

**Superior Court of New Jersey
Criminal Division - Hudson Vicinage
Drug Court**



Lourdes I. Santiago, J.S.C.
Drug Court Judge

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Hudson Vicinage Drug Court Holds 15th Graduation

Hudson Vicinage will hold its 15th drug court graduation celebration on Wednesday, June 17 at 12:30 p.m. in the rotunda of the William J. Brennan, Jr. Courthouse, 583 Newark Ave., Jersey City. More than 30 participants will celebrate commencement of the final phase of drug court or successful completion of the program.

Each graduate has attained a minimum of one year of continuous sobriety, is employed full time, has earned or worked towards a GED or high school diploma, has established a regular payment history on all court fines, and has established a sober community network.

Assignment Judge Peter F. Bariso, Jr. will address the graduates, family, friends, and supporters. Judge Lourdes I. Santiago will preside over the event. Judiciary Voices in Unity, a choir composed of judges, attorneys, and court staff members, will also perform. The Keynote Speaker will be Mustafa Ali, a professional counselor at New Pathway Counseling Center in Bayonne and a long-time advocate of addiction treatment and Drug Court.

Drug courts are a highly-specialized team process that functions within the existing Superior Court structure to address nonviolent drug related cases. They are unique in the criminal justice environment because they build a close collaborative relationship between criminal justice and drug treatment professionals. Within a cooperative courtroom atmosphere, the judge heads a team of court staff, attorneys, probation officers, substance abuse evaluators, and treatment counselors who work in concert to support and monitor a participant's recovery.

One of the largest Drug Court programs in the state, Hudson County Drug Court currently has over 470 active participants with an annual retention rate of 84 percent.

For more information about the event, please contact Evan Weiss at 201-795-6882.

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