

**SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY  
UNION VICINAGE**

UNION COUNTY COURT HOUSE, ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY 07207  
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Union Vicinage  
For Immediate Release  
May 16, 2011

**Union Vicinage Celebrates May as National Drug Court Month**

The Union County Drug Court will celebrate National Drug Court Month by holding a commencement and graduation ceremony on May 17 at 1:30 p.m. in the 5<sup>th</sup> floor courtroom of the Tower Building at the Union County Courthouse, 2 Broad St., Elizabeth.

The ceremony will honor 18 participants who are entering the final phase of the program and 17 participants who are graduating from the program.

The keynote speaker will be Margaret N., a Union County Drug Court graduate from 2004.

Begun in 1998, the Union County Drug Court was one of the first pilot drug court programs in New Jersey. Since the inception of drug courts in New Jersey, a total of 2,103 adults have successfully completed the program, 202 drug-free babies have been born, and 2,348 minor children benefitted from their parents' sobriety.

Statistics show that upon entering drug court, only 30 percent of participants are employed, compared to 84 percent of graduates. The reconviction rate for drug court graduates is 8 percent.

In Union County Drug Court, 89 percent of graduates are employed, 51 of graduates have obtained medical benefits, 55 percent have their driving privileges and 34 percent have increased their level of education.

Drug court is a highly specialized team process existing within the 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, 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, drug testing, and a tightly structured regimen of treatment and recovery services. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process, while allowing the team to react swiftly to impose appropriate therapeutic sanctions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants cannot comply with the program.

For more information contact Mathew Hagler, drug court coordinator, at 908-659-4680

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