



Contact: Leah Gurowitz
(202)879-1700

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PRESS ADVISORY

Family Treatment Court to hold Graduation Ceremony Friday

-- Mothers graduate to lives without drugs and *with* their children --

WHAT: Family Treatment Court Graduation

WHEN: **Friday, September 5, 2008, 11:00am - 1:00pm**

WHERE: Moultrie Courthouse, Jurors' Lounge (Room 3100)
500 Indiana Avenue, N.W.

WHO: **The Honorable Anita Josey-Herring**, Presiding Judge of Family Court
Ms. Tawana Williams, Inspirational speaker

An artist and a published author, Ms. Williams has overcome many great challenges in her lifetime. She was born in 1963 without arms and with only impaired use of her legs and, by the time she was eighteen, was struggling with a drug abuse problem that would last her ten years. In 1991, she sought help. Today, Tawana has been an inspirational speaker for more than fifteen years. She is the author of two books (*I'm Different but I Can* and *Unarmed but Dangerous*). She has appeared on a number of regional and national television programs.

Program details:

- Family Treatment Court is comprehensive substance abuse treatment program for mothers and female guardians of children who are the subject of a child neglect allegations. Those who participate stipulate to the allegations of neglect. The program can last as long as eighteen months.
- The first six months of treatment take place in a treatment facility in which the women reside along with up to four of their children, who are either ten or younger.
- The treatment facility provides on-site services as well as community-based services, including: substance abuse education and treatment, relapse prevention, parenting classes, counseling, and childcare.
- If the participants successfully complete the residential phase, they participate in a formal graduation ceremony and proceed to the community-based aftercare phase. It is this formal ceremony – the ninth such ceremony – that will take place Friday, September 5th.

NOTE: *Judges will be available for interviews. Mothers and children may also be available for interviews, with their permission. Cameras and recorders must be cleared in advance by calling (202)-879-1700.*