



BURLINGTON VICINAGE PRESS RELEASE

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Burlington Vicinage to Hold Drug Court Graduation Ceremony

The Burlington County Drug Court graduation will be held on Thursday, Sept. 3, 2015 at 2 p.m. at the Burlington County Library, 5 Pioneer Blvd., Westhampton. Four drug court participants will be recognized for advancing through the four phases of drug court and satisfying all of the significant requirements of drug court probation. Additionally, several other participants will be recognized for their advancement in the program.

Michael DeLeon, founder of Steered Straight, will be the keynote speaker for the ceremony. Founded in 2000, this nonprofit organization provides motivational presentations to youth and adults about the realities of making poor life choices. DeLeon is a supporter of the New Jersey Drug Court Program and has been a presenter at the statewide drug court training.

Superior Court Judge Susan Claypoole, who has presided over drug court since July 2013, said, "I am so very proud of our graduates. They have overcome addiction, reunited with their families and obtained employment. They have confidence, strength, self-respect and, most importantly, hope for a bright future without drugs."

The drug court program is a highly specialized team process within the New Jersey Superior Court that addresses nonviolent drug-related cases. Drug courts are unique, because they build a close collaborative relationship between the criminal justice system and drug treatment professionals. The program has a proven track record of success in changing the lives of those who suffer from the disease of addiction.

To date, the Burlington County Drug Court program has graduated 124 participants. The Burlington Vicinage Drug Court was included in the third group of vicinages to implement mandatory drug court on July 1, 2015. Mandatory Drug Court allows the court to order a defendant into the program even if the defendant does not voluntarily apply.

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