

Northern Hills Drug Court

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Northern Hills Drug Court Mission Statement

The Northern Hills Drug Court's mission is to increase community safety, foster healthy families, and proficiently utilize public funds. This will be accomplished by streamlining and coordinating services to felony offenders whose crimes are substantially related to the abuse or dependence upon a controlled substance with a primary consideration given to methamphetamine abuse or dependence. The Northern Hills Drug Court will increase long term abstinence by holding offenders accountable and ultimately reducing drug-related crimes.



Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man. ~Benjamin Franklin

Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. ~Hal Borland

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. ~Bill Vaughan

Northern Hills Drug Court welcomes Chris Pankratz new Drug Court Coordinator.



Northern Hills Drug Court welcomes Chris C. Pankratz as the newly appointed Drug Court Coordinator. Chris's experience includes juvenile and adult probation with the 4th Judicial Circuit Court Services Department, juvenile probation in the 7th Judicial Circuit Court Services Department, and juvenile intensive probation also in the 7th Judicial Circuit Court Services Department. Chris earned his graduate degree through USD's Master of Science in Administrative Studies.

"I was honored to accept the appointment of Drug Court Coordinator. I've spent my entire career promoting positive change in individuals and families within South Dakota, and can only hope to continue these endeavors in an organizational setting. I have personally observed the incredible life changes the Drug Court provides to our citizens and community. The foundation of success has been paved by the Drug Court founders and the Northern Hills Drug Court Team. I am truly blessed to be part of this Team, and able to assist in this process and the evolution of this program."

Chris is a resident of Sturgis, South Dakota, and demonstrates his commitment to the community with his involvement with the Sturgis area Parent Teacher Association (PTA), active membership in a local youth ministry, and is often seen coaching for a variety of youth athletics. He actively attends and participates in a variety of community activities.

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“Each participant of the Northern Hills Drug Court is a member of the broader Northern Hills community. Our participants are provided the skills necessary to harness sobriety, restore their lives and family relationships, and leave the program with the tools and structure necessary to maintain abstinence from their addiction, and prevent recidivism back into the criminal justice system.”

Intern Stephen Schopp



Hello,

During my final semester at Black Hills State University I was fortunate enough to have the experience to participate in an internship with the Northern Hills Drug Court. First off, I can't explain how lucky the Black Hills area is to have this program. It is truly a life saver for many people that somewhere along their path in life found the wrong road. To be able to take somebody that has never had a full time job or been able to maintain employment throughout their lives due to drug abuse and to see them enjoy putting in 40-hours a week just to make sure they can provide food for their families is amazing in itself. This would not be possible without the tremendous work of the drug court team. I never thought that it would be possible to find a group of people that truly seem to have found the exact fit for a job. It's not just one of the team members, but all of them give everything they know to make a better life for somebody else. It was a true pleasure to be able to work with every participant involved in the drug court and an honor to say for a short time I was part of a wonderful team of people.

Sincerely,

Stephen Schopp

Stephen graduated from BHSU on December 19, 2009.



Drug Court Participant, (center) and his employers, Mr. & Mrs. Claus, lit up the town at the Spearfish Festival of Lights.

Northern Hills Drug Court Web Site

ujs.sd.gov/drugcourt.htm



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