

2021 MODEL COURT SUMMIT BIOS

<p>Welcome & Updates</p>	<p>Nanci Thaemert, JFCPD</p>	<p>Nanci Thaemert is the Director of Juvenile and Family Court Programs Division which is charged with developing, implementing, and evaluating court programs for statewide application in the Oregon courts. She has spent her entire career serving government and nonprofit entities to ensure families and children in the system are safe and free of abuse. Before moving to Oregon, Nanci spent a decade at the Idaho Supreme Court managing programs and services in the areas of family law, juvenile dependency and delinquency, domestic violence, and guardianships and conservatorships. She is an expert on guardianship reform efforts and has trained and presented on this topic across the country. Nanci holds a juris doctorate from the Willamette University School of Law and is a licensed attorney.</p>
<p>Welcome & Updates</p>	<p>Heidi Strauch, JFCPD</p>	<p>Heidi Olsen Strauch earned her BA in Political Science from Drake University and her JD from Lewis & Clark Law School. For seven years Heidi was a partner in general practice in a small-town law firm in Columbia County, encompassing both a civil practice and serving as city attorney for criminal matters, prosecuting misdemeanors in municipal court. After spending time as a full-time mother to her three children, Heidi provided litigation support in Multnomah County in complex civil cases. Heidi began work as a hearings referee and circuit court judge pro tem in 2014, mostly handling juvenile dependency cases. She also created and led the Marion County LGBTQ Foster Youth Work Group, working with community partners to improve outcomes for LGBTQ youth in foster care, served on the Marion County Visitation Practices Workgroup and was recognized as the Oregon Chief Justice’s Juvenile Court Champion in 2018. Heidi now serves as the Juvenile Court Programs Manager for the Oregon Judicial Department.</p>
<p>Racial Equity and Disparate Impact in Child Welfare Decision-Making</p>	<p>Jessica Pryce, PhD</p>	<p>Dr. Pryce is an Assistant Professor at Florida State University. For over 10 years, she has been involved at multiple angles of child welfare (direct practice, teaching + training & policy and research). She has published on child welfare related topics, such as, training and education, racial</p>

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		<p>disparity and anti-poverty practices. She has presented at 50+ virtual and in-person conferences both nationally and internationally. She is the author of several op-eds focused on racial disparity and effective strategies to impact racial disproportionality within child welfare. Her TED Talk on Implicit Racial Bias in Decision Making has since been viewed over 1.3 million times. Dr. Pryce has worked on the frontlines of child welfare, conducted primary research, been a policy advisor to Florida’s legislature and taught graduate level courses in child welfare. Previously holding the positions of Child Protective Caseworker with the Department of Children and Families, and the Deputy Director of the University at Albany's New York State Education Consortium. In 2019, she received a 5-year appointment to the Advisory Board of the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, where she consults and advises on leadership and workforce interventions around the country. She currently sits on the Florida Dependency Court Improvement Panel, alongside judges and advocates who are working towards a more trauma informed approach within the judicial system. She has maintained and cultivated a commitment to the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families, the sustainability of the child welfare workforce, and effectively addressing inequity. Her paramount goal includes re-building and leading a child welfare system that focuses on strengthening families instead of pulling them apart.</p>
<p>Racial Equity and Disparate Impact: An Oregon Perspective</p>	<p>Rebecca Jones Gaston, Child Welfare Director, Oregon DHS</p>	<p>Rebecca Jones Gaston became the Child Welfare Director for Oregon’s Department of Human Services in November 2019. Prior to joining the Oregon team Rebecca served as the Executive Director of the Maryland Department of Human Services’ Social Services Administration with oversight of child welfare and adult services for almost four years.</p> <p>Rebecca has worked in the field of human services and child welfare for more than 24 years as a social worker, advocate, therapist, consultant and administrator. Previously, she was a Director with Casey Family Programs providing technical assistance to child welfare agencies</p>

