



Judiciary News Release

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Hudson Vicinage Holds First Drug Court Commencement

Hudson Vicinage will hold its first drug court commencement celebration on Tues., Sept. 12 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the second floor of the William J. Brennan Courthouse, 583 Newark Ave., Jersey City. Judge Francis Schultz will preside over the event. Speakers will include Assignment Judge Maurice J. Gallipoli, Hudson County Prosecutor Edward DeFazio, New Jersey Public Defender Yvonne Smith Segars, and Statewide Drug Court Coordinator Kathy Dixon. Judiciary Voices in Unity, a choir comprising Judiciary judges and staff, will perform.

Drug court is a highly specialized team process with judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation, corrections officers and rehabilitation and treatment providers all working together. Participants appear regularly before a Superior Court judge and are required to undergo frequent drug testing, obtain jobs, pay their fines and support their families. They are intensely supervised by specially trained probation officers.

Drug court targets offenders who, were it not for their substance abuse, may never have been involved with the court system. Drug court programs are rigorous, requiring completion of four phases during five years of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and testing, and a tightly structured regimen of treatment and recovery services. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process, but also allows supervisors to react swiftly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants cannot comply with the program.

Participants who reach commencement have been in the program a minimum of 18 months and made significant progress in meeting the goals of drug court. Five participants will receive certificates marking their completion of Phase III of the program, where they will remain subject to random urine testing and must continue with treatment provisions. They also will serve as positive role models for participants in Phase I and Phase II. The approach is both intensive and extensive and offers addicted offenders the best chance to remain drug free.

First opened in 2004, the Hudson Vicinage drug court currently serves 110 participants. For more event information, please call Patricia DellOsso at 201-795-6882.

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