

# Multi-Disciplinary Interviews

For Specialty Courts

# Multi- Disciplinary Interviews

Why is Collaboration important?

Strengthens the cohesion of the  
Treatment Team

Conforms with Standard VIII of the  
NADCP Best Practice Standards

Allows the strengths of each person to  
compliment the strengths of others

# Multi- Disciplinary Interviews

What makes collaborative interviewing important?

Reduces the amount of time defendants have to take time off work

All interviewers hear the same information

What one interviewer might miss gets picked up by another one

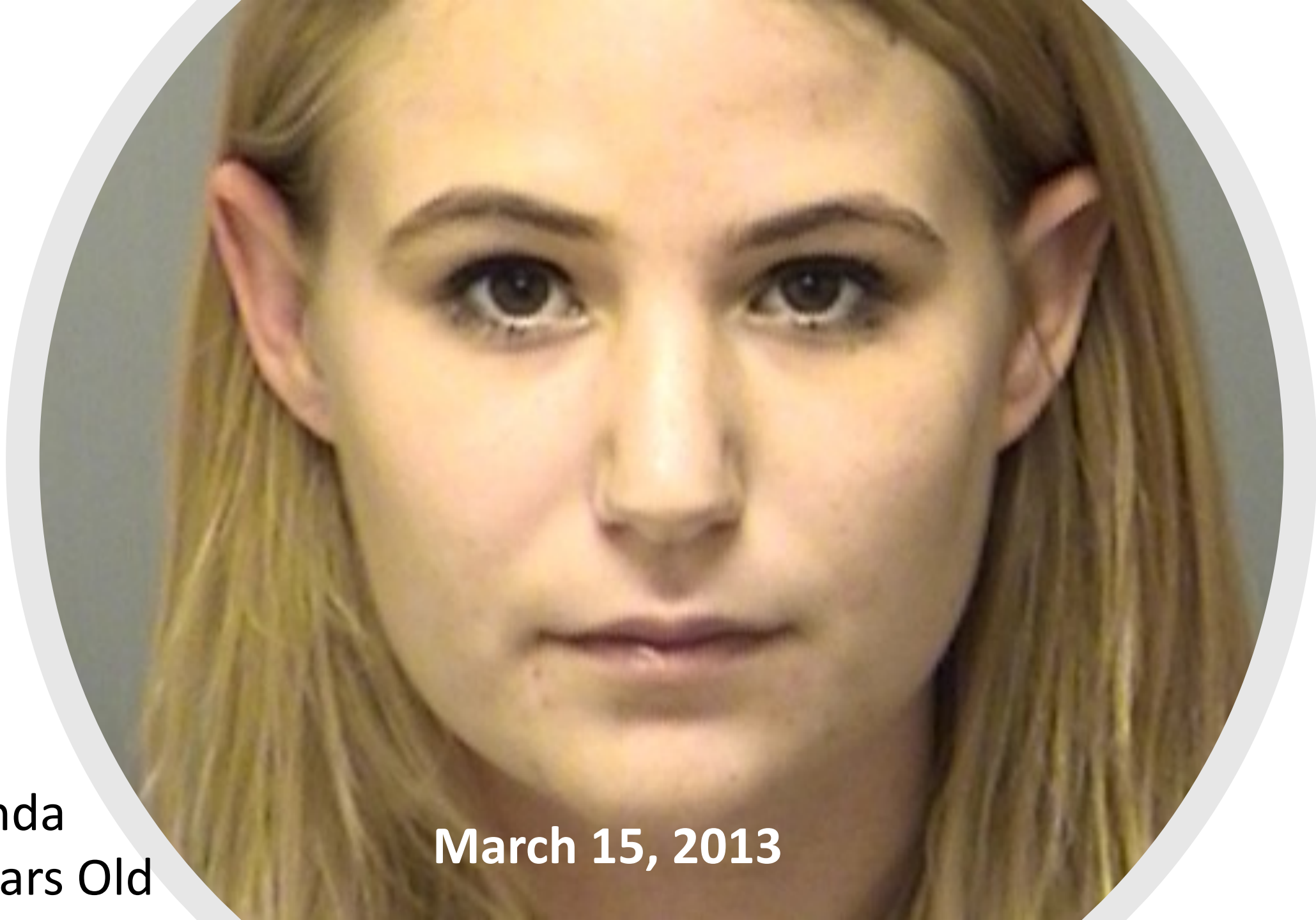
# Multi- Disciplinary Interviews

Benefits of collaborative interviewing

Reduced likelihood of manipulation/deception from defendant

Allows assessments to be completed at same time to determine risk and initial level of care

Encourages selection of candidates who are appropriate, not just those we want in the program



Amanda  
21 Years Old

March 15, 2013



## Amanda 26 Years Old

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- **September 2018** - Arrested by Denton PD on 3 drug charges.
- **September 2019** - Interviewed in Denton County Jail.
- **November 2019** - Accepted into Drug Court.
- **December 2019** – Entered into treatment facility.

