



# BURLINGTON VICINAGE PRESS RELEASE

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## **BURLINGTON VICINAGE DRUG COURT TO HOLD TENTH GRADUATION AND COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**

**MOUNT HOLLY** – Burlington Vicinage will hold its tenth drug court graduation celebration on Thursday, Dec. 9 at 1:30 p.m. at Burlington County College, 3331 Route 38, Laurel Hall, third floor, Mount Laurel. Reporters and photographers are invited to attend.

Superior Court Judge James W. Palmer Jr., who serves as the drug court judge, will preside over the event. "We are proud of the individuals that have made it through this intense program and have made a commitment to become productive members of our community."

Seven participants will celebrate the successful completion of the program, having progressed through all four phases. Five participants will commence to phase two, and two participants will commence to phase three. The graduates will give remarks about their journey through the program.

Drug court targets non-violent offenders with substance abuse issues. The clients are closely supervised by specially trained probation officers. Drug court programs began in New Jersey in 1996, and expanded into the Burlington Vicinage in 2004. Since 2004, thirty-eight participants have graduated from the Burlington Vicinage Drug Court.

Drug courts are a highly specialized team process with a judge, prosecutor, defense attorneys, probation staff and treatment providers working together. Participants appear regularly before a Superior Court judge and are required to fulfill the obligations of drug court by undergoing frequent drug testing, obtaining jobs, paying their fines and supporting their families.

For more information on the Burlington Vicinage Drug Court program, contact Michelle Consuegra, drug court team leader, at 609-518-2559.

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