



38th Annual Conference

**EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS IN COMMUNITY
CORRECTIONS**

Thursday and Friday October 9 and 10, 2025

Presenting the 2025 ODRC Cliff Skeen Awards and
OJACC Achievement Awards

The Ohioan (formerly Nationwide) Hotel & Conference
Center

100 Green Meadows Drive S.,

Lewis Center, OH

614.880.4300

Conference Overview

The Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) is pleased to present its 38th annual conference, “Exploring New Horizons in Community Corrections” to be held at the Ohioan (formerly Nationwide) Hotel and Conference Center, Lewis Center, Ohio, October 9th and 10th 2025.

The general session on Thursday morning, “How Can AI Help Us Build Better Community for Tomorrow?” will feature four panelists: Myrinda Smith, Ph.D, Executive Director, University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI); Joseph Arvidson, Executive Director, The Paragon Group; Jennifer Scott, Director of Innovation and Outreach, UCCI; and Vineela Kunapareddi, Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati Information Technology Solutions Center (ITSC). This dynamic session will explore the intersection of proven practices and emerging technologies—especially artificial intelligence (AI)—to envision a more connected, responsive and resilient future.

In the closing general session, Karen Vadino, trainer and consultant, will provide a presentation intended to enable participants to identify and recognize the symptoms of stress and ultimately learn techniques for coping, entitled “Mind over Monsters”.

You will also find many workshops focused on providing tools to improve the work of community corrections, both adult and juvenile.

The OJACC Achievement Awards and ODRC Clifford Skeen Awards, recognizing excellence in community corrections, will be presented during the Thursday luncheon.

Continuing education credits are being applied for in the areas of Changing Offender Behavior (COB), CLE, RCH and Counselor/Social Work.

Please make plans to attend this informative conference. Registration may be made at www.ojacc.org/event/annual-conference/ or by completing the attached Registration Form and sending it to Alicia Handwerk at ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Thursday, October 9, 2025

7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Registration

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Opening Session

10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Opening Session continues

11:45 a.m. to Noon

Break

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch, OJACC Achievement and ODRC Clifford Skeen Awards

1:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Break

1:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Afternoon Workshops

3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Afternoon Workshops

8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Hospitality Suite

Friday, October 10, 2025

8:00 a.m. to Noon

Registration (for new registrants)

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Workshops

10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Break

10:30 a.m. to Noon

Closing Session

Featured Speakers

Thursday Opening Session and Keynote

8:30 am to 10:00 am and 10:15 am to 11:45 am

How Can AI Help Us Build Better Community for Tomorrow?

Myrinda Smith, Ph.D,
Executive Director,
University of Cincinnati
Corrections Institute
(UCCI)

Joseph Arvidson,
Executive Director, The
Paragon Group

Jennifer Scott,
Director of Innovation and
Outreach, UCCI

Vineela Kunapareddi,
Assistant Professor,
University of Cincinnati
Information Technology
Solutions Center (ITSC)

In the evolving landscape of community corrections, one question stands out: How can we harness innovation to strengthen the communities we serve? This dynamic session explores the intersection of proven practices and emerging technologies—especially artificial intelligence (AI)—to envision a more connected, responsive, and resilient future.

We'll begin by grounding ourselves in what works: the hard-earned progress made through evidence-based practices, human-centered engagement, and the dedication of community corrections professionals. From there, we'll explore where we can lean in further—through peer engagement initiatives, technology integration, and smarter tools that support both staff and the people they serve. We'll take a balanced look at how AI can contribute—examining its potential, real-world applications, and the risks and challenges that come with it.

This session will also integrate findings from a survey on current AI use distributed to OJACC members to offer first-hand accounts, usage trends, and insights from the field as we feature live AI demonstrations, video examples, and data visualizations.

Whether you're curious, cautious, or already experimenting with AI, this session will offer practical insights and a collaborative space to imagine what's next.

Friday Closing Session 10:30 am to Noon

Mind Over Monsters

Karen Vadino, MSW, LPCC, OCPSII

It is amazing how many monsters get built in our brains when we're stressed. Stress is the perception that we cannot cope with life's challenges and demands. As we are faced with the event, our fear begins to exaggerate the demand and monsters are created in our minds.

The tools used to build the monsters include worry, fear and rumination. Somehow, in the end, what we actually experience is almost never as bad as what we built in our heads.

Workshops

Thursday Afternoon Workshops 1:45 pm to 3:15 pm

A-1 Ensuring Compliance: Medicaid Requirements for Youth in Congregate Care

Courtney Alcott, ODYS

January 2025 saw the commencement of new requirements for juvenile justice youth in congregate care settings, including detention centers, correctional facilities, and state-run deep end placements. This session will outline those requirements and share how jurisdictions and facilities are complying with the new Medicaid requirements.

