



**Second Judicial Circuit of Florida
Monday, May 24, 2021**



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Elizabeth Garber @ office 850.606.4427
e-mail GarberE@leoncountyfl.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE – DRUG COURT AWARENESS MONTH

TALLAHASSEE, FL – The month of May has been nationally recognized as Drug Court Awareness Month. All over the country, treatment courts are celebrating and highlighting the wonderful work they do daily to save lives, help families, and provide a second chance to those looking for a fresh start in life.

The Second Judicial Circuit recognizes Drug Court Awareness Month and celebrates the many individuals who have successfully completed Drug Court and are living better lives because of it.

The Leon County Adult Felony Drug Court program has provided amazing care and treatment since its inception in 1993, especially when working through the challenges recently brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program has a team of individuals who are all dedicated to the success of the participants in the program. The team includes: Leon County Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson; Judicial Assistant Blanca Delgado-Chavez; Assistant State Attorney Owen McCaul; Assistant Public Defender Edrene Johnson; Pre-trial Officer Robin Staton; Case Manager Jawanza Pipkin; Department of Corrections Probation Officer Laneka Williams; A Life Recovery Center, Eric Martin and Earl Lee; and Anchor Treatment Center, Surina Pillay-Alvarado and Michelle Brantley. Together, the team works collaboratively to make personalized treatment recommendations and develop program policies and procedures.

[The Florida Bar](#) recognized the efforts of Leon County’s Drug Court program to pivot quickly and stay open while so many shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby keeping participants on the path to graduation. A-Life and Anchor quickly implemented social distancing measures, safe drug testing environments and zoom to continue individual and group counseling services. As a result of these herculean efforts, new participants were able to come into the program and existing members were able to successfully graduate and have the felony

removed from their record. Club 25, a local civic organization, gifted the drug treatment program pre-purchased gift cards to give each graduate as a show of support!

[The Florida Bar](#) and [Tallahassee Democrat](#) also recently recognized the efforts of team member Owen McCaul for his 23-years of dedicated time and service to treatment court, and his recent selection as the first alum to Chair the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind Board of Trustees. His tireless work ethic and experience have contributed significantly to the program's success.

During this Drug Court Awareness Month, our community is well-served by the dedicated leadership of Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson and the Adult Felony Drug Court Team, who will continue to provide the services and care needed to help restore the lives of each participant in their effort for a second chance and new beginning.