

# Mental Health Court

## Bridging the Gap

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***Midway, UT***

# The Scope of the Problem

- ✚ 2002-2005 Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that nationally, 64 percent of inmates in Local Jails have a mental health problem. 24 percent report a recent history and 60 percent report current symptoms of a mental problem.
- ✚ State prisoners who had a mental health problem had longer sentences. In jails, they have a slightly shorter stay by 5 months.
- ✚ Nationally, almost 500,000 people booked in jails annually have a serious mental illness

# The Problem in Utah County circa 2007

- ✚ About 13,602 are booked annually
- ✚ About 952 of these have mental illness
- ✚ At any given time, about 88 inmates in Utah County Jail have a mental illness
- ✚ About 44 inmates report at least 1 stay in mental hospital
- ✚ Jail overcrowding

# Utah County Jail today

- ✦ About 981 inmates typically housed each day (82 percent capacity).
- ✦ About 10 individuals are seen on a daily basis by our WMH liasion for psychotherapy. About 50 individuals per week. 20-25 inmates are seen weekly for psychiatry.
- ✦ Approximately 20 percent of population are referred for treatment. Not all are mentally ill and others do not disclose and are not referred.

# Silos of Service

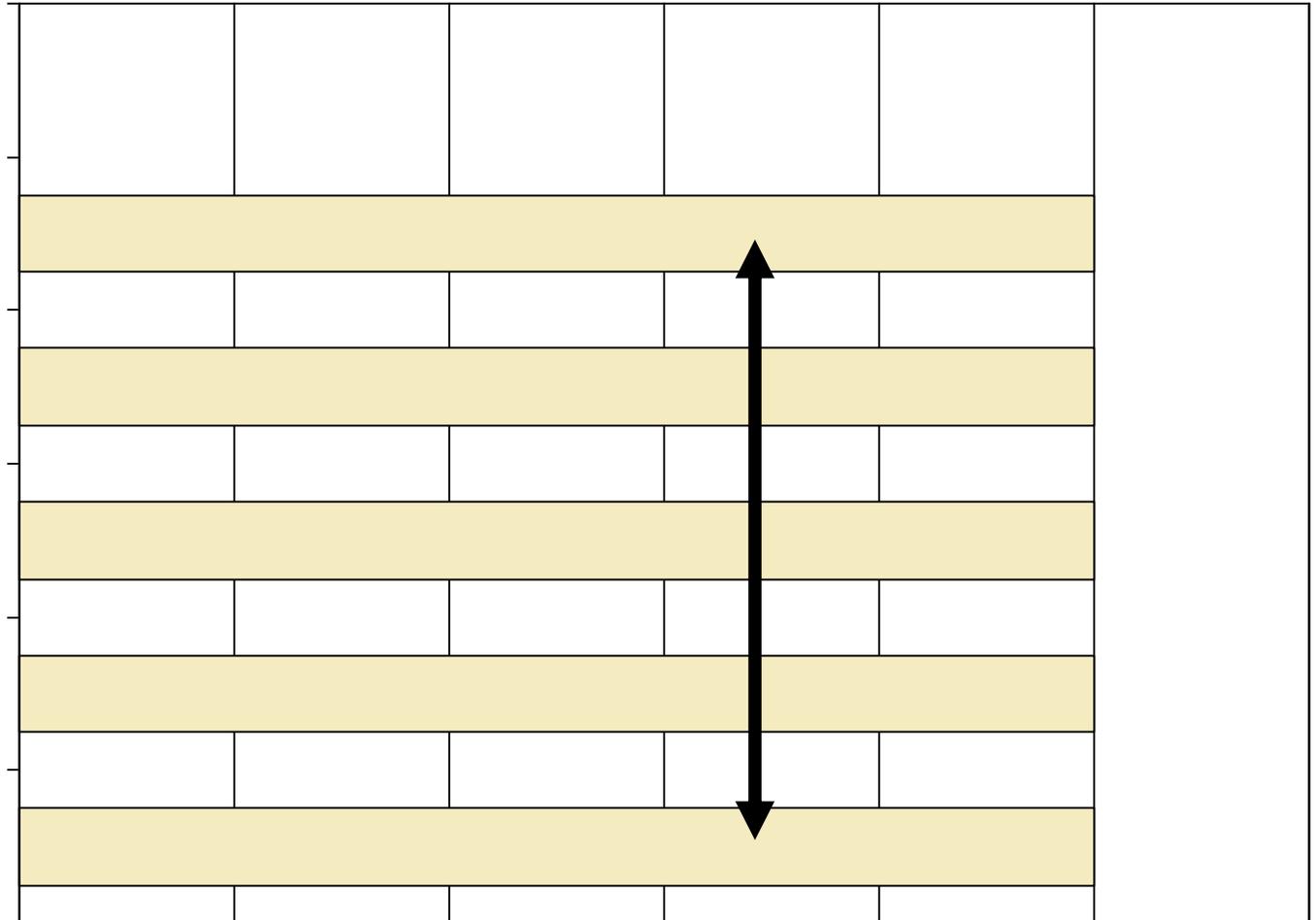
**Attorneys**

**AP&P**

**Jail**

**Courts**

**Mental Health**



# Bridging the Gap



## Therapeutic Justice

- Attention on impact of mental illness on criminal justice system and society
- Courts can be proactive responding to social problems
- Treatment & Prevention versus Punishment
- Combined focus on legal and therapeutic outcomes
- Judge becomes more of a coach/ encourager/ supervisor
- Coordination of all stakeholders



# Goals

- ✦ Divert participants from Criminal Justice System
- ✦ Avoid Revolving Door at inpatient facilities
- ✦ Enhance MHC participants quality of life
- ✦ Keep community safe
- ✦ Use limited available funds in most effective way

# Mental Health Court History

- Natural progression from Drug Courts (1989)
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Mental Health Court started in Florida (1997)
  - There are approximately 350 operating Mental Health Courts throughout the country as of 2012.
- => Cutting Edge of Mental Health Treatment and Prevention

# Utah County Initiative



- ✿ **IN 2004 Utah County instituted MHC in 4<sup>th</sup> District Court**
- ✿ **IN 2007, Provo City instituted Utah's first MHC in Justice Court**
- ✿ **IN 2011, Orem City partnered with WMH for a quasi MHC in Justice Court**
- ✿ **Established partnerships between courts, WMH, County and City attorneys, public defenders, and law enforcement**

# Participation Criteria

## • Clients must be:

- Legally competent
- Have suitable diagnosis (bipolar, psychotic disorder etc). Not overridden by Axis II Disorder
- No weapons, patterns of violent offenses, sexual offenses or DUIs
- Voluntary choice to participate in MHC rather than in traditional criminal justice system

# The Workings of the MHC

- Prospective participants are referred from any of the allied agencies (courts, prosecutors, defenders, AP&P)
- After acceptance based on criteria, clients referred back to court and scheduled in MHC
- Clients will enter plea in abeyance and agree to stay in MHC for 1 year
