



Media Advisory

Superior Court of California

County of San Francisco

CONTACT:

Ann E. Donlan
415.551.5957
adonlan@sftc.org

Gordon Park-Li, Chief Executive Officer

Release Date:

October 23, 2009

SAN FRANCISCO SUPERVISOR JOHN AVALOS TO COMMEND DRUG COURT GRADUATES

SAN FRANCISCO -- A graduation ceremony will be held Monday, October 26, at the Health Commission Building for 30 participants who have successfully completed their treatment programs in the San Francisco Superior Court's Drug Court.

Supervisor John Avalos will speak during the graduation ceremony, which will be held at **2 p.m. October 26, at the Health Commission Building, 101 Grove St., Third Floor, San Francisco.**

"The Drug Court in San Francisco has a long track record of helping people succeed in their journey to recovery," Supervisor John Avalos said. "This problem-solving Court has helped people repair their lives and their relationships. After 14 years of success, the San Francisco Superior Court now has the proof of what many in the justice system have known all along – that this program prevents people with addictions from cycling in and out of prison while saving the taxpayers money."

Established in 1995, San Francisco's Drug Court is the first of nine collaborative justice, or problem-solving courts, in the San Francisco Superior Court. Using a team approach, the Drug Court is an intensive rehabilitation program, which integrates treatment and social services with judicial oversight to monitor client accountability and steps toward recovery.

Judge Nancy Davis presides over the Drug Court, which is also run by Lisa Lightman, Director of the Office of Collaborative Justice Programs.

-MORE-

SFSC/DRUG COURT
2-2-2-2

The San Francisco's Drug Court has saved at least \$48 million since 1995, according to a recent study published by the Administrative Office of the Courts and NPC Research Inc. As compared to traditional criminal court, Drug Court saved \$22 million in programmatic costs—including court costs, staff costs, probation and treatment—and \$26 million due to reduced recidivism.

Defendants with non-violent felonies are eligible for Drug Court. Cases are referred to the program pre-plea, or on a deferred entry-of-judgment basis. The Drug Court has its own Drug Court Treatment Center, a facility which is managed by the Department of Public Health.

During the program, clients undergo intensive case management and report to the Drug Court Treatment Center for mandatory urine tests, counseling and other ancillary services, including literacy, GED and employment counseling. Participants also appear in Court on a regular basis for judicial monitoring and accountability.

Once a participant successfully completes the Drug Court program, charges are dismissed or probation is completed. The Drug Court admits more than 400 participants annually. Since 1995, more than 3,500 clients have participated in Drug Court.

###