



## TASC: 40+ Years of Promoting Health and Justice

Founded in 1976, TASC, Inc. of Illinois has facilitated access to community-based substance use and mental health treatment and recovery for tens of thousands of men, women, and youth.

Now in its fifth decade of service, TASC is at the forefront of local, state, and national efforts to improve criminal justice policies and access to quality care in the community.

### A National Program Model

The name TASC refers to both a program model and an organization.

The TASC model (originally “Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime”) came about in 1972 with pilot programs funded by the federal government, which sought a response to increasing numbers of heroin-addicted individuals entering criminal courts. The first TASC program was established in Delaware in 1972, and other pilot programs soon followed, designed to divert people with non-violent offenses out of court systems and into supervised drug treatment in the community.

Building on the original model, currently there are numerous entities across the United States called “TASC.” These programs operate independently of one another.

In Illinois, TASC is a statewide, independent nonprofit organization. It is the largest TASC program in the nation.



TASC helps individuals, families, and communities throughout Illinois achieve health and wellness.

### Origins and Evolution of TASC in Illinois

TASC, Inc. of Illinois was founded in 1976 by Melody Heaps, who had been working for civil rights and social justice on the west side of Chicago, and had witnessed communities being torn apart by drugs and the criminalization of addiction.

Heaps partnered with the Illinois Dangerous Drugs Commission and the Circuit Court of Cook County to apply for federal funding to create an independent agency to provide treatment placement, clinical tracking, and monitoring services as an adjunct to traditional probation for people with heroin addictions.

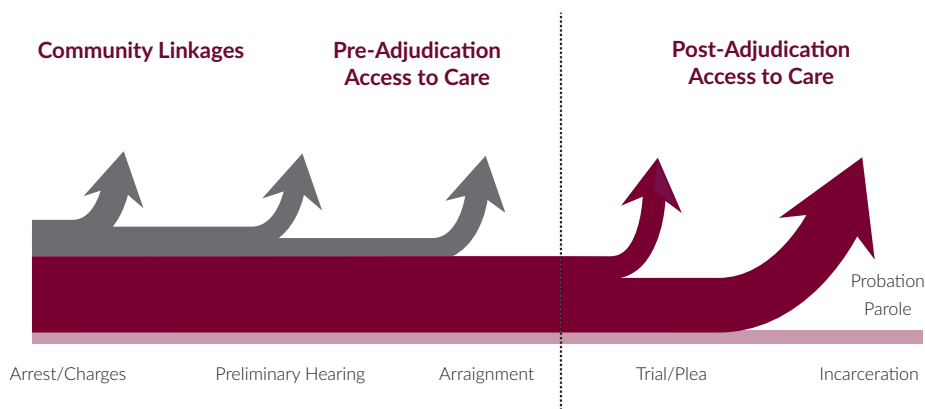
From this small pilot program, TASC was born in Illinois.

Within five years, TASC had grown beyond Cook County to reach every jurisdiction in Illinois. Over the decades, TASC has expanded its services for people involved in the justice system, from pre-arrest diversion through reentry, and also has developed programs for juvenile justice, public health, and child welfare systems.

From the beginning, TASC’s core services have included clinical assessment, client advocacy, treatment placement, reporting to referral sources, and ongoing care coordination, all grounded in a steady commitment to diverting people away from government institutions and into health and recovery in the community. Recently, TASC also has begun providing outpatient substance use treatment services in some Illinois locations.

To help advance health and justice on a broader scale, in addition to direct services in Illinois, TASC also offers public policy, consulting, and technical assistance services nationally and internationally.

