



Colorado Judicial Department

19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District

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## **Local Drug Court Celebrates “National Drug Court Month” Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Greeley, Colorado – May 15, 2009:** In celebration of “National Drug Court Month”, the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Adult Drug Court participants will be giving back to the community of Greeley by donating their time to paint a local sober living home on Friday, May 15, 2009.

National Drug Court Month is coordinated nationally by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), which was established in 1994 to assist in the planning, implementation, and operation of drug courts. This year marks a historic milestone in the drug court movement reflected in May’s National Drug Court Month theme: “Celebrating Twenty Years of Drug Court: Restoring Lives, Reuniting Families, and Making Communities Safer.” What started in a Florida courtroom 20 years ago has become the nation’s most successful strategy for dealing with substance abusing offenders.

Like many of the 2,301 operational drug courts in the United States, the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Adult Drug Court hears cases of offenders charged with drug-related crimes. Drug courts place offenders in an environment where they undergo treatment and counseling, submit to frequent and random drug testing, make regular appearances before the judge and are monitored closely for program compliance. Graduated sanctions, including jail time, are imposed for noncompliance. Conversely, incentives are applied for continual compliance.

Nationally, more than 70 percent of drug court participants have successfully completed the program or remain as active participants, and the cost of drug court programs are significantly less than the cost of incarceration in the traditional court system. A recent study by the Department of Justice found a cost/benefit of \$3.36 for every \$1.00 invested in treating drug-addicted offenders under the watchful eye of drug court.

“In twenty years drug court has been one of the most researched programs in the criminal justice system,” said NADCP CEO West Huddleston. “The scientific community has put drug court under the microscope and concluded that they work. In fact, drug courts significantly reduce drug abuse and crime and do so at a less expense than any other justice strategy.

“This May, all across the nation, thousands of people are graduating drug court with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to serving their community,” continued Huddleston. “This is changing the face of our justice system.”

Huddleston acknowledges the progress of the last 20 years, but stated that more can be done. “In order to truly end the cycle of substance abuse and crime,” he added, “we must put a drug court within reach of every American.”

The 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Adult Drug Court Program was launched Sept. 11, 2008, and currently has 12 participants. In correlation to the program and its requirements, the participants began a “Sober Living Group” that meets every Friday afternoon. During this time, the group, headed by an elected president, vice president, secretary and treasurer often discuss many sober living activities they can do as a unit. The group also is engaged in a book club and discusses the book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen R. Covey.

Additionally, the participants partnered with 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Probation Department to assist with the community garden and one drug court participant gathered information regarding a community volunteer project that involves painting a sober living home sponsored through Loved-Ones Again Meth Ministries.

For more information about the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Adult Drug Court Program, please contact Marci Hoffman at (970) 351-7300 x5502 or by email at [marci.hoffman@judicial.state.co.us](mailto:marci.hoffman@judicial.state.co.us).