A-2 AI and the Human Element: Enhancing Supervision Through Generative Tools

Jennifer Scott, UCCL; Joseph Arvidson, The Paragon Group; and Vineela Kunapareddi, ITSC

In a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, how can we ensure that technology enhances—rather than replaces—human connection in supervision and corrections work? This interactive workshop explores the evolving role of generative AI tools in supporting, not supplanting, the human element in supervision. Participants will gain a foundational understanding of AI types and tools, including hands-on demos of platforms like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Canva. We'll explore when and where AI is most appropriate—highlighting tasks best suited for automation versus those requiring empathy, ethics, and professional discretion. Through real-world examples from a "day in the life" mapping exercise, attendees will

discover how AI can boost productivity, streamline documentation, and support decision-making—while keeping human judgment at the center. Whether you're curious, cautious, or already experimenting with AI, this session will equip you with practical insights and ethical frameworks to integrate AI meaningfully into your work.

A-3 The Window of Detection: What Urine Drug Screens Really Tell You

Susan Tulley, Oriana House, Inc

The presentation explores how prolonged fentanyl clearance can alter the window of detection for some individuals. It delves into the nuances of interpreting drug screens, moving beyond just positive or negative results, and emphasizes the importance of adapting our approach to better serve clients.

A-4 Trauma Informed Care in Corrections

Nicolle Brooks-Willis and William Salas, ODR

The goal is to educate correctional staff and administrators on the importance, principles, and implementation of trauma-informed practices in a correctional setting.

A-5 Invisible Injuries: Traumatic Brain Injury, Strangulation, and Domestic Violence

Rachel Ramirez, Ohio Domestic Violence Network

Domestic violence often causes harm to the head, neck, and face—yet brain injuries from such violence remain widely

overlooked, under-identified, and untreated. This session shares key findings from Ohio's groundbreaking research and introduces practical strategies to raise brain injury awareness in your services, including the CARE framework (Connect, Acknowledge, Respond, Evaluate). Integrating these tools can help agencies better support program participants and address the full impact of violence and abuse.

Thursday Afternoon Workshops 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

B-1 Right Sizing Youth Justice

Brittany Neal and Cecilia Ko, ODYS

Throughout the last few decades, much research has been done to determine what best practices exist for justice-system-involved youth. From educational support, facility construction and make up, to appropriate therapeutic intervention and length of stay, the youth justice system has the capacity to provide youth with necessary and beneficial interventions that reduce recidivism and bring about wholeness for children and teens and the communities from which they come. This session will highlight best practices from across the country and give practical tools on how systems in Ohio can implement those practices in their own jurisdictions.

B-2 Ease on Down the Road: Understanding Social Determinants that Lead to Recidivism, and How to Help Others Navigate Them

Alex Harper, Oriana House, Inc

Get ready to hit the yellow brick road of insight, empathy, and action! This lively and interactive workshop takes a fun spin on the serious issue of recidivism. Using engaging storytelling, and real-world scenarios, we'll explore the social determinants—like housing, employment, education, and healthcare—that often trip people up after incarceration. You'll laugh, learn, and maybe even dance a little as we discover how community support and practical tools can help break the cycle. Perfect for community corrections professionals, advocates, and change-makers, this session isn't just informative, it's transformational. So, grab your ruby slippers (or comfy sneakers) and join us as we ease on down the road to understanding and making a lasting impact. There's no place like a supportive community—and this workshop shows you how to help build one!

B-3 Making Change Work: Practical Strategies for Bringing New Tools into Community Corrections

Jennifer Scott, UCCL; and Vineela Kunapareddi, ITSC

Change doesn't have to be overwhelming—especially when it's done with your team, your clients, and your mission in mind. This hands-on workshop is designed for community corrections professionals who are exploring how to bring new technology, like AI tools, into their work in a way that supports—not disrupts—their day-to-day responsibilities. Together, we'll walk through a step-by-step approach to introducing change, from identifying key stakeholders and understanding compliance needs, to piloting new tools and building team buy-in. You'll hear real stories from agencies that have been through this journey—

including how a state university shifted from resisting AI to embracing it, and how a county probation department led a successful rollout in their department. We'll also reflect on your own agency's readiness for innovation and share strategies to build a culture that welcomes new ideas. Whether you're a supervisor, frontline staff, or just curious about what's next, this session will give you practical tools, relatable examples, and a supportive space to think through what change could look like in your agency.

