

NORTH CAROLINA

Prosecutor Training Assistance Program

► AT-A-GLANCE

► Project Characteristics

Innovative
Training

► Program Areas

Law Enforcement and
Prosecution
Alcohol and Other Drugs

► Targeted Populations

North Carolina Prosecutors
Law Enforcement Officers

► Type of Jurisdiction

State

► Jurisdiction Size

8 million

► Funding

Federal: \$155,000
Local Match: \$20,000

► Contact

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Problem Identification

While the majority of highway related cases start at the district court level, about 42 percent of the prosecutors in the North Carolina District Attorney's office have five years or less experience trying these types of cases. North Carolina did not have a formalized training program specifically focusing on highway related issues such as prosecuting DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) cases, evidentiary issues, and trial advocacy skills at the district and superior court levels. There is a clear need for adequate and ongoing training curriculum and programs for successful prosecution.

Since the prosecution of highway related cases begin with law enforcement, it is necessary that the relationship between prosecutors and law enforcement be fostered and improved. Prosecutors and law enforcement must learn to work together to ensure a positive outcome. Prior to this program there was also no curriculum providing prosecutors and law enforcement the opportunity to better their relationship and be cross-trained.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Prosecutor Assistance Training Program is to improve the quality of prosecution of highway related cases in North Carolina.

The program's objectives are to:

- Provide quality ongoing training curriculum and programs that will educate and train a minimum of 1200 prosecutors and law enforcement personnel within a one year period;
- Improve the relationship between law enforcement personnel and prosecutors through cross-training and programs designed to foster this relationship.

Strategies and Activities

The Prosecutor Training Assistance Program implemented the following strategies to achieve their goals:

- Ensured that Conference staffers attend meetings of the National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators in order to have access to representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the National Traffic Law Center who provide new information about highway related programs.
- Converted a conference room into a high technology courtroom to conduct regular training for prosecutors and law enforcement officers.

Results

The Prosecutor Training Assistance Program achieved the following results in fiscal year 2001-2002:

- Offered training courses, such as:
 - Basic DWI Trial Advocacy;
 - Regional Vehicular Homicide.
- Held over 12 courses for approximately 400 students.
- Received consistent outstanding ratings from student and instructor participants who were surveyed immediately following the course and again three months after completing the course. The evaluation form contains questions about the quality of course content, instruction, usefulness of the course to the job, and assesses the value of the course for improving on-the-job performance.
- Plan to continue to develop curriculum and provide training for prosecutors and law enforcement statewide.
- Prompted the Executive Committee of the Conference of District Attorneys to issue a directive that all training provided by the Conference of District Attorneys will have a law enforcement component.