- Weekly staffing meetings (w/o MHC participants) to monitor progress and recommend treatment regimen
- Weekly meetings of MHC participants with MH Case Manager
- MHC participants appear in court on weekly (or bi-weekly) basis

# Phases of Treatment

## ↓ Screening

- competence, suitability, diagnosis and orientation

## ↓ Entry into Court

- Meet team and arrange for mental health services

## ↓ Stabilization

- Weekly progress report in court and with court accountability

## ↓ Maintenance

- Compliance monitored, decreased court appearances

# Phases of Treatment

	Screening Phase	Entry Phase	Stabilization Phase	Maintenance Phase
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine legal appropriateness</li> <li>✦ Determine defendant's willingness</li> <li>✦ Determine clinical appropriateness for mental health court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop treatment regimen</li> <li>✦ Address symptoms of mental illness</li> <li>✦ Establish medication regimen</li> <li>✦ Establish accountability to court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stabilize symptoms of mental illness</li> <li>✦ Demonstrates accountability to court</li> <li>✦ Makes progress reports to court</li> <li>✦ Is actively involved in treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops insight into need for treatment</li> <li>✦ Is actively involved in treatment</li> <li>✦ Is self motivated to continue in treatment</li> <li>✦ Self regulates symptoms of mental illness</li> </ul>
Timeframes	2 weeks	2 – 4 weeks (typically)	6 months	6 - 9 months (as determined by the court)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral for MH eval completed</li> <li>✦ Mental Health Evaluation</li> <li>✦ Transfer case to MHC, if appropriate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychiatric evaluation</li> <li>✦ Attend all appointments as scheduled</li> <li>✦ Take all medications as prescribed</li> <li>✦ Attend weekly court hearings</li> <li>✦ Comply with drug screens as ordered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all appointments as scheduled</li> <li>✦ Take all medications as prescribed</li> <li>✦ Actively participate in all treatment activities</li> <li>✦ Attend weekly court hearings</li> <li>✦ Comply with drug screens as ordered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all appointments as scheduled</li> <li>✦ Take all medications as prescribed</li> <li>✦ Actively participate in all treatment activities</li> <li>✦ Attend bi-weekly (or as scheduled) court hearings</li> <li>✦ Comply with drug screens as ordered</li> </ul>
Completion Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets all entry criteria</li> <li>✦ Signed MHC agreement</li> <li>✦ Signed plea in abeyance agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completes all recommended and scheduled treatment activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive review for 8 consecutive court reviews</li> <li>✦ Completes and actively participates in all recommended and scheduled treatment activities</li> <li>✦ No new offenses or non-compliance with treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completes and actively participates in all recommended and scheduled treatment activities</li> <li>✦ No new offenses or non-compliance with treatment</li> </ul>