**September 17, 2018**

# Likes

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**Scott Wisenbaker came to visit/interview me first and took the time to explain the program to me.**

- It made me feel understood.
- It gave me a sense of having a support network.
- It gave me time to consider how much the program could help me.

# Likes

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**Scott Wisenbaker came to visit/interview me first and took the time to explain the program to me.**

I remember him explaining to me how he knew me; he had seen me get arrested time after time in Denton County. He told me how in each one of my mugshots I was deteriorating, and that he was grateful I was still alive in time for him to come and reach out to me. I will never forget that. That conversation will stay with me for the rest of my life and had a profound impact on my choice to enter the program.



# Likes

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**Scott Wisenbaker, Kevin Edwards, and Robin Watts interview after I applied to be a participant.**

- It confirmed that I did have a support network, and people who were there to help guide me.
- It gave me an idea of what the treatment team was like, and how serious they were about the program itself.
- I naturally felt more comfortable with Robin in the room. I feel like it's because she's a woman, but she's also a trauma counselor. That was really comforting. Her energy was so positive, and I could tell that she enjoys being able to help others.

# Likes

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**Scott Wisenbaker, Kevin Edwards, and Robin Watts interview after I applied to be a participant.**

Just the fact that they were interviewing me showed me that they don't just give spots away to anyone that applies; they want to make sure that you have a firm understanding of what the program is, what is expected from the participant's end, and that you're ready to make the changes necessary to move forward. They don't want to give a spot in the program away to someone who's going to take it for granted when there's always going to be someone out there who would give anything for a chance for help like that.

# What Scared Me

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- **I wasn't sure if I could get/stay sober for a significant period of time.**
- I was afraid that the treatment would be like the programs I had been through before.
- I didn't know how to live a 'normal' life.
- I was afraid that if I ended up making a mistake, I would be sent to prison.

# What Scared Me

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- Getting sober, just the thought of being sober, scared me.
- Kevin kind of intimidated me a little bit in that second meeting.
- He was going to be my probation officer, and that made me a little nervous for some reason. But he was one of my favorite team members during the program and served not only as my probation officer, but also as a counselor at times.

# How I Felt

- Nervous
- Unsure
- Untrusting
- **Physically and psychologically sick.**
- I was dealing with mental/physical withdrawals.
- I didn't have a lot of faith in myself at that time.

# How I Felt

- I found it difficult to have faith in a program, or people, that I didn't know a whole lot about.
- I didn't think that I wanted to get sober, completely.
- I didn't feel like it was fair that I either had to get sober or I would probably end up in prison. I felt like I was being forced into a corner (at first). These feelings quickly faded.

