



September 29, 2017

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## PRESS ADVISORY

### **Mental Health Community Court to Celebrate 10 Years of Success**

-- Program has served nearly 4000 defendants since its inception --

**WHAT: Mental Health Community Court Ceremony**

**WHERE: Moultrie Courthouse, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor – Jurors’ Lounge, Room 3100  
500 Indiana Avenue, NW**

**WHEN: Friday, September 29, 2017, 11:00am – 1:00pm**

**WHO: Chief Judge Robert Morin, DC Superior Court**  
Judge Lynn Leibovitz, Presiding Judge, Criminal Division  
Judge Milton Lee, Deputy Presiding Judge, Criminal Division  
Judge Heidi M. Pasichow, Mental Health Community Court Judge  
**US Attorney Jesse Liu**  
**Chief Peter Newsham, DC Metropolitan Police Department (Chief Newsham will be not speaking)**  
Nancy Ware, Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)  
Leslie Cooper, Director, Pretrial Services Agency  
Dr. Tanya Royster, Director, DC Department of Behavioral Health  
Karen Minor, Defense Attorney  
and **Doreen Gentzler, Mistress of Ceremonies**

To commemorate its 10-year anniversary, the Mental Health Community Court (MHCC) will be hosting an anniversary celebration on Friday, September 29, 2017. At the event, we will celebrate the community partners who have helped make the program a success over the past 10 years. In addition to reflecting on the progress made, we will also have acknowledgements from our key stakeholders.

The MHCC program started in 2007 as a one-year pilot program in collaboration with the DC Superior Court, the DC Pretrial Service Agency, the United States Attorney’s Office, the Criminal Justice Act Bar, the Public Defender Service, and the DC Department of Behavioral Health. In 2010, the program was expanded to include non-violent felony charges. Just this month, DC Superior Court and the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency developed a community court program for felony probationers who are at risk for future violations related to their mental health challenges.

MHCC aims to reduce crime and improve public safety; connect defendants to - and increase treatment engagement with - community mental health programs; and promote successful completion of the program, in order to reduce criminal justice involvement, dismiss or reduce criminal charges, or completion of probation.

The DC MHCC is one of the largest mental health courts in the country. The success of the program is largely due to having a dedicated judge and court team, and strong collaborations with community mental health programs and supervision agencies – PSA and CSOSA. Since the inception of the program, over 3500 people have benefitted from the program.

For more information on MHCC, see <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/criminal-matters/community-court-and-problem-solving-courts>.

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