

**Superior Court of the State of Washington
For Chelan County**

Lesley A. Allan, Judge
Department 1
Travis C. Brandt, Judge
Department 2



Kristin M. Ferrera, Judge
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Chelan County Superior Court Celebrates
First Graduate from the Adult Drug Court**

CHELAN COUNTY, September 26, 2019. Chelan County's Adult Drug Court will hold its first ever graduation ceremony on October 3, 2019. The graduation marks the participant's completion of the intensive program of comprehensive substance use disorder treatment, close supervision, and accountability. The ceremony will be held at 4:30 p.m. in Courtroom 2 on the 5th floor of the Law & Justice Building and all are welcome to attend to support the graduate. Judge Kristin M. Ferrera will preside over the ceremony.

The Chelan County Adult Drug Court is a pre-adjudication diversion program that was launched in June of 2018. Drug courts are the nation's most effective strategy to reduce drug use and recidivism among substance-addicted, nonviolent offenders with criminal histories. They are evidence based programs with proven success in increasing public safety, reducing recidivism, and saving public dollars. Nationally, these courts save up to \$13,000 for every individual they serve and return as much as \$27 for every \$1 invested.

The October 3rd graduation ceremony will highlight the impact the Chelan County Adult Drug Court has had on our community and will send a powerful message that these programs reduce addiction, crime and recidivism while saving lives, families and

valuable resources for our state. There are more than 3,000 treatment courts in the United States annually serving 150,000 people. Since 1989, treatment courts have saved more than 1.5 million lives and billions of tax dollars. Research continues to show that treatment courts work better than jail or prison, better than probation and better than treatment alone. Learn more about national treatment court research at AllRise.org.

Our graduation ceremony will celebrate Mr. Jerome Dillon's successful completion of Drug Court. Mr. Dillon—who will not only be our first Drug Court graduate, but has also successfully reunified with his two young children, secured housing and full-time employment, and recently purchased a vehicle—had this to say when he was interviewed about Drug Court and how it has impacted his life:

I have been raised here my whole life... I have been battling addiction for a long time, since I was 16 or 15... I had never even heard of it before. ... A lot of other routes, you know, you get in trouble and they put you in jail. In Drug Court it seems more like they try to help you... they treat you more like a person. Like we're not all horrible people. Like were not just all criminals—they actually look at the person, like 'what are you struggling with' ... I have changed immensely since Drug Court. I have been in and out of jail... I've always gotten out and said, okay, I need to stay clean and sober and I need to do this for my kids and I've ended up back in jail every time—something wasn't working, and it's working this time...

My kids were taken and I was supposed to have my rights terminated in December, but since I've gotten on Drug Court I have turned my life around 100% and they see that and I am working on getting my kids back... I've lived here all my life and I've hated it here, but I haven't opened my eyes. My mind's been fogged up. I get a little recovery in me and open my eyes and it's a beautiful place and plenty of stuff to do and I love life. I mean, I wake up every day happy....

I am grateful for what I do have. I am grateful I can open my eyes every day.