# What I Think of the Interview

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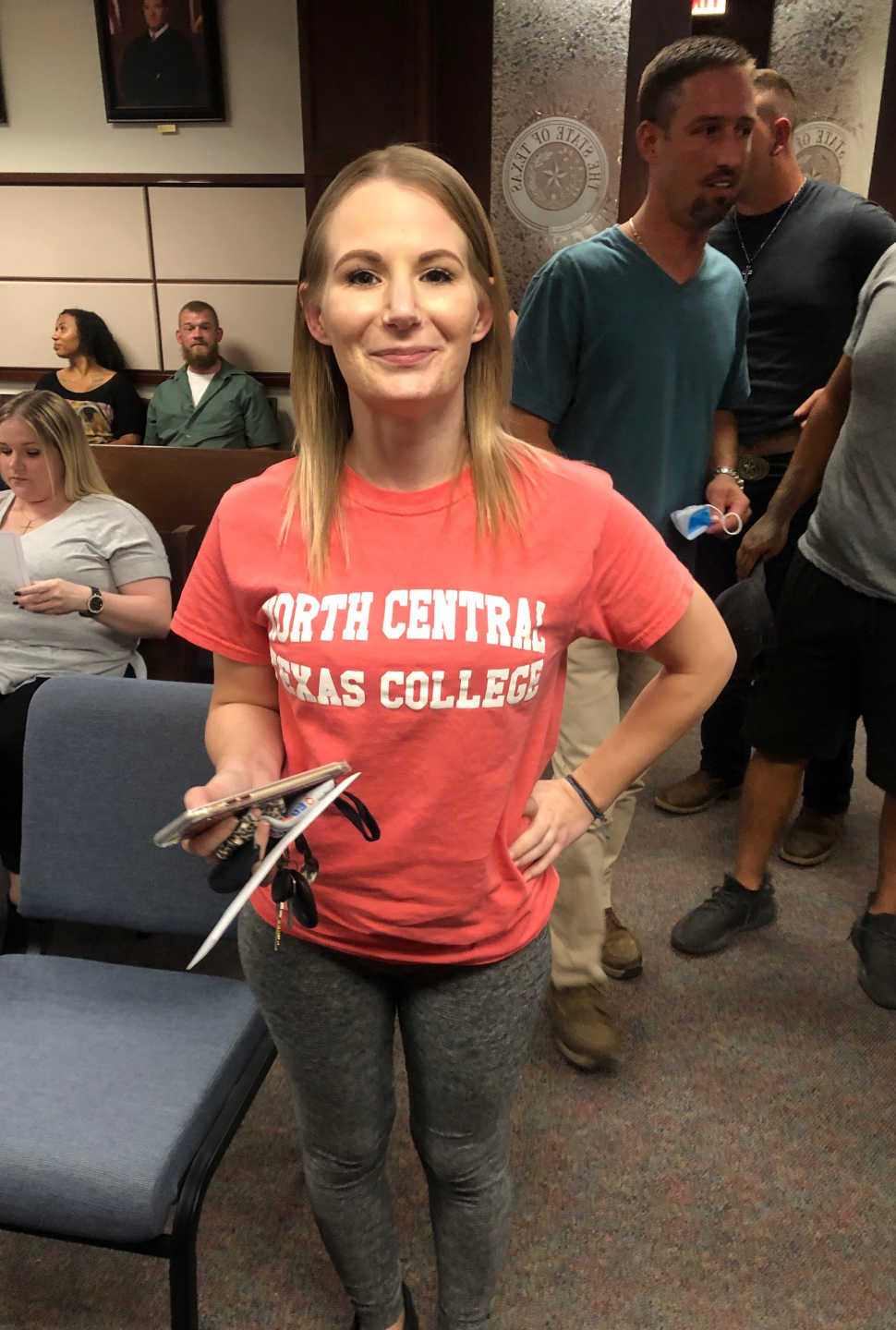
- **I think that Scott should *always* continue to visit the potential participants.**
- It really influenced my decision to give the program a chance, and I'm not confident that I would have made the same choice had he not come and talked to me.
- When an addict is at rock bottom, and they're scared/pushed into a corner, it's comforting to have someone who can understand where they are mentally. I feel like if I had been approached by anyone who hadn't been in my position before, I wouldn't have had the same amount of confidence or trust in what they were telling me.

# What I Think of the Interview

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- **It helps to have the interviews during the first few days/weeks of getting off the drugs because the worst parts of the lifestyle are still fresh in your mind.**
- **It's good that they don't just let anyone who applies into the program.**





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**Fall 2020 – Enrolled in  
North Central Texas College**

**Plans to become a Lawyer and help  
women trapped in their addiction.**



Sarah  
22 Years Old

# Sarah

- Attempted to manipulate team during interview process
- Never engaged in program
- Absconded out-of-state with participant from different Specialty Court
- Terminated from Specialty Court Program

# Sarah's Exit Interview

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## Reason(s) for choosing program

- Less incarceration time
- Supportive & Structure
- No conviction

## What aspects of court supervision do you feel is helpful

- Positive interaction with the Judge
- Extra recovery support groups
- Increasing court reporting

# Sarah's Exit Interview

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Did you receive rewards while in the program?

➤ No

What difficulties/barriers have you experienced while in the program?

➤ Mental Health Counseling

➤ Relating to/trust staff

➤ Recovery environment

➤ Finances

➤ Sober Housing

# Sarah's Exit Interview

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What aspects of court supervision do you feel is LESS helpful

- Home visits
- Detention/Jail or threat of Detention/Jail

Who do you feel comfortable to talk to on the team

- Judge

What sanctions did you receive while in the program

- Jail
- Rehab

# Sarah's Exit Interview

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What aspects of treatment do you feel really helped you?

- Able to take me out of my unmanageable life and help take me on a different path that doesn't include reckless behavior, death, or arrest

What aspect of treatment do you feel was LEAST helpful to you?

