

**SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
OCEAN VICINAGE**

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For immediate release:
Dec.13, 2010

Ocean Vicinage Drug Court to Hold 15th Graduation and Commencement Ceremony

Ocean Vicinage will hold its 15th drug court commencement and graduation celebration on Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 11 a.m. in the Mancini Room of the Ocean County Library, 101 Washington St., Toms River. Judge Ronald E. Hoffman will preside over the event. The celebration will mark the accomplishments of 21 candidates who are eligible to graduate and another 21 participants who are eligible to commence into the final phase of the program.

Drug court 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.

Drug court targets offenders who, were it not for their substance abuse, might 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 do not comply with the program.

The graduates have met all the requirements of the program and have successfully completed their terms of probation supervision. Participants who reach commencement have been in the program a minimum of 18 months and have made significant progress in meeting the goals of drug court.

The Ocean Vicinage Drug Court program serves 260 participants. A total of 113 participants have graduated from the program since its inception in 2002.

For more information, call Carole Haines, drug court coordinator, at 732-929-2125.

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