

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT EXPANDING TO NEW CASTLE COUNTY

The Delaware Superior Court's Veterans Treatment Court program will hold its first calendar in New Castle County on January 2, 2013 starting at 2PM. The Honorable Jan Jurden, a former member of the armed services (she was honorably discharged as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army after serving in the 32nd Air Defense Unit in Germany) will preside over the New Veterans Court.

This innovative program was initiated by the Honorable William L. Witham, Jr. as a pilot project in Kent County in February 2011. Judge Witham, also a former member of the armed services, served as an officer for 33 years in the Reserves and Army National Guard and graduated from the United States Army War College in 1998. He also served as the Deputy State Area Commander, as well as the Brigade Commander of the Delaware Army Troop Command, when he retired in 2001.

The program is designed to assist justice-involved veterans with mental health and substance abuse issues to obtain necessary services and reduce recidivism. As a subdivision of the Mental Health Court, the mission of this court is to work with veterans who have been charged with felony or misdemeanor non-violent criminal offense(s) and divert eligible veteran-defendants with substance dependency and/or mental health issues from traditional court processing to a treatment based problem-solving model court. Veterans are identified through specialized screening and assessments and voluntarily participate in a judicially supervised treatment plan developed by a team comprised of court staff, veteran health care professionals, veteran peer mentors and other health and mental health care professionals. Upon admission to the Veterans Treatment Court, the court staff, health care professionals and mentors assist the veteran with an array of stabilization and other services.

"I am very proud of the hard work of our court in bringing this most effective program to New Castle County. This expansion will provide greater numbers of justice-involved veterans with the means to address their substance abuse and mental health issues in an effort to create constructive lives and become productive members of our community." President Judge James T. Vaughn Jr.

For more information regarding the Veterans Treatment Court, please contact Maureen Frederick at (302)255-0798.