

# News Release



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For immediate release: May 6, 2019

## New Jersey Judiciary Recognizes National Drug Court Month

The New Jersey Judiciary is recognizing National Drug Court Month with activities across the state, including a display of artwork created by those in recovery.

Several vicinages are holding graduation ceremonies for those who have completed the intensive four-phase drug court program, which diverts defendants to the appropriate services to treat their addiction.

Original artwork created by Monmouth Vicinage drug court participants will be displayed throughout the Monmouth County Courthouse, 71 Monument Park, Freehold, during the week of May 13.

In addition to the artwork display, the Monmouth Vicinage will hold a panel discussion, “Inside the Drug Court,” on Wednesday, May 15 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in courtroom 334 east.

The following drug court graduation ceremonies will take place during the month:

- [Monmouth Vicinage](#), Monday, May 6
- [Morris/Sussex Vicinage](#), Thursday, May 9 and Tuesday, May 21
- [Camden Vicinage](#), Tuesday, May 21

The Monmouth panel discussion, which is open to the public, will feature three drug court graduates who will discuss their experiences in the program and their roads to recovery.

The Judiciary’s drug court program operates within the Superior Court to address nonviolent drug addicted offenders. The program requires participants to complete four phases of rigorous drug and alcohol treatment and recovery.

“Drug court offers participants the opportunity to reclaim their lives and become healthy and productive members of society again,” said Donna Westhoven, chief of adult drug court. “We know that drug court graduates are much less likely to return to prison than defendants who are released from state prison. The positive effects of their sobriety last well beyond their graduation.”

Drug court began in New Jersey in 1996 with pilot programs in the Camden and Essex vicinages and gradually expanded until they were implemented statewide with voluntary participation by 2004. The program became mandatory for certain drug offenders in 2013.

Since its inception, 5,828 participants have graduated from the program.

To learn about the stories of some of our drug court graduates, watch our video [here](#).

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