



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Woodland Man Graduates from Mental Health Court

**Phillip Collins' mom said, "now I have my son back, and I am grateful"**

**(Woodland, CA)** – On October 21, 2021, 33-year-old Phillip Collins, from Woodland, successfully graduated from Mental Health Court in Department 8 of the Yolo County Superior Court. Mr. Collins was homeless in Davis at the time of his arrest on September 26, 2018. He was arrested for trying to steal a bike out of a garage. He was charged with 1<sup>st</sup> degree burglary which could result in a prison sentence. As part of his agreement to enroll in Mental Health Court, he pled no contest to a second degree burglary with his conviction deferred, or placed on hold.

Mental Health Court is a minimum 18-month court-based treatment and monitoring system for adult offenders with serious mental illness. Mental Health Court is designed to increase the treatment engagement of the participants while reducing both arrests, hospitalizations, and jail time both during and after their involvement and participation in the program. The program is a collaborative effort between the Yolo County Superior Court, Probation, Health and Human Services Agency, the Public Defender, and the District Attorney. Mental Health Court follows the Forensic Assertive Community Treatment model where participants get intense services two hours per week or meet with staff four times per week. The team provides participants with wrap-around treatment, which includes a focus on mental health, substance abuse, housing, vocational and school, and physical health. The goal is to address the criminogenic factors and reduce recidivism. At the end of the program, individuals participate in a restorative justice conference.

There is a maximum of 30 participants in Mental Health Court. Addiction Intervention Court, a program for those with substance use disorders, also has room for 30 participants, and the Department of State Hospitals grant program, for those with a serious mental illness who are at risk of being sent to a state hospital, allows for 8 participants. Recently, due to funding provided by the Community Corrections Partnership, the team will be starting a Mental Health Diversion program for participants with less severe

mental illness.

A results-based assessment conducted during fiscal year 2020-21 showed significant accomplishments. During the 12-month period after enrolling in Mental Health Court, participants had a 73% decrease in arrests, a 93% decrease in jail bed stays, a 35% decrease in local hospital bed stays, and a 100% decrease in state hospital bed stays.

During Mr. Collins' graduation, team members congratulated him and shared their thoughts. Judge Peter Williams, who presides over Mental Health Court, congratulated Mr. Collins and stated, "What you said in one of your essays should be the mantra of Mental Health Court. You said your advice to others is to be patient, and patience doesn't mean you have to be perfect, it means for you to grow into a better person. Congratulations, Phil." Deputy District Attorney Preston Schaub stated, "What I appreciated from your restorative justice essay is you said people should get second chances. I want you to give yourself a second chance and give second chances to everyone else in your life. Nice job." Probation Officer Jasmine Gonzalez commented, "Phil, you have always remained very resilient and receptive. You were strong enough to face your fears."

Judge Williams then asked others watching on Zoom if anyone wanted to speak. Davis Police Department Deputy Chief told Mr. Collins, "I have so much respect for you and for what you've accomplished. I want to thank you because your story makes our job as police officers worthwhile." Next, a Mental Health Court participant said, "Congrats, Phil, and thanks for graduating because watching you today gives me hope to graduate." A woman started to speak and said she was Mr. Collins' mother. "Today is his big day, and I am very grateful. We could not have done it without the team's support, and now I have my son back. I am deeply grateful."

Finally, it was Mr. Collins' chance to speak. "For starters, I want to thank [Probation Officer] Stephen for being the man in my corner. Thanks to [Probation Officer] Jasmine for being such a great friend. Thanks to [Health & Human Services Agency Caseworker] Terri, who even to this day is helping me, it does not stop with her, she is a machine, and one heck of a pitcher in kick ball."

After the graduation, Judge Williams dismissed the charges filed against Mr. Collins, who I now living independently in an apartment in Woodland. In the final post-graduation phase, Mr. Collins will participate in the "alumni program," and he will attend events and support current participants.

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Attachment:

Picture of Graduation  
MCH Outcome Measures FY 18/19  
MHC Outcome Measures FY 20/21