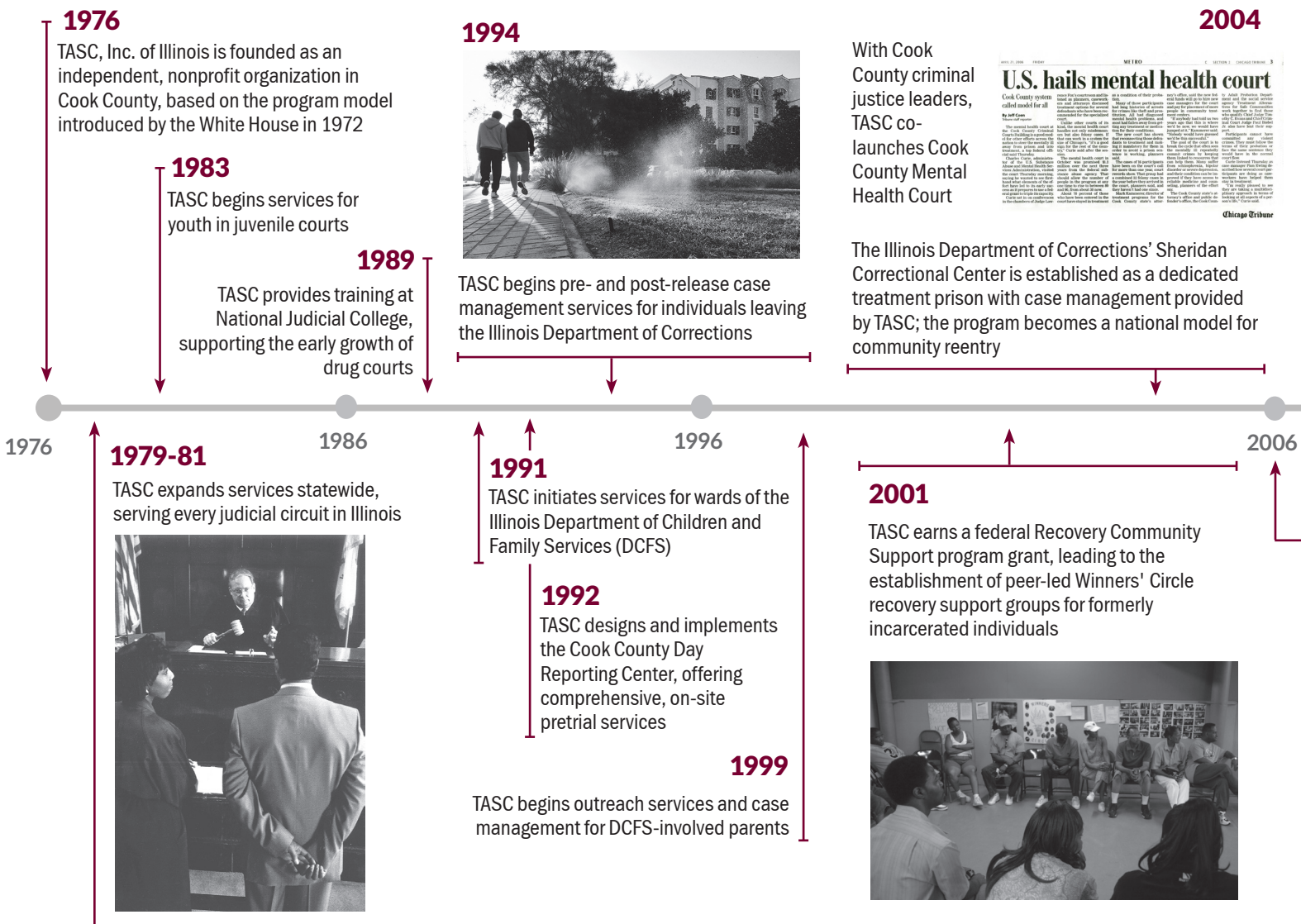
“Every point in the justice system—from arrest to community reentry—is an opportunity to identify and intervene with individuals who have substance use and mental health conditions,” says TASC President Pam Rodriguez. “Our aim is to ensure that services and public policies are in place that will help people leave these systems and achieve health and full engagement within their families and communities. In this way, we help reduce crime, improve public health, and create a more fair and just society.” ❖



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— TASC President Pam Rodriguez

# TASC Timeline: 40+ Years of Promoting Health and Justice

Working in collaboration with numerous private and public partners at local, state, and federal levels, below are some of the milestones marking our progress in creating a more healthy and just society.



