



# Fall 2015



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Produced by Chris Pleasanton



## GARDEN PROJECTS

The Hartford Community Court community garden projects  
(see more on pg. 5)

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## WELCOME JUDGE GEATHERS

The Hartford Community Court welcomes its new presiding judge, Honorable Tammy D. Geathers. As presiding judge, Judge Geathers sits on the bench for the majority of community court sessions and ensures the policies and practices of the Judicial Branch are in effect at the court. Judge Norko continues to sit on the bench of the Hartford Community Court on Tuesdays.

Judge Geathers has been serving as a judge in Connecticut for more than a year. Previously, she served as an assistant attorney general for 16 years and as a public defender for nine years. Judge Geathers is a graduate of the University Of Connecticut School Of Law. She was raised in Hartford.

**"I am honored to be selected as the presiding judge of the Hartford Community Court following in the giant steps of Judge Norko. I believe in the community court approach, which provides accountability and services and allows for second chances whenever possible."**

**Hon. Tammy D. Geathers**



Hon. Tammy D. Geathers

# Community Court Statistics

		JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	TOTALS
Total Arraignments	633	570	508 846	485	2,196
Community Service Hours	2,934	3,296	3,858	2,514	12,602
Value of CS (\$9.15 Min Wage)	\$26,846	\$30,158	\$35,300	\$23,003	\$115,307
Social Service Referrals non DMHAS	75	37	37	32	181
Appearance Rate	90%	90%	90%	88%	89% AVG
Suburban Caseload	15%	18%	20%	24%	19% AVG



## YOUR INPUT MATTERS!

**To suggest a community service project in Hartford,  
please call Deb Barrows or Elizabeth Rosa  
at 860-756-7035**



# ACCESS TO RECOVERY 4 PROGRAM

The Access to Recovery program returned to the Hartford Community Court this summer. After a short restructuring and re-establishment from ATR III, ATR is now in its fourth cycle. ATR IV is a federally-funded program through the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) that provides services to people in recovery from alcohol and other drug use. Services include traditional clinical treatment and other support including recovery management, vocational services, faith-based support and sober housing assistance. Access To Recovery IV is designed to give people with substance abuse disorders wider access to people, programs and systems within the community that can help them start or continue their journey on the road to recovery.

The Hartford Community Court has been an official ATR portal since the days of ATR 1 in 2006 along with the DMHAS, the State Department of Correction, the Offices of Probation and Parole, the State Department of Children and Families, members of the National Guard and veterans, and Federally-qualified health care centers.

In Connecticut, DMHAS contracts with Advanced Behavioral Health to administer the program throughout the state. Advanced Behavioral Health Care Coordinator Destiny Grant is on-site at the Hartford Community Court each Thursday afternoon and all-day on Fridays. Ms. Grant works with referred persons to develop a recovery plan, allowing the person to choose the services and providers the individual wants to work with within the ATR IV network. Participants are required to participate in monthly check-ins with ATR coordinators who monitor their progress and make adjustments to the client's recovery goals as necessary. Participants must be compliant and making good-faith efforts with the providers in order to stay in the program.

"We are very grateful to DMHAS and Advanced Behavioral Health for working with the Hartford Community Court on Access To Recovery IV," Program Manager Chris Pleasanton said. "The high-quality services available through ATR IV and the hard-work of Ms. Grant have helped a lot of people at the court to establish a foundation for recovery and resolve their court matters productively."



Destiny Grant, ABH-ATR IV

## JUDGE NORKO ACCESS TO JUSTICE HONOR

Judge Raymond R. Norko was honored by the Judicial Branch's Access to Justice Commission at a recent educational summit held by the Commission at the UConn School of Law on September 16. Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers introduced Judge Norko and presented him with a legislative citation and other proclamations of appreciation for his past hard work and leadership on the Commission. Judge Norko served as co-chair of the Access To Justice Commission at its inception in 2009.

The mission of the commission is to develop recommendations to help ensure equal access to the courts and justice for all people, including low- and moderate-income individuals, people with different physical or developmental abilities, the elderly, limited English proficient and ethnic, cultural and racial minorities.

"Ensuring access to justice for all in our courts is a sacred charge and I was honored to participate with the Access to Justice Commission," Judge Norko said. "I am very humbled by and appreciative of this recognition from Chief Justice Rogers and the Commission. Thank you."



Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers and Judge Norko  
(photo by Ginny Apple, Judicial Branch)

# DALLAS COMMUNITY COURT VISITS

The Hartford Community Court recently hosted a site visit from its counterparts from the Dallas Community Court. Dallas' Program Manager Dianne Gibson, Community Service Coordinator Jermaine Nation and City Attorneys Mark Murrell and Jill Haning visited Hartford on October 14 and 15. The Dallas Community Court and the Hartford Community Court are two of four nationally-recognized Mentor Courts by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. Both courts work with the Center For Court Innovation to provide technical assistance and host site visits for groups that are developing community courts in their jurisdictions.

