

Hinds Drug Court graduation set for May 18

May 9, 2016

As graduation season approaches, schools aren't the only institutions preparing to mark milestones. Eight people who have struggled with drug addiction and found sobriety and drug-free lifestyles will be honored at the Hinds Circuit Drug Court graduation ceremony at 6 p.m. May 18.

The ceremony will be held in Courtroom No. 1 on the second floor of the Hinds County Courthouse in Jackson. Family and friends will celebrate their loved ones' accomplishments. The public is invited.

Hinds County Sheriff Victor Mason will be the guest speaker. Circuit Judge Winston Kidd, who oversees the Drug Court, will preside.

The ceremony will be the 37th graduation exercise for the state's second oldest drug court.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. praised Judge Kidd's efforts to increase the numbers of people participating in Drug Court. About 150 people are enrolled in the Hinds County Drug Court. The program's enrollment has grown significantly.

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.

A total of 42 drug courts are certified to operate in Mississippi. There are 22 adult felony programs – one in each Circuit Court district. There are also 14 juvenile programs, three misdemeanor programs and three family drug courts. More than 4,000 people were served by drug courts last year, and more than 500 people graduated from drug courts across the state.

May is National Drug Court Month.

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