

News Release



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Mercer Vicinage to Hold Drug Court Graduation

The Mercer Vicinage will hold its winter drug court graduation ceremony on Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. in the special proceedings courtroom on the fourth floor of the Mercer County Criminal Courthouse, 400 S. Warren St., Trenton.

Superior Court Judge J. Adam Hughes, who presides over the vicinage's drug court program, will address 12 graduates. Assignment Judge Mary C. Jacobson will host the ceremony. Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes and Savita Bambhrolia, assistant dean of Enrollment Services at Mercer County Community College, will address the graduates.

Albert "Albie" Aveta, a Middlesex drug court graduate who has been working in the recovery arena for the past six years, will give the keynote address. A recovery support coordinator for RWJ Barnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery, Aveta is an advocate for appropriate and effective community treatment and recovery.

The Judiciary's drug court program operates within the Superior Court to address nonviolent drug addicted offenders. The program requires completion of four phases of intensive drug and alcohol treatment and recovery. This level of supervision permits the program to support the recovery process but also allows the team to react swiftly to impose appropriate therapeutic interventions or to reinstate criminal proceedings when participants do not comply with the program.

The Mercer Vicinage started its drug court program in 1999, and in 2014 joined five other vicinages in implementing mandatory drug court, which is now statewide, for certain offenders. Since its inception, the vicinage's drug court program has graduated more than 276 participants. The program has been successful in breaking the cycle of addiction, improving the lives of individuals, their families and benefiting the community. The vicinage's drug court program has 225 participants.

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