

Third District Drug Court graduation set for Aug. 11 in Oxford

August 6, 2015

Commissioner of Corrections Marshall Fisher will be the guest speaker at the Third Judicial District Drug Court graduation at 2 p.m. Aug. 11 at the Lafayette County Courthouse in Oxford. The ceremony will be held in the main courtroom. The public is invited to attend.

Circuit Judge Andrew K. Howorth and two graduates also will speak. Sixteen people are expected to graduate, said Drug Court Coordinator Brandon Vance.

This will be the ninth graduation ceremony for the program that began operation in April 2008.

“Not only have the lives of these participants been changed, but also the lives of their families,” Vance said. “The statistics for this court alone are proof that drug courts work.”

Only 4 percent of the participants tested positive for drug use during the 2015 fiscal year which ended June 30, according to statistics reported to the Administrative Office of Courts. During that time, 93 participants were enrolled in college courses, and three participants earned GEDs. Eight parents regained custody of children, and five drug-free babies were born to participants. Participants paid \$112,780 in fines and \$116,390 in fees to the Drug Court.

The Third Judicial District Drug Court currently has 195 people enrolled. The district includes Lafayette, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Marshall, Tippah and Union counties.

The mission of the Third Judicial District Drug Court is to enhance public safety by providing substance abusers with cost-effective, multi-disciplinary alternatives including substance abuse treatment and monitoring. The mission also includes improving a participant’s quality of life and returning that participant to the community as a productive, law-abiding citizen, thereby reducing the rate of recidivism and breaking the drug abuse cycle.

Drug courts offer the incentive of a chance to remain out of jail and be employed and the sanction of a prison sentence if participants fail to remain drug-free and in compliance with all program requirements.

Mississippi currently has 40 drug court programs enrolling about 3,400 people.

#####