

News Release



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For immediate release: **Dec. 30, 2020**

NJ Judiciary Drug Court Participant Has Urgent Reason to Interrupt Session

A week before Christmas, Desmond Causey-Jones reported virtually for his drug court session as usual, but behind the scene an urgent event was about to unfold. Just 10 minutes into the session, Causey-Jones interrupted Superior Court Judge Jeffrey J. Waldman with an important message, telling the judge he needed to sign off.

“I apologize for interrupting, but our daughter’s coming out,” Causey-Jones recalled informing Judge Waldman.

Causey-Jones had delivered his apology from the restroom of his girlfriend’s hospital room at Shore Medical Center in Somers Point. Thirty-five minutes later, Jade Aaliyah Ruth Jones was born.

While nearly 800 babies have been born to drug court participants since the program’s inception in 1996, little Jade’s arrival during her father’s session left a big impression.

Judge Waldman, the recovery court judge in the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage, said he was struck by Causey-Jones’ dedication.

“This was meaningful on a number of levels. First, this participant has taken his recovery so seriously that when offered a pass from his court session, he decided to participate, nonetheless. On a more personal level, we as a recovery court team are flattered that of anyone he could have possibly chosen to bring into the delivery area with him, he chose us. It was moving beyond belief to all of us who were there,” Judge Waldman said.

Only Causey-Jones’ probation officer knew that his girlfriend, Niciaya Jones, had been in labor for two days by the time his bi-weekly session came around on Dec. 17. The probation officer had given him permission to skip that session.

“I knew regardless I was going to go on there, just to show my face. Especially during the pandemic, you gotta show your face on there so they know you’re doing alright. I enjoy going on there. You get to talk a lot and get stuff off your chest,” Causey-Jones said.

Causey-Jones first got into trouble with the law as a teen. After his father was killed 13 years ago, Causey-Jones started selling drugs and became addicted to alcohol. He was arrested for possessing and distributing heroin.

Now a father of three, Causey-Jones said it was his middle child – his 5-year-old son – who inspired him to work hard at his recovery. He said he knew he would have ended up in prison for a long time if it hadn't been for drug court.

“My son changed me because when my father got murdered, I was basically roaming the streets by myself, no guidance, nothing like that. And I don't want my son growing up without a father,” Causey-Jones said.

Now sober for nearly three years, he said drug court taught him, among other things, to consider the consequences of his decisions. He wants his legacy to his children to be knowledge, not a street name or a criminal record.

“Drug court's always been on my side,” Causey-Jones said. “They never gave up on me and I appreciate drug court for that.”

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Desmond Causey-Jones with newborn daughter Jade Aaliyah Ruth Jones.
(Photo courtesy of Desmond Causey-Jones)