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Camden Vicinage to Host Drug Court Graduation Ceremony

Camden Vicinage will celebrate the graduation of 15 drug court participants at a ceremony on Tuesday, Oct. 25 at 2 p.m. in Courtroom 63 of the Hall of Justice, 101 S. 5th St., Camden, announced Assignment Judge Deborah Silverman Katz.

Criminal Division Presiding Judge Edward J. McBride Jr., who leads the vicinage's drug court team, will preside over the ceremony. Vance Johnson, former wide receiver for the Denver Broncos and motivational speaker, will give the keynote address.

The drug court program is a highly specialized team process within the existing Superior Court structure that relies upon a collaborative relationship between criminal justice officials and drug treatment professionals to assist non-violent drug offenders in rehabilitation. Drug court programs are rigorous, requiring completion of four phases during five years of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and testing. The program supports 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 program's requirements.

The vicinage's drug court program began in 1996. Along with the Essex Vicinage, it was the first voluntary drug court program in New Jersey. The program serves more than 600 participants. As of September, 388 participants had graduated from the program.

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