- Constant threats of jail or prison over simple things
- Believed there is favoritism

# Sarah's Exit Interview

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In your opinion, what are YOU most proud of in your life today?

- Accomplishing school
- Obtaining my girlfriend
- Don't have to deal with drugs or alcohol anymore
- I work legally



# Sarah's Exit Interview

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What comments would you like us to know or think about the program?

- Really know treatment centers before sending someone
- Show less favoritism
- Less judgmental on mental health

Why are you opting out?

- Not my choice

Izzy



Izzy

I had been sitting in jail for a few months when my attorney told me that I would be interviewed for drug court.

I think Kevin Edwards suggested me for the interview.

At that point, I just really wanted out of jail and was willing to consider any options.

Izzy

The day of the interview I walked in and met with Robin and Scott. Scott asked, “are you willing to do anything?” And I said yes. Well...I really didn’t know what “anything” meant at that point.

Izzy

Robin talked with me from a clinician viewpoint, and she told me I really didn't need to be focused on my son right now. That upset me but I continued to listen.

Scott told me about the structure of drug court and talked about the expectations.

Izzy

In the interview, they continued to talk through the details. They said I would go before the judge and that kind of scared me. All the things they asked of me...I thought...'if I don't do this I will go to prison'.

Izzy

I believe the interview process is a critical point in the process. It gave me hope for the first time really. I remember thinking, “they know me...why do they believe I can do this?”

Izzy

Scott told me about his story and that made me feel more comfortable.

Robin was really serious and pretty hard on me. She was matter of fact. It was hard to hear but was sobering...really. It wasn't what I expected.



Izzy

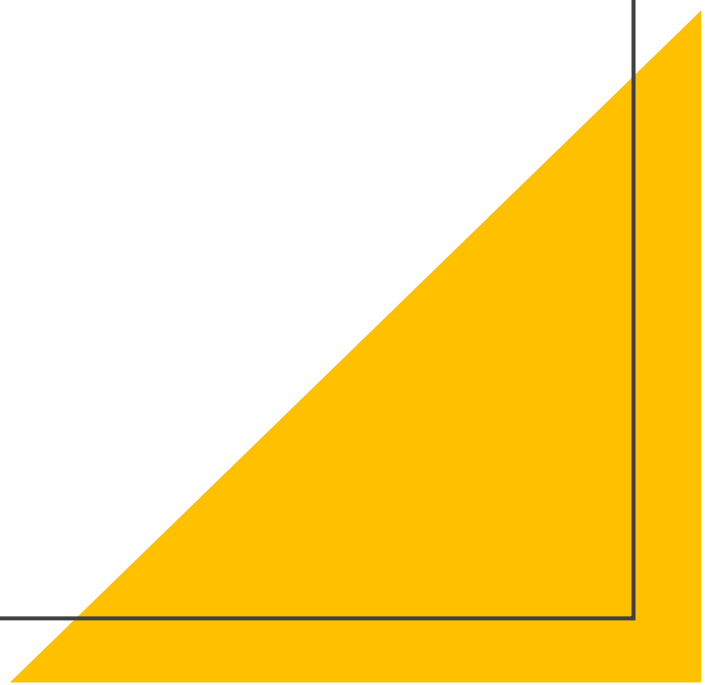
I realized the whole purpose was  
to save my life

About the same time, I started  
seeing they believed in me

I started believing in myself

Izzy

Setting the bar high was so  
important





The high bar saved my life and showed me a new future.




Michael



Michael


## What he like the most:

- Ongoing accountability by team and peers.
  - FYI, in our initial interviews, the majority of participants say they want accountability - at least conceptually.
  - Said "drug court saved his life."
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Michael

## What he liked the least:

- Couldn't think of anything initially.
  - He said "Jail kept me alive"
  - He further stated the sanctions had to be there and fear of further jail time is what kept him on track.
  - He said he noticed right before he graduated that we "were becoming "kind of lax."
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# Michael

- Just bought a new house and brand-new truck.
- Was at the playground with his 2 1/2 y/o Daughter when we spoke.
- Killin' it is more like it.



Alicia





Alicia

Municipal Court –  
Stephanie Berry

Recovery Center  
Interview & Admission  
Willingness

Looking at 3<sup>rd</sup> trip to  
TDCJ for Meth charges



Alicia

1<sup>st</sup> potential candidate  
for Drug Court in 211<sup>th</sup>  
District Court

1<sup>st</sup> graduate from Drug  
Court

Strong female sponsor in  
the community