## Rebuilding lives. Strengthening communities. Restoring hope.

At TASC, we are committed to building a healthier, safer, and more just society.

"Our overall purpose is to help our clients restore their lives, and at the same time, improve the systems which they encounter. We give clients a voice. Nowhere have I run into an agency that can speak to so many issues—systemic or clinical—or help inform policy the way TASC does. We work with a pretty impressive bench of experts who always seem willing to address the tough subjects and problem solve when systems ask for our help."

**Phillip Barbour**  
TASC Master Trainer

"Through our court services, we encourage our clients to make good decisions, keep them on task toward their own recovery, and support their positive changes."

**Shelley Sears**  
TASC Clinical Supervisor

"My TASC case manager encouraged me and believed in me before I believed that I could succeed in recovery myself."

**Stacy**

"I myself was a TASC client upon my release from the IDOC in July of 1996. I was given the support I needed to complete my parole and gain employment, and I was blessed to become the first chairperson of the Winners' Circle. Another miraculous thing happened when TASC hired me in 2001. As a case manager, I helped others just as TASC had helped me. TASC helped save my life. As a result of affiliation with TASC, I celebrated 23 years of sobriety on December 11, 2018."

**Darryl Johnson**  
First chair of the Winners' Circle, which offers peer-based recovery support for individuals facing the dual challenges and stigma of substance use disorder recovery and justice system involvement

## 2007

Center for Health and Justice at TASC releases first *No Entry* report, highlighting the benefits and cost savings of diverting people with substance use disorders out of the justice system and into treatment



## 2012

TASC begins pre- and post-release services for Moms and Babies program at the Decatur Correctional Center

TASC and partners initiate the Madison County Opiate Alert Project, saving lives by closely tracking at-risk probationers who have opioid addictions

## 2014

TASC and Winnebago County Drug Court offer pilot program for opiate-addicted individuals to receive medication-assisted treatment along with TASC case management

## 2015

TASC President Pam Rodriguez is appointed to the Governor's Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform



## 2006

Under the leadership of the Illinois Department Juvenile Justice, TASC begins providing clinical reentry case management services across Illinois that help youth parolees successfully transition to their communities

Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center (SWICC) expands as fully dedicated drug treatment and reentry program; TASC provides pre- and post-release case management

TASC's Center for Health and Justice is established, providing consulting, training, and technical assistance services nationally and internationally

## 2011

TASC initiates Illinois TECH Care program, using video technology to provide care coordination services for justice-involved adults in Clinton, Fayette, and Marion counties

## 2010

TASC staffs Illinois Disproportionate Justice Impact Study (DJIS) Commission, producing report on disproportionality in the prosecution and sentencing of African Americans for drug crimes



2018

## 2017

Based on our experience providing Medicaid enrollment assistance and linkage services at jail discharge, TASC and partners open the Supportive Release Center, offering an overnight stay and service linkages for men leaving the Cook County Jail who have substance use disorders, mental illness, and/or physical health disorders, and who don't have an immediate place to go



"The biggest thing that stands out to me is that people didn't give up on me. Long after I had quit on myself, I had individuals from TASC at my door saying 'OK, we understand where you've been and what's happening. Let's focus on what we need to do to move forward.'"

**Tim**

"When I regained custody of Marshall, I was relieved, happy, and scared. I had a second chance."

**Kim**

"Because TASC is baked into the criminal justice system in Illinois, the justice system presents a more human face—with a focus on the individual—and promotes public health and human rights."

