected it's time to connect.



PRO-TIP: Alumni groups shall only be established with judicial approval.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR ALUMNI

Create an event that will kick off the creation of your alumni group.
The purpose of this event is to gain interest in the alumni program.

Discuss some of the following:

What does an alumni program look like and how could it benefit you, current participants, and the community?

What would it have been like if there would have been an alumni program when you went through treatment court?

What would the “perfect alumni group” look like?

During our kick-off meeting we discussed the opportunity to apply for our alumni coordinator position. Alumni were given the job description and expectations of the position. If interested, applications were available.

Our kickoff, January 7, 2025.



TURNING POINT PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

The Turning Point Program Alumni Coordinator is responsible for managing and facilitating ongoing support for individuals who have graduated from a treatment court program, maintaining communication, organizing alumni events, connecting graduates with community resources, and advocating for their continued recovery and successful reintegration into society; essentially acting as a liaison between the court, alumni, and community support networks.

Job Qualifications:

Experience working with individuals in recovery from substance abuse.

Strong communication and interpersonal skills to build relationships with alumni and community partners.

Ability to organize events, manage data, and maintain detailed records.

Knowledge of the criminal justice system and treatment court practices.

Understanding of addiction and recovery issues.

Job Function:

Reach out to graduates regularly to check on their progress and provide support.

Organize alumni meetings, social events, and workshops to foster connection and shared experiences.

Develop and implement alumni newsletters or online platforms to share updates and information.

Assist in the development and implementation of post-graduation plans for treatment court participants.

Collect feedback from alumni to improve the treatment court program and alumni support services.

Track alumni engagement and participation in programs.

Maintain accurate records of alumni contact information and progress.

Work closely with the treatment court team, including judges, probation officers, case managers, and treatment providers.

ORGANIZING YOUR ALUMNI

Once you have designated an alumni coordinator and secured commitments from some of your alumni, it is time to organize and develop their community.

From there we began to strategize and plan.

***Remember-** equality is synonymous with empowerment. Most members will respond more effectively if they feel that all members are equal.

Below is our Mission Statement.

Turning Point Program Alumni Group Mission Statement

The Turning Point Alumni Program provides ongoing peer and social support, resources, and advocacy to sustain long-term recovery, support and engage current participants in the Turning Point Program, and enhance the well-being of the broader community. We foster an open and inclusive community for all Turning Point Program graduates, welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

PRO-TIP: Have one treatment court team member overseeing your alumni program.

IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUR ALUMNI GROUP

Create a Policy and Procedure Manual accessible to all members of the group.

Our manual includes our history, mission statement, purpose, membership, attendance policy, participation policy, responsibilities of the coordinator and members, a code of ethics and a confidentiality policy.

Organize your strategic goals, which will need to be realistic and attainable based on the commitment of your alumni members.



PRO-TIP: Remember, make this your own creation and give it character!

ALUMNI ROLES

The alumni role is different than the certified peer role on the treatment team.

- Alumni are not therapist, attorneys, doctors, or faith-based leaders.
 - Alumni DO NOT have legal privilege with confidentiality.
- Alumni may need to navigate ethical challenges, so it is highly suggested that ethics training is provided and or an agreement is developed.
- Clear boundaries must be established to grow a healthy relationship between the court, alumni and the participants.
 - Prioritize safety, respect, privacy and setting clear expectations.
- Remember that Alumni are the mentors and role models for program participants and others in recovery.

**Community
Service**

**Chili
Cook-off**

**Recovery
Events**

**GROUP
IDEAS**

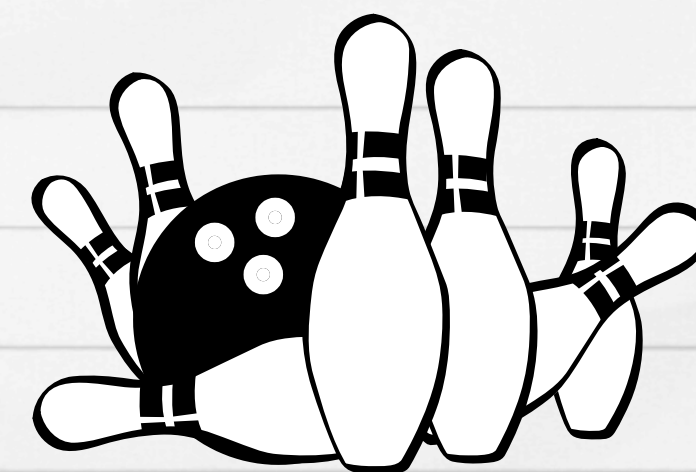
Wellness Walk

**Scavenger
Hunt**

Bowling



The Turning Point Alumni group hosted a night of sober fun and competition at Apollo 3 Bowling Center.



**TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!
THE TURNING POINT ALUMNI, FAMILY, AND
FRIENDS HIT IT OUT OF THE PARK AS THEY
ENJOYED A RUBBER DUCKS GAME FOR A NIGHT
OF BASEBALL, BONDING, AND BALLPARK
SNACKS. A TRUE HOMERUN HANGOUT!**





The Turning Point Alumni group hosted their first annual “Clash of the Courts” on September 13, 2025 in collaboration with the City of Akron. Valor Court was coached to victory by Judge Susan Baker Ross and Turning Point was coached by their very own Judge Joy Malek Oldfield. This very special event was made possible by the OneOhio Recovery Foundation as well as IBH Addiction Recovery, The JADFA House, Just A Dad From Akron, SkyPoint Recovery, the City of Akron, and Hope United. It was a day full of recovery, fellowship and fun. We may not have taken home the trophy but at the end of the day, we celebrated the power of the recovery community in a positive way.



