



# Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia

# News

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## Second Circuit Family Treatment Court Holds First Graduation

For immediate release

MOUNDSVILLE, W.Va. – The Second Circuit Family Treatment Court has celebrated its first graduate.

“It’s rewarding to be able to help someone regain control of their life and reunite with their children. Treatment court is a very difficult process, and the people who graduate really work hard to get to that day. We look forward to many more graduations,” said Second Judicial Circuit (Marshall, Tyler and Wetzel Counties) Judge C. Richard “Rich” Wilson, who has been supervising the circuit’s family treatment court since August 2023.

The first graduate did not want her name made public, but treatment court team members want to make sure she gets the recognition she deserves.

“B. worked tirelessly to achieve a total of 245 days in recovery,” said Family Treatment Court Case Coordinator Mariah Hamilton. “She went from staying with family and friends with no permanent residence to obtaining stable housing and, upon graduation, having the ability to place a down payment on a forever home.

B. had been unemployed for some time because she had no means of transportation in the rural areas where she lived. Thanks to the full-time job she obtained while in treatment court, she was able to buy her own vehicle. “B. was reunited with her three children months before her graduation, giving the family treatment court treatment team the opportunity to watch her family heal and grow together as she progressed through the program,” said Officer Hamilton.

“B. was able to not only be in her own home with her children for the holidays, but she was able to celebrate with items for a homecooked meal, gifts for all of her children, and to be truly present with her family through the lens of recovery. She took the time to take care of herself so that she could provide the best version of herself for her children,” Officer Hamilton said.

“During the program, she took full advantage of resources such as assistance with vision and dental needs, two needs which many West Virginia folks struggle to obtain. Upon graduation, B. was able to celebrate her accomplishments with a beach vacation with her children.

“B. obtained a home, a vehicle, an abundant Christmas for her children, a full-time job, and a graduation diploma but the greatest of all her accomplishments was regaining her family and her recovery,” Officer Hamilton said.

B. graduated from family treatment court on May 20.

West Virginia has 13 family treatment courts serving 16 counties.

Family treatment courts serve adults with substance use disorders who also have been adjudicated to be abusive or neglectful parents and who have been granted a post-adjudicatory improvement period. The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia’s Administrative Office provides oversight, technical assistance, and training. Each local family treatment court advisory committee sets criteria for eligibility and participation.

Family treatment courts are a cooperative effort of circuit courts, Child Protective Services and substance abuse treatment providers as well as anyone involved in the welfare of children in the foster care system. The goal is to help parents access substance abuse treatment in a more timely manner, returning children home and reunifying them at a potentially faster rate than traditional abuse and neglect court proceedings, while ensuring fewer children experience subsequent maltreatment and return back to foster care.

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