

## **Drug Court conference to be held in Biloxi May 4-6**

April 28, 2011

Cyber bullying, teen suicide, and drug abuse involving household items are among the discussion topics for the annual Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference which begins May 4 in Biloxi.

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr., Biloxi Mayor A. J. Holloway and MADCP President Linda Edison will open the conference at 1 p.m. May 4 at the Imperial Palace in Biloxi.

The conference runs May 4-6. About 300 people, including judges, drug court staff, law enforcement, correctional officers and drug treatment providers, are expected to attend. Attendance is expected to be the largest in the seven-year history of the conference, said State Drug Court Coordinator Joey Craft.

The seventh annual conference will include presentations from mental health and drug treatment professionals, law enforcement, corrections officers and judges.

Suicide and cyber bullying will be discussed in a training session scheduled for 3:30 p.m. May 4. Marc Fomby of Richland, who provides training about juveniles, gangs and drugs, will lead the discussion. Fomby is a former Anniston, Ala., police officer.

Circuit Judge Robert P. Krebs of Pascagoula and Adams County and Youth Court Judge John N. Hudson of Natchez will lead separate discussions about adult and juvenile drug courts, also starting at 3:30 p.m. May 4.

Judge Hudson formed the state's first juvenile Drug Court in 2001. Judge Hudson is one of two state youth court judges to recently create pilot family drug courts.

Judge Krebs for the past six years has supervised a felony adult Drug Court in the 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court District of Jackson, George and Greene counties. All three of the 19<sup>th</sup> District's judges preside over drug courts.

On May 5, starting at 9 a.m., Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics Director Marshall Fisher will speak. He is among five speakers scheduled in concurrent sessions.

At 1 p.m. May 5, substance abuse prevention and education consultant Michael Nerney will talk about how gender differences affect communication strategies in dealing with adolescents in drug court programs.

At 3 p.m. May 5, Nerney will lead a session titled, "Kids in a candy store: Household items with abuse potential." The discussion is one of six concurrent sessions.

Nerney, of Long Lake, NY, is the former director of the Training Institute of Narcotic and Drug Research, Inc. His areas of expertise include psychopharmacology, adolescent chemical dependency, relapse prevention, and managing violent incidents. Earlier in his career, he worked for 12 years as a high school and junior high teacher and coach, then as a substance abuse counselor.

A schedule of all conference sessions and speakers is available at this link:

<http://www.cvent.com/events/mississippi-association-of-drug-court-professionals-annual-training-conference/custom-17-d42f404538714f2e8f9567b62b6ae509.aspx>.

May is National Drug Court Month.

Mississippi has 39 drug court programs. About 2,880 people are enrolled in drug courts.

Drug courts seek to rehabilitate drug-using offenders through drug treatment and intense supervision with drug testing and frequent court appearances. Drug courts offer the incentive of a chance to remain out of jail and be employed, and the sanction of a jail sentence if participants fail to remain drug-free and in compliance with all program requirements.

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