Upon arriving in Hartford, the Dallas team met with Presiding Judge Tammy Geathers and observed a court session. They paired up with their Hartford counterparts to discuss similarities and differences between the two courts. The Dallas team also met with many other key Hartford staff members including staff from the Clerks Office, the office of the Bail Commissioner, the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Hartford Department of Health and Human Services. Judge Norko joined the group for an informal roundtable discussion and end-of-day wrap-up meeting. Hartford's Community Service Team also took Mr. Nation and Mr. Murrell to observe several community service work sites.

Dallas has three community courts with plans for a fourth under consideration.



**“We are truly honored to be visited by the Dallas Community Court and I hope we were helpful to their team. In truth, I think we learned more from them than they did from us. Their enthusiasm for the community court approach was an inspiration to us.”**

**Honorable Tammy D. Geathers**

(From top) Judge Geathers with the Dallas team (Jermaine Nation, Dianne Gibson, Jill Haning, Mark Murrell), Deb Barrows and Dallas' Jermaine Nation meet with Friends of Elizabeth Garden staff, Supervising Bail Commissioner Tamara Niemann and Dallas' Program Manager Dianne Gibson



# 2015 COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECTS

The Hartford Community Court's two community garden projects had a very successful 2015 season. The gardens were planted, maintained and harvested by defendants performing community service.

At last count, the gardens produced more than 450 pounds of vegetables that have been donated to local shelters and soup kitchens.

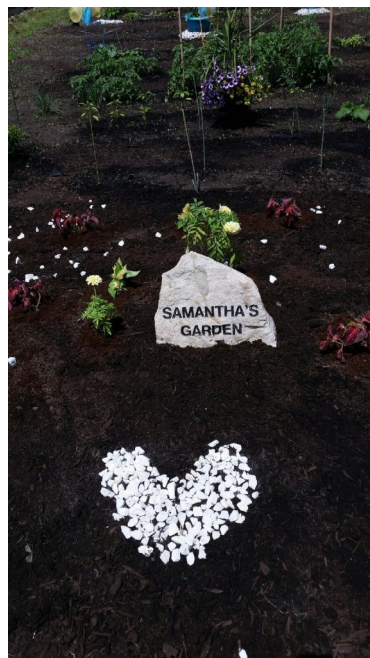
The first community court garden is located within the larger Knox Park-managed community garden on Earle Street, off Barbour Street, in Hartford's North End. This garden was under the supervision of community service field supervisor Alice Gibbs. Ms. Gibbs not only supervised the community service crews at this site, she also went there on her own time to water the vegetables and make sure the site was clean. Ms. Gibbs also installed a memorial stone in honor of former Community Partners In Action-Hartford Community Court Community Service Team Crew leader Samantha Benjamin who passed away earlier this year.

The second garden was located right next to the court at the lot formerly occupied by the 60 Washington Street building that was razed in 2001. This lot is managed by the State Department of Administrative Services, which allowed the court to develop the garden on the property. This garden was under the supervision of community service field supervisor Daniel Guilfuchi.

The court staff received technical and hands-on assistance by the expert staff from the University Of Connecticut School Of Agriculture's Master Gardener Program. The master gardeners helped plan the planting and harvesting schedule and advised the court staff on all aspects of maintaining and growing the vegetables. Students from the carpentry program at Hartford's A.I. Prince Tech High School built and installed the raised beds. Several other local groups and individuals supported the project by sharing their expertise or donating materials to Community Partners In Action.

"Thank you to all of our partners for their assistance and expertise," CPA Program Manager Deb Barrows said. "It was the collaborations that grew along with the vegetables that made the gardens a success in 2015."

(From top right) Earle/Barbour St. garden,  
raised boxes made by A.I. Prince Tech  
students, Washington St. garden,  
harvested vegetables, Samantha Benjamin  
Earl/Barbour St. garden memorial





# CLERKS OFFICE SERVICE EXCELLENCE 2015

The Hartford Community Court Clerks Office participated in Judicial Branch during the Branch's 2015 Service Excellence Week in October. The Hartford Community Court's Clerks Office, led by Supervising Clerk Gloria Hall, along with courtroom clerk Valerie S. Myrick and administrative clerks Linda Ruffino and Joyce Williams greeted people as they entered the courthouse and handed out courthouse information sheets.

The Judicial Branch holds an annual Service Excellence week to renew our commitment to customer service excellence and to recognize those who promote those standards throughout the year.

This year's message was "Be Proactive, Be Empathetic, Be a Communicator, Be a Problem Solver."

The Clerks Office plays an important role in customer service because they handle the official case files for the court, updates case information on databases and answers inquiries at the public window and on the telephone from citizens and attorneys.

"I am proud of the Hartford Community Court Clerks Office," Judge Geathers said. "In my eyes, they are the gold standard for customer service every single day."



