



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION:
May 14, 2010

CONTACT: José A. Álvarez (619) 515-6635
(619) 964-1526 cell

DRUG COURTS REDUCE CRIME AND DRUG ABUSE

White House Drug Policy Director to Give Keynote Address at Drug Court Graduation

- WHAT:** More than 60 San Diego County residents will celebrate their sobriety at a countywide drug court graduation ceremony. Graduates will share stories of addiction and recovery.
- WHO:** **Gil Kerlikowske**, Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
Renée Zito, Director, California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
Bonnie M. Dumanis, District Attorney, County of San Diego
Judge Harry L. Powazek, North County Adult Drug Court
Judge Peter L. Gallagher, Central County Adult Drug Court
Judge Gary M. Bubis, East County Adult Drug Court
Judge Alvin E. Green, Jr., South County Adult Drug Court
Drug Court Graduates
- WHEN:** **TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2010 AT 5:00 P.M.**
- WHERE:** **Spreckels Organ Pavilion—Balboa Park**
- WHY:** Established in 1997, the San Diego County drug courts use a collaborative approach to treat substance abuse, while increasing public safety. The drug courts were created through a multi-agency partnership between the San Diego County Superior Court, the County's Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), the District Attorney, the Public Defender, and local law enforcement agencies.
- Since their inception, more than 3,000 people have graduated from San Diego County's four adult drug courts.
- Drug courts divert felony cases involving non-violent, drug-using offenders from prison and jail into treatment. The 18-month program includes frequent random drug testing, judicial and law enforcement supervision, individual and group drug treatment counseling, educational and vocational training opportunities, and the use of court-imposed sanctions and incentives.
- By increasing direct supervision of offenders, drug courts can help break the cycle of criminal behavior, alcohol and drug use, and incarceration. Drug court participants are 60 percent less likely to re-offend.
- The cost for a drug court participant is about \$13,000, compared to \$47,000 for sending the convicted felon to prison; a \$34,000 savings per participant.
- The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency funds the treatment programs and testing services for drug court.
- People suffering from a drug addiction are encouraged to seek help by calling the County's Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

###

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
1700 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 207 • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2472