



# Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

## News

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### **Four graduate from Monongalia County Drug Courts**

For immediate release Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. – Three adults and one juvenile graduated from drug courts in Monongalia County this week.

One youth graduated from the Monongalia County Juvenile Drug Court on Monday, Feb. 5, in the courtroom of Seventeenth Judicial Circuit (Monongalia County) Judge Phillip Gaujot. Three adults graduated from the Monongalia County Adult Drug Court on Tuesday, February 6, in the courtroom of Seventeenth Judicial Circuit (Monongalia County) Judge Russell M. Clawges, Jr.

Judge Gaujot is the Juvenile Drug Court Judge and Judge Clawges is the Adult Drug Court Judge.

Two of the adult drug court graduates agreed to make their names and accomplishments public.

Nick Dalton spent 16 months in the adult drug court program and, at the time he completed the program, had been clean for 501 days. He completed all drug court outpatient treatment and 421 hours of community service. He has had a full-time job for almost a year and has made significant personal changes that have resulted in him spending more time with his children.

Melissa Hines spent 19 months in the adult drug court program. She completed all outpatient drug court treatment and 423 hours of community service. At the time she completed the program she had been clean for 538 days. Since entering drug court, she has obtained a driver's license and a full-time job. She lives with her family and helps care for her 98-year-old grandmother.

Residents of every county in West Virginia have access to one of the state's 28 Adult Drug Courts. Juveniles in 19 counties have access to the 15 Juvenile Drug Courts in West Virginia.

The goal of drug courts is to help participants overcome addictions that may have led them to commit crimes. Turning people who might have become repeat offenders into productive citizens also improves public safety. The programs can be more productive, cost-effective, and humane than incarceration for those who have committed non-violent crimes and are a low to moderate risk to be released into the community.

People who are registered as sex offenders or who have a prior conviction for a felony crime of violence are not eligible. Prosecutors and judges choose which offenders may participate.