TURNING POINT ALUMNI OCTOBER CALENDAR

The Turning Point Alumni group host a monthly alumni meeting and an alumni focused event. Additionally, the group keeps a calendar of events that boosts alumni leads and special recovery events.



OCTOBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Alumni Townhall meeting 7-8 pm JADFA House	2	3	4 Neil K. Lead 10am Faith & Blue Hardesty Park 11am - 2pm
5	6 Friends in Tents Open House 445 N. Cedar St	7	8 IBH Main Campus Fall into Recovery 5-7 pm	9	10	11 Kingsway Pumpkin Patch
12	13	14	15 Specialty Docket Meeting 4-7 pm Coffee House	16	17	18 Shawn K. Leading 10am ARC Fall Festival 3-6 pm Haunted House
19 The JADFA House 7k/1 Mile 9am	20	21	22 Specialty Docket Meeting 4-7 pm Coffee House	23	24 Brody leading 7pm 937 Kenmore Blvd	25
26 JADFA Trunk or Treat 1-3pm	27	28	29 Specialty Docket Meeting 4-7 pm Coffee House	30 Duke leading 7pm 1601 S. Main St	31	

IS OUR ALUMNI GROUP WORKING?

WAYS TO GET FEEDBACK:

SURVEYS

TOWNHALL MEETINGS

DIRECT CONTACT

DOODLE

Feedback is essential in group work as it enhances communication, fosters collaboration, and drives continuous improvement among team members. Feedback facilitates open dialogue within a team, allowing members to express their thoughts and concerns. This open communication helps to clarify expectations, align goals, and ensure that everyone is on the same page. When team members feel comfortable sharing feedback, it creates a more transparent and trusting environment, which is crucial for effective collaboration.

6 MONTHS OF IMPLEMENTATION, TIME TO REVIEW. WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOES NOT?

Continue to review
and revise policies
and procedures.

Review the
coordinators role.
Are they fulfilling their
job responsibilities?

Evaluate the
effectiveness of the
alumni specific events.
Make adjustments if
needed.

Is the alumni group
meeting the needs of
active participants?

Are we connecting
with the
community?

Are we
having
FUN??

WHAT OUR ALUMNI ARE SAYING

It is a vital source of support and connection. It provides a safe space for individuals in recovery to share their experiences, encourage one another, and continue building a life of stability and purpose. Alumni play an important role in giving back to current participants, showing that long-term recovery is possible through commitment, accountability, and community. – Nikki Rodkey

Alumni group helps me stay connected with the program that helped save my life. The alumni group is important because having a support group is imperative to staying sober – Jamie Posten

I love the friendships and relationships I've been blessed with. The alumni group is a safe place where everyone helps each other. – Tim Hunt

What I love about our Alumni Group is the sense of community and sustained connection! We get to have fun, build friendships, give back to the community, and support others still in the program. An Alumni group is important because it keeps those connections going after graduation, offering support, continued accountability and encouragement to stay on track and keep growing in recovery! It also contributes to decreasing stigma showing that “WE” do recover to the community at large and that people are more than just the sum of their past or criminal record! – Leah Cohen-Packard



SUMMIT COUNTY TURNING POINT PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP

WHAT OUR ALUMNI ARE SAYING

The Turning Point Alumni group has been a huge part of my recovery journey. Being surrounded by others who understand what I've been through has given me strength, support, and hope. I love being part of it because it gives me the chance to share my story and give back to the community, showing others that recovery is possible. The meetings, events, and friendships keep me grounded and remind me that I'm never alone on this path. – Sone Rassavong

I feel the alumni group is important for all of us for accountability and growth. It continues to remind us where we came from and pushes us to help our newcomers with the same support that we were given and to continue to provide our community with resources we utilized ourselves. – Krista Chavarria

My favorite thing about the alumni group is seeing people continue to get involved and live their best life, even after graduating the program. I think its important because it shows people in the program that we don't live this way just to get finished with court. We do what we do because this new freedom in life is better than any of us imagined it could be. – Matt Hunsucker

The alumni group helps me stay connected with turning point. It's important to help new clients see what is possible, that you can graduate and live a new life in recovery that you love – Tracy Affolter



SUMMIT COUNTY TURNING POINT PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP

FINAL THOUGHTS

THE SUPPORT AND LIVED EXPERIENCE OF ALUMNI AND PARTICIPANTS BEING SHARED CONSISTENTLY WILL ENHANCE RECOVERY GOALS AND LIFE SKILLS. AS LONG-TERM RECOVERY CAN BE CHALLENGING AT TIMES, PEER SUPPORT IS ABSOLUTELY A FOUNDATIONAL GUIDE TO SUCCESS. THOSE ALUMNI WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATED, AND ARE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR TIME, EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH, AND HOPE ABOUT RECOVERY WILL EMPHASIZE DIGNITY, VALUE, AND HUMANITY.



SUMMIT COUNTY TURNING POINT PROGRAM ALUMNI GROUP

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**THANK
YOU VERY
MUCH!**

