

Elliot Kolkovich
Summit County Prosecutor



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CONTACT: [Elaine Vilem/Jillian Zetts](#)

(330) 643-8386 / (330) 643-2321

PROSECUTOR KOLKOVICH AND JUDGE OLDFIELD HONOR GRADUATES OF THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM



AKRON, OH – Yesterday, Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich and Summit County Court of Common Pleas Judge Joy Malek Oldfield celebrated the graduation of seven participants of Summit County

Turning Point, a special court for substance-dependent felony offenders who are seeking rehabilitation based on eligibility. The graduates this quarter include Harrison Meek, Timothy Henry, Marissa Cartwright, Tara Lock, Jaden Gisentaner, Chris Munford, and Brett Kelly. Prior to the ceremony, graduates presented a short spoken-word performance to attendees, showcasing the drama therapy program within Turning Point. The Turning Point program fosters community and personal accountability among participants to ensure successful reentry into society.

“Through their perseverance and commitment, these graduates have demonstrated their ability to be active, responsible members of our community,” said Prosecutor Kolkovich. **“The Prosecutor's Office is proud to collaborate with the Turning Point Program and appreciates Judge Oldfield's dedication to helping participants build stable, connected lives.”**

“Today we celebrate freedom from addiction for seven Turning Point participants. Today the officers who arrested them witnessed the results of their hard work and recovery. Today we, again, saw the hope and healing that can come from the criminal justice system. I am so grateful to be a part of it,” said Judge Oldfield.

As part of the graduation process, participants complete a Mission Statement and Community Plan for themselves moving forward. The following quotes have been pulled from the graduates' statements.

“Today I'm almost a year and a half sober. I have a job, a car, and most importantly I'm surrounded by family and friends that love me. No matter how dark your life may get, there is always hope and only you can make the decision to change,” said Harrison Meek.

“I hope and pray that someday I can qualify to be a part of the Turning Point and Oriana House Inc., programs so that I can give back what was so graciously given to me,” said Timothy Henry.

“I am now 19 months clean and sober. I wouldn't have gotten here if it wasn't for the Turning Point Team, for my family, sober support, and for believing in my abilities,” said Marissa Cartwright. **“I don't have to end up just a statistic, I am more than just a number, I am and will be a legacy,”**

“I know that sobriety must come first, because without it everything else falls apart. I want to thank the Turning Point Team for the endless support and accountability I've received throughout the program, and my family for never giving up on me as hard as I've made it not to,” said Tara Lock.

“I owe it all to my wonderful Caseworker Nicole Jones, my wonderful Probation Officer Nikki Lambert, the rest of the Turning Point Team, and the best judge a criminal could ever have, Joy Oldfield. I thank you guys so much for turning my life around, for that I'm forever grateful,” said Jaden Gisentaner.

“My mission is simple: to keep moving forward, one day at a time. To take the pain I lived through and use it as fuel to build something real,” said Chris Munford. **“I want to be someone my son can look up to, someone who helps others believe they can change too. I finally understand that the respect I used to chase isn't given, it's earned. I'm earning mine every single day.”**

“I've met every requirement of this program with no sanctions, and I've learned how to show up – not just for others, but for myself. Most of all, I am proud of the person I've become. I am no longer ashamed of my past, because it led me to where I am now,” said Brett Kelly.

The Summit County Turning Point Program is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in our community by offering structured court supervision and comprehensive treatment services for offenders struggling with substance abuse. Its primary goal is to promote lasting behavioral change and reduce participants' risk to

public safety. The program is structured into four progressive phases, each varying in duration depending on the participant's level of engagement and progress. Emphasizing the importance of community support in achieving long-term sobriety, the program encourages participants to build and sustain meaningful connections, with staff actively supporting them in fostering these relationships throughout their journey.

Turning Point supports participant success through consistent collaboration with everyone involved in each case, including the judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, addiction specialists, and educational and vocational advisors. Judge Oldfield, Prosecutor Kolkovich, and the entire Turning Point team are committed to fostering an environment of acceptance and growth, ensuring that participants feel welcomed and supported throughout their journey. Since its launch in October 2020, the program has served hundreds of defendants.

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