



For Immediate Release

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KANE COUNTY DRUG REHABILITATION COURT CONDUCTS ZOOM GRADUATION

For the first time in the 20-year history of Kane County Drug Court, a remote graduation ceremony was conducted on June 4, 2020. Eleven participants in this specialty court program participated in a graduation using the Zoom video conferencing tool. Judge Marmarie J. Kostelny presided. Kane County Courts have limited the number of people present for in court hearings during this coronavirus pandemic in accordance with health guidelines.

“In the past, our drug court graduations were large events with up to 200 people in attendance. Obviously, such an event is not possible at this time. These eleven participants were originally scheduled to graduate from the program in May,” Kostelny said. “As a result of the pandemic, we were unable to go forward at that time. However, we were able to put together a special program to honor the hard work of these individuals in completing this difficult program.”

Chief Judge Clint Hull was present in the Zoom graduation to congratulate the graduates. The entire drug court team participated in the Zoom graduation including attorneys, the Drug Court Coordinator, probation officers and treatment professionals from the Kane County Diagnostic Center, Gateway Foundation, Ecker Center and Renz Center. Family, friends, lawyers and others were able to watch the graduation being live-streamed on YouTube. One graduate was a featured speaker and told her story of transformation. She explained that drug court was “her cocoon which allowed her to emerge a beautiful butterfly.” All the graduates spoke about their time in drug court in a pre-recorded video.

Drug Rehabilitation Court is a Kane County Specialty Court program established in 2000 to serve defendants who have serious substance abuse disorders and co-occurring mental health

disorders. The drug court team works with participants to obtain appropriate treatment and therapeutic care and to reduce new arrests.

The graduation marked the completion of an intensive program requiring substantial accountability and sustained treatment. Participants in drug court are required to appear frequently in court, complete treatment, maintain compliance with any prescribed medications and treatment, meet regularly with probation and maintain sobriety.

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