

Umatilla County Drug Court Program Umatilla County Community Corrections

NEWS RELEASE / MEDIA ADVISORY

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Local Drug Court Team Promotes Drug Court and Addiction Awareness Town Hall and Two Open Houses Scheduled

What: **Addiction and Drug Court Town Hall**

- Discussion panel of Addiction and Drug Court Professionals to include: Members of the Drug Court Team, the State Drug Court Liaison, a representative from the Oregon Association of Drug Court Professionals, and the Regional Coordinator for the Addictions and Mental Health Division. The event is being sponsored by the Umatilla County Drug Court Program.
- A viewing of segments of the HBO Addiction Series.
- Refreshments provided.

Where: Umatilla County Media Center
4700 NW Pioneer Place
Pendleton, Or 97801

When: June, 19th 2007, 6 to 8 pm

Who: Media, public, law enforcement agencies, school personnel, business community, community leaders, treatment counselors.

Why: Like many of the over 1,900 operational drug courts in the United States as of December 2006, the Umatilla County Circuit Court hears cases of offenders charged with drug-related crimes. The Drug Court relieves already overwhelmed Court dockets, placing 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. Since their inception, Drug Courts have enjoyed bi-partisan support as a result of the phenomenal success rates and national attention they have received. In addition, the cost of Drug Court Programs are significantly less than the cost of incarceration in the traditional Court system.

Local data: We currently have 42 active participants in Drug Court and in July our second drug free baby will be born to a drug court participant. Our overall alcohol and drug treatment attendance is at 91.8% and our overall Court attendance is at 91.7%.

The following is a quote from a local participant who has 383 days clean after 5 years of daily methamphetamine use: *Drug Court has given me a chance to completely start over again and for the first time in my life I feel like I am doing something right!*

Two Open Houses scheduled to celebrate 1 year anniversary:

- **June 4, 3 p.m.** -- Judge Reynolds' Court room in the Hermiston Courthouse (915 SE Columbia Drive). The Open House will begin immediately following Drug Court proceedings.
- **June 18, 3 p.m.** -- Judge Brauer's Courtroom in the Pendleton Courthouse (216 SE Court). The Open House will begin immediately following Drug Court proceedings.

QUOTE:

Drug courts are a vital, essential element of our National Drug Control Strategy. While offering incentives to stay off drugs, they hold individuals accountable and simultaneously deal with the deadly disease of addiction. America is better off because of drug courts.

John Walters
Director of Office of National Drug Control Policy

BACKGROUND: WHY DRUG COURTS?

The Problem...

- The number of substance users/abusers in American is high.
 - 110 million Americans have used illicit drugs in their lifetime and 35 million have used drugs regularly in the past year.
 - 7 million abuse or are dependent on illicit drugs, and another 17 million Americans abuse or are dependent on alcohol.
- Substance abuse and dependence and their consequences remain the greatest social problem facing America and addiction rips the foundations from millions of families and communities each year.
- Each year, 5 million children are the subject of 3 million cases of child abuse and neglect and 80% of such cases are drug and alcohol related.

The Solution... Drug courts were created to protect public safety, provide treatment, and turn the tide of addiction and they represent the coordinated efforts of the judiciary, prosecution, defense, probation, law enforcement, social service, and treatment communities to break the cycle of addiction and crime.

The results...

- Drug courts work:
 - o In February 2005, the GAO issued a report confirming that drug courts significantly improve substance-abuse treatment outcomes, substantially reduce crime, and produce greater cost benefits than other justice strategies
 - o Last year alone, 16,000 individuals graduated from drug courts and more than 840 babies were born drug free to drug court clients
 - o According to a study released by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in 2003 from a sample of 2,000 drug court graduates nationwide, within one year of program graduation, only 16.4 percent had been re-arrested and charged with a felony offense (Roman, Townsend, & Bhati, 2003)
- Drug courts are cost effective:
 - o In Multnomah County (Portland) Oregon, for every \$1 spent on drug court, \$10 was saved. A total savings to the taxpayer over a one-year period was \$1,521,471 per year.
 - o In California, drug courts demonstrate a savings of \$18 million per year. A \$14 million investment returned \$43.3 million in savings over two years. (Judicial Council of California & California Dept of Alcohol & Drug Programs, 2002; NPC Research, Inc. & Judicial Council of California, 2002).

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