



Eighth Judicial District Court

For Immediate Release

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55 Former Addicts Get 2014 Off To A Great Start Drug Free

Eighth Judicial District Specialty Courts Graduates Working, Paying Taxes And Caring For Their Children

Fifty-five graduates of the Eighth Judicial District specialty courts, including five veterans, will get 2014 off to a great start when they graduate Friday from intensive treatment and counseling programs. The graduates from drug, mental health, DUI or veterans' court will leave behind years of addiction and broken lives to launch their new year substance-free. At a commencement ceremony on **Friday, Jan. 10 at 2 p.m., in the Regional Justice Center jury services room at 200 Lewis Ave**, friends and family of graduates will cheer them onto their new lives. The graduates will share their stories of how they struggled to turn their lives around.

"I'm proud of the commitment each one of our specialty court graduates has made to successfully complete their treatment program," said Judge Linda Marie Bell who presides over the specialty courts. "Last year, we had more than 300 graduates. That's 300 people who are contributing to our community rather than serving time and costing tax dollars. It is a tribute to the participants and to their counselors and others who work to help them recover."

The graduates have successfully completed intensive treatment and counseling programs to prepare them for a new life free from substance abuse and crime. Their booking mug-shots will serve as a backdrop reminder of the life they left behind.

"Our specialty courts are a real success story," said District Court Chief Judge Jennifer P. Togliatti. "Instead of committing crimes, victimizing our community and ultimately revolving through our prisons, the hundreds of specialty court graduates are working, paying taxes and caring for their children."

Specialty courts solve issues through a rigorous and coordinated approach between judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation, law enforcement, mental health, social service and treatment communities. All work together to help participants recover, live crime-free and become productive citizens. The National Association of Drug Court Professionals reports that "nationwide, 75 percent of drug court graduates remain arrest-free at least two years after leaving the program. Drug courts significantly reduce crime as much as 35 percent more than other sentencing options.

The specialty courts are a great example of how the Eighth Judicial District Court is using alternative, more efficient means to address crime and ensure justice. District Court continuously works to develop innovative ideas, improve efficiencies, address issues and improve access to justice. For more information about the courts, please visit our website at clarkcountycourts.us.

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