B-4 Reentry Simulation

Nicholas Emmons, Lanaya McDonald, Richard Schmidt, ODRC

Participants will participate in a simulation as a justice involved person released from incarceration. They will go through stations such as ID/License, probation, filling out applications for employment, gaining employment, paying bill/fines, obtaining and paying for housing etc. The simulation is designed for participants to understand the barriers that justice involved individuals face when being released from incarceration or just being justice involved.

B-5 Reducing the Risk of Homicide in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence

Erin Becker, High-Risk Domestic Violence Court in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court

Attendees will gain foundational knowledge of the dynamics of intimate partner violence, how to identify cases that are high risk for homicide and will gain practical skills to apply to their work to reduce risk of homicide and serious re-assault in these cases.

**Friday Morning Workshops
8:30 am to 10:00 am**

C-1 Building Resilience: Combating Secondary Trauma and Compassion Fatigue in Youth Justice Work

Lisa Fleisher, Franklin County Children's Services

Professionals who work in youth justice experience high levels of secondary trauma, frequently because of the exposure to the traumas that children who are system-involved experience. If we aren't careful, we can experience burnout, compassion fatigue, and exit this work without learning keys to developing resilience and wellness. This session will examine the causes of secondary trauma and provide practical tools for youth justice workers to use to be able to build into themselves to do this work and maintain well-being in the long run.

C-2 From Courtroom to Career: Vocational Pathways Supporting Justice-Involved Ohioans with Disabilities

Mallory Pitts and Julie Lasher, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and Meghan Patton, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas

This informative session will explore how vocational services can be a powerful tool for recovery, stability, and reducing recidivism among individuals with disabilities involved in the justice system. The presentation will spotlight the OOD Jobs for Recovery program, a collaborative initiative with specialized dockets across the state, highlighting the critical role employment plays in building recovery capital. Mallory Pitts and Julie Lasher from

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) will demonstrate how strategic partnerships with state and community corrections, specialized dockets, and employer partners are driving meaningful outcomes. Meghan Patton from the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court will share firsthand how OOD Jobs for Recovery has positively impacted participants on their specialized dockets, providing a local perspective on the initiative's success. Attendees will gain insight into OOD's approach to developing employer relationships, supporting participants through job placement, and sustaining long-term success beyond the justice system.

C-3 The Danger on the Roads: Understanding Alcohol and Drug-Impaired Drivers

Honorable Mary Huffman, Second District Court of Appeals

In 2022, 13,524 people died on the roadways in the United States as a result of impaired driving incidents, representing 32% of overall traffic fatalities - all preventable deaths. Despite the known risk associated with driving under the influence, impaired driving continues at an alarming rate, even among those previously convicted of an offense. Recent studies reveal that 13.5 million people aged 16 or older reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the past year, and 11.7 million reported driving under the influence of an illicit substance. Alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription drugs and even some over-the-counter medications, including combinations of substances, impact the critical divided-attention skills necessary to drive safely. Research makes clear that many impaired drivers

share risks and needs different from other criminal offenders. This program begins with a discussion of the psychological, physiological and psychomotor effects of substances on driving skills and the critical differences between impaired drivers and other offenders and the risks and needs common among impaired drivers. The program will also review various screening and assessment tools validated for impaired drivers to assist courts in determining appropriate supervision levels and sanctions. To both contribute to public safety and assist offenders, the program will conclude with a discussion of the evidence-based practices judges, probation officers and treatment team members may utilize with impaired drivers, specific sanctions appropriate for impaired drivers included in specialized dockets or while on supervision.

C-4 Where Justice Meets Health: Integrating SDOH in Community Supervision

Jennifer Martinez and Daniel King, Volunteers of America, Ohio and Indiana

Success in community corrections depends on more than compliance—it depends on meeting fundamental human needs. This session will explore how social determinants of health (SDOH)—including housing, transportation, food security, employment, education, and access to care—directly impact a person's ability to comply with supervision, engage in treatment, and build a life outside the justice system. Drawing from behavioral health and social work perspectives, as well as key findings from the *Ohio Supreme Court's Task Force on Reentry*

Final Report, the session will highlight how systemic barriers and stigma prevent many individuals from achieving stability. Without a safe place to live, reliable transportation, or access to healthcare and income, even the best evidence-based programs may fall short.

C-5 Preparing for a BCS Program Review and What to Expect.

Krista Burke, ODRC/BCS

It's a new era and the program review process is changing! Attendees will be able to identify what standards can be prepped throughout the year, and what standards they need to "wait on". What standards still apply in relation to an organization's FY25 POA's? Creating audit files? Maybe not so much anymore. This training will empower programs to make a smooth transition into the new review process. The importance of routine policy monitoring and WHY is included. This presentation is appropriate for all program directors, QA personnel, and anyone closely involved in the review process.