# Sanctions

- ✘ Verbal / written reports
- ✘ Increased treatment requirements
- ✘ Closer monitoring of medications
- ✘ 12 step marathon
- ✘ More frequent meetings with MH Case Manager
- ✘ Revert to earlier treatment phase
- ✘ Community Service
- ✘ Jail
- ✘ Termination from program

# A Case Study “Marilyn”

- ✦ 44 year old female diagnosed with Bi-Polar Disorder and Alcohol Dependence.
- ✦ In and out of treatment, various episodes of homelessness due to her mental illness. Lost her marriage and her children and cut off by her parents and family due to her erratic and destructive behaviors.
- ✦ Multiple charges over the years including 3 DUI's

# A Case Study “Marilyn”

- Given the acuity of her condition, she was admitted to the Bridge Team for treatment.  
Attended Dual Diagnosis Group 2x weekly.  
Reported weekly to the Court on her progress.  
Attended MHC for 13 months.

# A Case Study: “Marilyn”

## ✦ The Statistical Outcome:

✦ 3 years prior to MHC: 301 jail days,

✦ 1 year prior to MHC: 169 jail bed days

✦ During MHC: **0 jail bed days,**

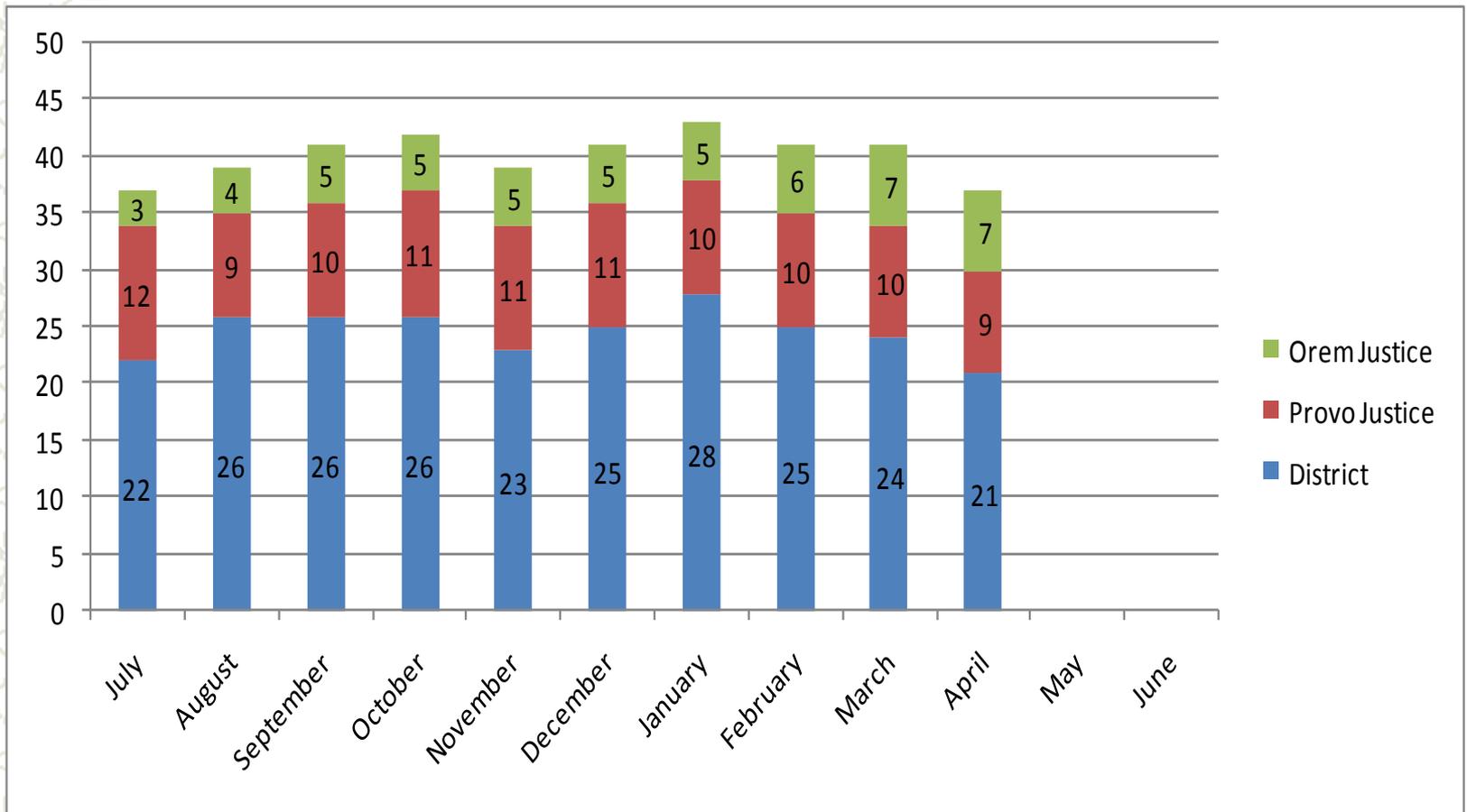
✦ 3 years after MHC: **0 jail bed days**

