

PRESS RELEASE  
HPP/OCJS  
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION AWARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2018

(Chillicothe, OH) The Ross County Heroin Partnership Project (HPP) was awarded the National Criminal Justice Association Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award for the Midwest Region for the impact it has had on the opiate epidemic in Ross County. Nominated by the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) Executive Director, Karhlton Moore, the HPP received the award for the collaboration with the community working to reduce overdose deaths and positively impact the prevalence of opioid use disorder and substance use disorder. A key component of the recognition is due to the Post Overdose Response Team (PORT) and its impact on those who have overdosed on opiates.

Michelle McAllister, Coordinator of the HPP, was very pleased to receive the award. "This award reflects the efforts of our entire community, especially from law enforcement, drug courts, Paint Valley ADAMH board, treatment providers, the Ross County Health District, and Adena Health System. It is difficult to keep up the fight in this long battle but moments such as this give us the energy to persevere."

The HPP was formed in 2015 and funded with a \$100,000 grant from the OCJS Byrne Grant program. The grant was designed to fund a coordinator to develop the linkages and collaborative relationships necessary to impact this public health crisis.

Executive Director Moore said, "I could not be more pleased with the efforts of the Heroin Partnership Project. This multiagency comprehensive approach to the heroin epidemic serves as a model for other communities across the country battling the same problem."

Ross County Common Pleas Court Judge Michael Ater, the pioneer of drug court dockets in Ross County, was also very pleased at the national recognition of these efforts. "We can't prosecute or incarcerate our way out of this situation. By treating opioid use disorder as an illness and helping those in the criminal justice system take a different path has shown me that not everyone is condemned to a life of addiction, if they are willing to take advantage of the opportunity presented."

Ross County Commissioner Doug Corcoran and HPP Chair and Ross County Coroner Dr. John Gabis both said the community deserves this award for all their united efforts. Without a willing community, the opiate death and addiction rate would not be on the decline. Corcoran also stated, "We live in a very supportive community. While the publicity of the opiate epidemic has been negative, we have more positive stories tell than negative stories."

Contact: Michelle McAllister 740-703-8608  
[michellemcallister@rosscountyohio.gov](mailto:michellemcallister@rosscountyohio.gov)