Conference Location

The Ohioan (Nationwide) Hotel
and Conference Center
100 Green Meadows Dr. South
Lewis Center, Ohio 43035
614-880-4300

Registration Fee

Full conference registration cost is \$350 for non-members and \$325 for OJACC members.

Agency membership includes discounted conference registration (\$325) for up to 7 staff from the agency. If you are unsure whether your membership is current, please contact Alicia Handwerk at ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Checks should be made payable to Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections and mailed to **OJACC, P.O. Box 79, New Albany, OH 43054** with the completed registration form(s).

Cancellations made after September 25, 2025, or no shows at the conference are subject to the full registration fee. You may substitute another attendee by contacting Alicia Handwerk at ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Registration fee includes participation in education sessions, conference materials, continental breakfast, breaks, and lunch on Thursday.

Continuing Education Credits

CEUs have been applied for:

- Recognized Clock Hours (RCHs)
- Counselor/Social Worker Board
- Continuing Legal Education
- Hours that qualify for ODRC Changing Offender Behavior (COB) requirements

Attendees must attend the entire conference to receive full CEUs/CLEs.

Certificate of Attendance

Participants will be given a "Certificate of Continuing Professional Education" form at registration. At the end of each session, participants will be provided with an attendance validation code. Record the codes and return the yellow copy of the form to the registration desk before leaving the conference.

Hotel Reservations

All hotel reservations must be made directly with the Hotel and Conference Center through this link: [Book Here for the 2025 OJACC Conference](#) or by calling 614-880-4300.

State you are with the OJACC Conference **Group**

Code: 400466 to receive the group rate of \$151 per night.

Reservation cut off date is Monday, September 8, 2025.

The hotel will accept reservations after the cut-off date, *if rooms are available*, however, **the group room rate may not be available after September 8, 2025.**

OJACC Annual Awards

OJACC created 4 awards to be given to Ohioans whose work has contributed to the improvement of community corrections.

The nomination form is attached to this registration brochure, or you can obtain a copy by emailing ojacc.director@gmail.com.

Registration Form

38th Annual OJACC Conference October 9 and 10, 2025

You may register online at ojacc.org OR submit this registration form to:
ojacc.director@gmail.com

(Complete one form per participant. All fields are required.)

First Name

Last Name

Name as you would like it to appear on nametag

Agency/Organization

Address

City State Zip

Work Phone

Email

Workshop Selection (Please circle one for each session so we may determine appropriate room size for workshops—Please keep for your record).

Thursday A Session 1 2 3 4 5

Thursday B Session 1 2 3 4 5

Friday C Session 1 2 3 4 5

Special Meal Requests: Vegetarian Gluten-free Other

Registration Cost: \$325 for members, \$350 for non-members.

Agency membership *includes up to 7 registrations at the member rate.*

Method of Payment:

Purchase order is attached. P.O. #

Personal/Agency check is enclosed.

Credit Card (a 3% fee will be assessed for credit card payment)

Name as it appears on card:

Address:

City: State : Zip :

Account Number:

Check card type: MasterCard Visa

Verification # (3 numbers on signature line in back). Expir Date:

Email credit card receipt to:

Please make checks payable to Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections and mail with a copy of the registration form to:

OJACC, P.O. Box 79, New Albany, OH 43054

OJACC Federal ID #: 31-1255020

Any questions? Contact: Alicia Handwerk, Executive Director

(740) 420-6444 or ojacc.director@gmail.com

PLEASE COMPLETE :

Job & Jurisdiction

- ☐ Federal
- ☐ State
- ☐ County
- ☐ City
- ☐ Private Firm/Business
- ☐ Academic Institution
- ☐ Nonprofit Organization
- ☐ Other

Professional Category

- ☐ Line Personnel
- ☐ Commissioner/Director
- ☐ Administrator
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Trainer
- ☐ Sheriff
- ☐ Judge
- ☐ Attorney
- ☐ Educator/Researcher
- ☐ Private Sector/Corporate
- ☐ Chief Probation Officer
- ☐ Other

Primary Work Area

- ☐ Adult Probation & Parole
- ☐ Adult Probation Only
- ☐ Adult Parole Authority
- ☐ Juvenile Parole/Aftercare
- ☐ Pretrial
- ☐ Residential
- ☐ Other

Geographic Area

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Rural

Experience in Corrections

- ☐ Less than 2 years
- ☐ 2-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ 21-25 years
- ☐ More than 25 years

Past Attendance at our Conference

- ☐ First time
- ☐ 2-4 times
- ☐ 5-6 times
- ☐ 7-9 times
- ☐ 10 + times