# A Case Study: “Marilyn”

## • The *Human* Outcome:

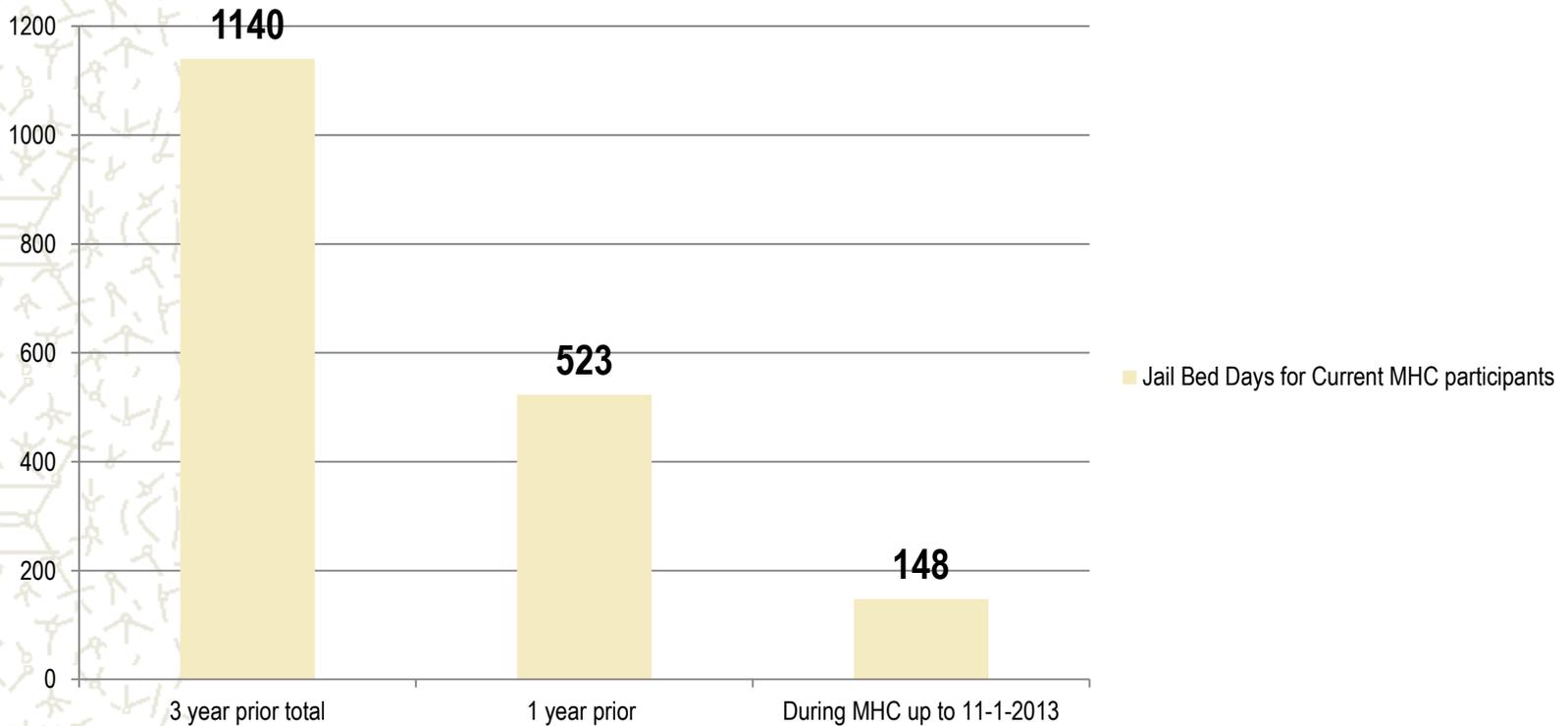
Marilyn’s estranged parents showed up to her MHC graduation and stood to applaud her. She now has reestablished contact with her family.

