



# Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF VENTURA  
Hall of Justice  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

*Michael D. Planet*  
Executive Officer/Clerk  
and Jury Commissioner

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SUPERIOR COURT TO HOLD DRUG COURT GRADUATION CEREMONY**

The Ventura Superior Court will hold its 16<sup>th</sup> annual Juvenile and Dependency Drug Court Graduation and Recognition Ceremony on Thursday, May 19, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. in Courtroom 22 of the Hall of Justice. The ceremony will be presided over by Supervising Juvenile Judge Kevin McGee and Judge Tari Cody. The ceremony is open to the public. All past drug court graduates are invited to attend.

Two Dependency Drug Court participants will graduate during the ceremony. Several current and past graduates are also scheduled to speak.

Drug court is a program that holds substance abusers responsible for their actions while providing them with the tools necessary to rebuild their lives. Graduation is the final step that highlights the completion of a minimum 12-month program of comprehensive drug treatment, close supervision and full accountability. All drug court participants undergo treatment and counseling, submit to frequent and random drug testing, make regular appearances before the drug court judge, and are closely monitored for adherence to the program.

Since the inception of the two programs, more than 1,000 participants have enrolled in the drug courts. There are currently 31 participants in the two programs and numerous graduates with success stories from both drug courts. Nationwide, there are now more than 2,800 drug courts.

Juvenile Drug Court was implemented in September of 1999. It is a program for minors charged with drug violations who have a moderate to severe substance abuse problem. Its goals are to assist minors in overcoming substance abuse by providing treatment, services and community support to achieve and maintain sobriety, increase school attendance and performance, reduce juvenile arrest for drug and alcohol related offenses, and decrease violent crimes.

Dependency Drug Court has been in operation since November of 2000. It is a program for mothers who have given birth to newborns prenatally exposed to alcohol and/or drugs. The program offers a secure environment for mothers and their newborns to develop an early mother/child bonding relationship while in an intensive residential treatment program, followed by a safe supervised transition to an outpatient treatment program. Participants also attend parenting skills classes and are assisted in obtaining employment. Successful completion of Dependency Drug Court results in early reunification of the family.

The two drug court programs are a collaborative effort by the Ventura Superior Court, Ventura County District Attorney's Office, Ventura County Public Defender's Office, Ventura County Probation Agency, Ventura County Behavioral Health Alcohol and Drug Programs, Ventura County Public Health, Ventura County Human Services Agency Children and Family Services, CalWORKs Job and Career Centers, and local community treatment providers to end the cycle of substance abuse and improve the lives of the community.

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