



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Justice Benjamin to attend Boone/Lincoln drug court graduation**

For immediate release Thursday, April 26, 2012

MADISON, W.Va. – Supreme Court Justice Brent Benjamin will attend a ceremony honoring two graduates of the Boone/Lincoln County Juvenile Drug Court. The ceremony will be at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 1, at the Coal Museum in Madison.

The juvenile drug court serving the Twenty-Fifth Judicial Circuit (Boone and Lincoln Counties) is among eleven active juvenile drug courts in West Virginia now operating, serving a total of thirteen counties. It opened in October 2010 and has had six previous graduates.

Another four juvenile drug courts are in development, including those in McDowell County, Harrison County, Greenbrier/Pocahontas Counties, and Berkeley/Jefferson/Morgan Counties.

The West Virginia Juvenile Drug Court Program is a cooperative effort of the juvenile justice, social service, law enforcement, and education systems. Juvenile drug courts divert non-violent juvenile offenders exhibiting alcohol or substance abuse behavior from the traditional juvenile court process to an intensive, individualized treatment process. The goal is to reduce future court involvement for these youth.

On any given day in West Virginia, approximately 7,000 youths are under some form of court-ordered diversion program or supervision by a probation officer.

Annual West Virginia juvenile probation reports demonstrate that controlled-substance violations are the third-largest category of offenses charged. This fact is the motivating reason behind the development of juvenile drug courts in West Virginia.

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