The Hartford Community Court Clerks Office: Gloria Hall, Valerie S. Myrick, Linda Ruffino, Joyce Williams

## RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE A SUCCESS

The American Red Cross Connecticut Blood Services Region conducted the first blood drive at 80 Washington Street on October 28. Twenty seven Judicial Branch employees donated 24 units of blood.

Sam Bruder, a casflow coordinator with Centralized Small Claims, led the efforts to organize the blood drive by coordinating with the Red Cross, distributing flyers to the staff and helping people make appointments to donate. Deb Barrows and Daniel Guilfuchi of the Community Court's Community Service Team helped with event set up and registration.

"We were very successful for this first blood-drive," Mr. Bruder said. "We would like to thank the Red Cross and all of the people who generously donated blood to help others."

A special thanks to Administrative Judge Julia Dewey and JD Chief Clerk Robin Smith, who were instrumental in making this event happen.



Sam Bruder, Centralized Small Claims

# COMMUNITY SERVICE SITES

## July 2015

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
		1 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, Hartford Public Safety complex	2 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	3 Independence Day Holiday
6 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, DPW-Keney Park, community garden projects	7 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Hartford Public Safety complex, community garden projects	8 Foodshare, Maple Avenue, community garden projects	9 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	10 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects, Capen Street
13 Foodshare, DPW-Colt Park, Riverfront Recapture, New Britain Ave.	14 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Hartford Public Safety complex, community garden projects	15 Lawrence Street, Jewish Cemetery (perimeter Tower & Garden St.), Union Baptist Food Pantry	16 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	17 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects, Russ St., Lawrence St.
20 Foodshare, DPW-Keney Park, community garden projects, Riverfront Recapture	21 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Hartford Public Safety complex, Gillette St.	22 Foodshare—CRT Mobile Unit, community garden projects, Irving St.	23 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	24 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects, Rosemont St.
27 Foodshare, DPW-Hyland Park, community garden projects, Riverfront Recapture	28 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, community garden projects	29 Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, Jewish Cemetery (perimeter Tower and Garden St.)	30 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	31 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects

## August 2015

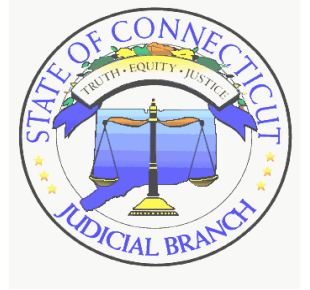
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3 Foodshare, DPW-Keney Park, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects	4 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, community garden project	5 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects	6 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Food Pantry, community garden project	7 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects
10 Foodshare, DPW-Colt Park, Riverfront Recapture, Maple Ave.	11 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Charter Oak Health Center, community garden projects	12 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	13 Foodshare, Community Health Services, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry	14 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects
17 Foodshare, DPW-Keney Park, Riverfront Recapture, Lawrence St., community garden projects	18 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, community garden projects	19 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, community garden projects	20 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, Waverly St.	21 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects, Niles St., Gillette St.
24 Foodshare, DPW-Pope Park, Riverfront Recapture, Irving St., community garden projects	25 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, community garden projects	26 Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, Jewish Cemetery (perimeter Tower & Garden St.), Rosemont St.	27 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, Union Baptist Church Food Pantry, Hamilton St.	28 Foodshare, Ely St., Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects
31 Foodshare, DPW-Goodwin Park, Riverfront Recapture, Allen Pl., Lincoln St.				

## September 2015

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Ebony Horse Women, community garden projects	2 Foodshare—CRT Mobile Unit, community garden projects	3 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, Washington St., Main St., Albany Ave.	4 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, community garden projects
7 Labor Day	8 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Ebony Horse Women, Maple Ave.	9 Elizabeth Park, Jewish Cemetery (perimeter Tower and Garden St.), community garden projects	10 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, community garden projects	11 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, Ebony Horse Women, community garden project
14 Foodshare, DPW-Colt Park, Riverfront Recapture, community garden projects	15 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Holcomb Farm, community garden projects.	16 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, community garden projects	17 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, community garden projects, Russ St., Lawrence St.	18 Foodshare, Riverfront Recapture, Ebony Horse Women, Waverly St.
21 Foodshare, DPW-Colt Park, Riverfront Recapture, Niles St., Gillette St.	22 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Holcomb Farm, Irving St., community garden projects	23 Elizabeth Park, Jewish Cemetery (perimeter Tower & Garden St.)	24 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, community garden projects, Rosemont St.	25 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Riverfront Recapture, Hamilton St.
28 Foodshare, DPW-Goodwin Park, Riverfront Recapture, Ely St.	29 Foodshare, Holcomb Farm, Ebony Horse Women, Allen Pl., Lincoln St.	30 Foodshare, Elizabeth Park, community garden projects		

STATE OF CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

# HARTFORD COMMUNITY COURT



## FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER

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