# Mental Health Court Outcomes: # of Participants in FY14



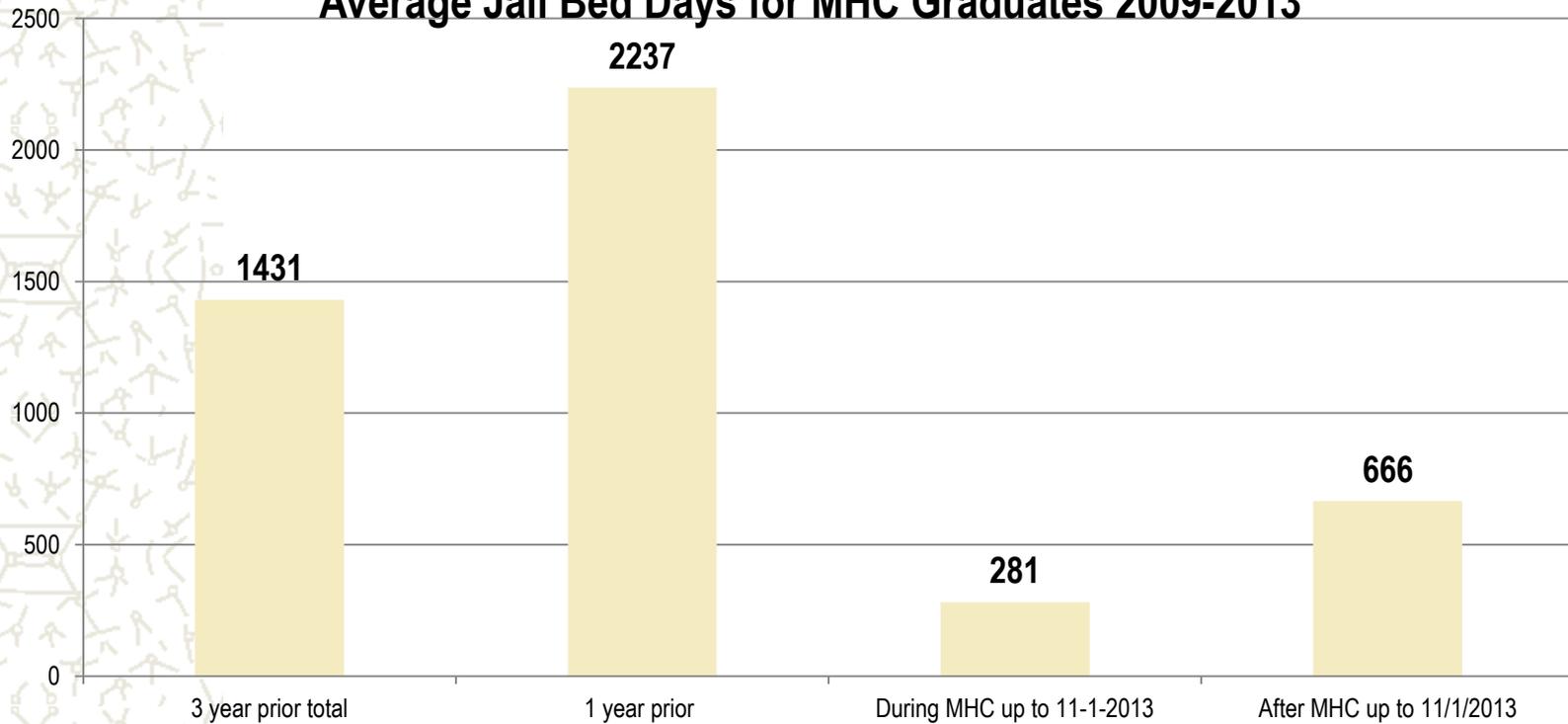
# Mental Health Court Outcomes

## Jail Bed Days for Current MHC participants



# Mental Health Court Outcomes

**Average Jail Bed Days for MHC Graduates 2009-2013**



# Mental Health Court Outcomes

- ✦ The data was annualized to better compare across groups.
- ✦ Removed 2 outliers, one on each end of the spectrum that skewed the data.
- ✦ Out of 104 graduates between 2009 and 2013, 30 had some jail time after graduation. 6 had significant jail time after MHC (over 100 days)
- ✦ 70 percent of graduates had no additional jail time!



# Special Guest

Lori Mortensen,  
Provo City Justice MHC graduate



Thank you

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