

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY

BERGEN VICINAGE

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Bergen County Superior Court Hosts Drug Court Graduation

The Bergen County Drug Court will hold a graduation ceremony on Thursday, June 18 at 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 426 in the Bergen County Justice Center, 10 Main St., Hackensack.

The keynote speaker will be Bruce Harper, former all-pro running back of the New York Jets and the co-founder of Heroes and Cool Kids. This program is designed to teach high school athletes to be role models for the elementary school children in their neighborhoods.

Heroes and Cool Kids focuses on the development of important life skills such as making connections with positive role models, bullying prevention, conflict resolution and making positive lifestyle choices by highlighting drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse prevention. The mentors are trained by former NFL standouts like Harper and Keith Elias of the New York Giants.

Additional remarks will be delivered by Assignment Judge Peter E. Doyne; Judge Harry Carroll, presiding judge of the criminal division, and Judge Lois Lipton, who presides over the Bergen County Drug Court. Allen Quintavella, criminal division manager, will serve as master of ceremonies.

The Drug Court program is a highly-specialized team process within the existing Superior Court structure that addresses nonviolent, drug-related cases. Drug Courts are unique in the criminal justice environment because they build a close collaborative



relationship between criminal justice and drug treatment professionals. Participants follow a tightly structured regimen of treatment and recovery services. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process.

Drug Court participants in phases one, two and three receive intensive supervision from their probation officers. To commence to the fourth and final phase, participants must be in the program for at least 18 months and make significant progress in their recovery. In order to graduate, which includes their term of probationary supervision; participants must successfully complete all treatment requirements, demonstrate a strong sobriety support system and remain sober. In addition, participants must be employed full-time and have no pending criminal charges or active bench warrants.

Since the inception of the program in Bergen County in April 2002, 62 participants have graduated and 25 have commenced into the final, least restrictive phase of the program.

For more information regarding the Bergen County Drug Court program, contact Barbara Morgan, Drug Court coordinator, at 201-527-2405.