



NEWS RELEASE

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SUPERIOR COURT OF
CALIFORNIA
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John P. Vander Feer
Presiding Judge

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Court Executive Officer

ANNUAL COLLABORATIVE COURT CELEBRATION HONORS NEW GRADUATES AND CONTINUED SUCCESS

SAN BERNARDINO, CA—Since 2018, over 120 participants have successfully completed one of the rehabilitative programs offered at the San Bernardino County Superior Court. On May 17, these achievements were celebrated at the Annual Collaborative Treatment Court Celebration where nine graduates were honored by their families, justice partners and local legislators.

The ceremony commenced with a welcome message from Treatment Court Coordinator Laura Martinez and opening remarks from Presiding Judge John P. Vander Feer, followed by the introduction and presentation of the Judge Morris Award for 2019, presented to the Honorable Pat Morris (ret.) for his establishment of treatment courts in San Bernardino County. Assembly Member Eloise Reyes, representing the 47th District Assembly, addressed the graduates and spoke about the positive impacts of the collaborative treatment models and how they save lives. Commissioner Ronald J. Gilbert recognized John Mayor, Public Defender's Office; Michelle Bergey, District Attorney's Office; Gheiza Rosales, Probation Department; and Eric Butterfield, Department of Behavior Health as this year's justice partner honorees.

"Hearing from past graduates was an impactful reminder that collaborative courts make a true difference in the lives of all those impacted, including the community," said Presiding Judge Vander Feer.

Multiple speakers noted that the focus of these collaborative programs is to treat people as "human." One graduate said that this celebration was the first time she was referred to as "honoree" and not "inmate number." Several other graduates mentioned that these programs saved their lives and they are now attending college, employed, and had been reunited with their family and children.

Collaborative Justice Courts, also known as problem-solving courts, are an effective strategy for reducing addiction, crime and recidivism while saving taxpayer dollars. California has more than 420 collaborative justice courts, with San Bernardino having five different court types including Adult Drug Court, Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court, Adult Mental Health Court, Veterans Treatment Court and Shelter Court.

For more information or questions, please contact the Communications and Public Affairs Unit, at (909) 708-8779 or Courts-pio@sb-court.org.

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