**Ambassador Adam Namm**

*Executive Secretary*

*Organization of American States (OAS), leading an international delegation visiting TASC in June 2018*



## Chris Foltz: Reinventing Life

When Chris Foltz was young, his parents were well known in the community as law enforcement professionals. Chris developed an early interest in civics and politics, and after college, he began a successful career running political campaigns.

Chris moved home when his mother fell ill. Not long after, he had oral surgery and was prescribed opioid painkillers, soon becoming addicted to Vicodin and OxyContin, and ultimately to heroin. His addiction was costing him \$300 a day. And then his mother passed away.

The next days were a blur, except for one moment that Chris remembers as he left the wake. He spotted a coin purse on the floor of the funeral home and picked it up, his thoughts jumping to where he could go to score some heroin. He walked outside and opened the coin purse to find that it contained 63 dollars, credit cards, a ring, and an ID: the coin purse belonged to one of the funeral staff members, someone Chris knew.

Chris decided he would return the coin purse to the funeral home the next day, and quietly leave it where someone else could find it. But by then, it already had been reported stolen. When Chris returned to pay expenses, he found himself eyeing the

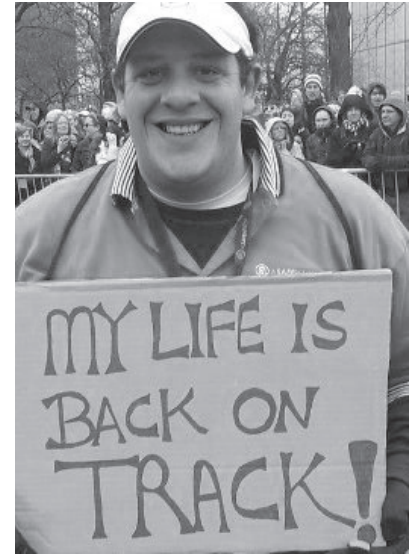
monetary donations left by mourners. That money could buy a lot of heroin.

"With everything I was going through, I was thinking of getting high that day and I would have probably died," Chris says. If so, what happened next may have saved his life. The very police officers who had paid their respects to Chris' mother at the wake now were there to arrest Chris for theft.

Chris spent 119 days in the Winnebago County Jail. During that time, he lost everything. His mother's home and all his possessions were gone. Chris was devastated that he had disrespected his mother.

While in jail, Chris received a visit from Don Allen, a TASC case manager in Winnebago County. At first, Chris didn't believe that he needed TASC's help, but Don helped Chris understand that there was hope in treatment and recovery. Don helped Chris move into an independent living program in Waukegan, many miles from the jail. Over the next many months, Don helped Chris navigate clinical appointments, court appearances, and barriers that could have prevented Chris from succeeding.

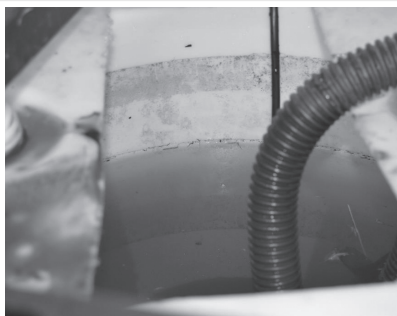
Since being a TASC client, the world has become a different place for Chris. Now dedicated to helping others through social innovation, he and his team have worked



on a project to recycle non-potable and rain water into clean drinking water, while also reducing the amount of water used for appliances such as air conditioners and washing machines. Once this enterprise is fully developed, Chris would like to install these systems for social service organizations that could benefit from the cost savings.

Passionate about working with nonprofits and with people who want to change the world, Chris often thanks the people who helped him turn his life around. "Don Allen cared about me," says Chris.

"Without him and TASC, I don't think I would be successful in my recovery." ❖



### 10 Years After Being a TASC Client...

Chris became committed to creating innovative solutions for nonprofits and people who want to change the world.

His projects have included building a system to recycle non-potable and rain water into clean drinking water (photos at left), and robots (photo below) to assist with landscaping, snow removal, and other community improvement needs.

