



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### Chief Justice to attend drug court graduations

For immediate release Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2013

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Supreme Court Chief Justice Brent D. Benjamin will attend several adult and juvenile drug court graduations during the month of December.

He will attend an event honoring one graduate of the Northern Panhandle Adult Drug Court at **3 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9, in the Courtroom of Judge David J. Sims in the Ohio County/City Building, 1500 Chapline St., Wheeling.**

The drug court, established in 2005, serves Brooke, Hancock, and Ohio Counties. The adult graduating on Monday will be the 142<sup>nd</sup> graduate of the program. Jim Stock is the Drug Court Coordinator.

Chief Justice Benjamin also will attend a ceremony honoring three adults graduating from the Southeastern Regional Drug Court. The ceremony will be held at **noon on Thursday, Dec. 12, in the second floor courtroom of the Greenbrier County Courthouse, 200 North Court St., Lewisburg.**

The Southeastern Regional Drug Court, established in 2009, serves Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties. Kachine Jonese is the Drug Court Case Manager.

Both events are open to the public and the press.

In December, Chief Justice Benjamin also is attending events honoring graduates of juvenile drug courts in Brooke, Hancock, Harrison, Jefferson, McDowell, Preston, and Randolph Counties. Because juveniles are involved, those events are closed to the public and the press.

West Virginia has a growing network of adult and juvenile drug courts, which are intensive supervision probation programs.

Juvenile drug court participants are usually in the program for six to eight months. Initially, a participant meets with the drug court judge weekly and a probation officer several times per week. Juvenile drug court is intended for youths who are at risk of becoming addicted, not those who are already addicted.

Adult drug courts include those who already are addicted. Participants complete a treatment program of no less than twelve months. They are required to attend group and individual counseling, to take drug tests multiple times per week, to perform community service work, to participate in education programs, and to work on individualized rehabilitation plans as directed. They meet with probation officers frequently and see the drug court judge at least weekly.

The average annual cost incurred by the state for one adult drug court participant is approximately \$7,100 compared to \$18,000 in jail or \$25,000 in prison. About 10 percent of drug court graduates return to jail compared to 80 percent of drug offenders who have not gone through drug court programs.

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