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		<p>throughout the United States. Rebecca also has served as the National Campaign Director for AdoptUsKids, a collaboration with the National Ad Council and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children’s Bureau and a major campaign aimed at increasing the numbers of foster and adoptive families.</p> <p>Rebecca has specialized knowledge and experience with change management approaches and the implementation of successful evidence-based programs including IV-E waivers and Family First efforts. She has extensive experience with community engagement, parent and family support programs, mental health and in achieving reunification and/or permanency for children in foster care. She has formed strategic partnerships with organizations that share the same goals of safety, permanency and well-being for those served by the agency. She has worked throughout her career to successfully leverage internal and external resources for impacting equity and promoting safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families and reducing the number of youth in residential, out-of-home care.</p> <p>Rebecca’s commitment to serving on behalf of children, youth and families is rooted in her own personal experience with child welfare and adoption.</p> <p>Rebecca is the proud mother of two young adults and holds a degree in psychology from Georgetown University and a master’s degree in social work from the University of Pennsylvania</p>
<p>The Nuts and Bolts of Applying FDTC Principles in Your Local courts</p>	<p>Tessa Richter, LCSW, MSW, Center for Children and Family Futures</p>	<p>Tessa Richter currently serves as a Senior Program Associate for the National Family Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program for the Center for Children and Family Futures (CCFF). In this role, she provides technical assistance, support, and program management for several state and local substance abuse and child welfare related projects. Prior to her position with CCFF, Ms. Richter was the Problem Solving Court Coordinator and Juvenile Programs Coordinator for the 1st Judicial</p>

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		<p>District in Colorado, where she coordinated the family treatment court program in Jefferson County, Colorado. She also has experience as a child welfare caseworker. She completed the Women’s Addiction Services Leadership Institute (WASLI) through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2015. Ms. Richter received her MSW from the University of Denver with an emphasis in Child Welfare and holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Missouri. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.</p>
<p>The Nuts and Bolts of Applying FDTC Principles in Your Local courts</p>	<p>Arielle Andrews</p>	<p>Ms. Andrews works for Children and Family Futures as a Program Associate for the National Family Treatment Court Training and Technical Assistance Program. She provides training and technical assistance to OJJDP grantees and Family Treatment Court (FTC) teams nationwide to improve outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Ms. Andrews previously served as a probation officer and Family Recovery Court (FRC) Coordinator for Grant (County) Superior Court 2 in Marion, Indiana, where she coordinated the FRC program and served as a peer mentor to other FRCs in the state. She implemented an FTC program from the start, coordinated a multidisciplinary team, and managed several grant awards.</p> <p>Ms. Andrews is trained in Effective Communications and Motivational Strategies (ECMS). She is passionate about systems change, serving families affected by substance use disorders, and thrives on increasing the capacity and efficacy of family treatment courts. Ms. Andrews attended Ball State University where she received a BA in Criminal Justice and Criminology with minors in Spanish and Sociology.</p>
<p>The Nuts and Bolts of Applying FDTC Principles in Your Local courts</p>	<p>Mia Ruston, JFCPD</p>	<p>Mia Ruston is a Family Treatment Court (FTC) Analyst with the Juvenile and Family Court Programs division. She serves as the coordinator for Oregon’s Family Treatment Court Improvement Program, a three-year project funded under a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and</p>

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		<p>Delinquency Prevention. She is overseeing the implementation of the grant statewide, working with FTC teams locally and coordinating the work of the program’s Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Prior to joining OJD, Mia worked for the YWCA’s Family Preservation Project at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, a program aimed at reducing the collateral consequences of parental incarceration on children, families, and the community.</p> <p>Mia grew up in California and has a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology and a Master’s degree in Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy. She earned her J.D. at the University of San Diego where she focused on juvenile and family law and was awarded the James A. D’Angelo Outstanding Child Advocate Award. Her passion for Family Treatment Courts stems from her work as a juvenile dependency attorney, observing the profound growth and sustained recovery the FTC model helped so many of her clients achieve.</p>
<p>The Nuts and Bolts of Applying FDTC Principles in Your Local courts</p>	<p>Kelli Sutton, FDTC Coordinator</p>	<p>Kelli Sutton currently serves as the 1st Judicial District Problem Solving Court Coordinator II for Family Integrated Treatment Court (FIT Court) in Jefferson County, Colorado, overseeing the daily operations of the program. Ms. Sutton has 12 years of experience working in Problem Solving Courts in a variety of roles. Prior to being named the FIT Court Coordinator, Ms. Sutton worked with Savio House providing in-home services for FIT Court families, as well as a dedicated FIT Court Child Welfare Permanency Caseworker and Lead.</p> <p>Ms. Sutton received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from Colorado State University. Throughout her 10-year involvement in FIT Court with positions in mental health, child welfare and judicial, Ms. Sutton has gained experience with program development, implementation and enhancement from many perspectives. Ms. Sutton is currently serving</p>

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		<p>as the Project Director for a Prevention and Family Recovery Grant as well as a FDC Enhancement Grant with OJJDP.</p> <p>Ms. Sutton has experience in data collection and understands the importance in using data to drive outcomes. Ms. Sutton uses her knowledge of Best Practice Standards to guide practice and program enhancement.</p>
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