

# **19<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT NEWS RELEASE**

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## **19<sup>th</sup> District Court Awarded Michigan Veterans Treatment Court Grant**

Dearborn, Michigan, October 25, 2018 – The 19<sup>th</sup> District Court announces it has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Michigan Supreme Court to fund the day-to-day operations of the 19<sup>th</sup> District Court’s Veterans’ Treatment Court (VTC). The Court, is one of 24 Michigan Courts awarded a grant for the state’s fiscal year that runs October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. Grants were made available to courts that have completed a planning phase of their treatment court program.

The planning phase for the Dearborn Court started a while back and the process to implementation was accelerated when Judge Gene Hunt took the necessary steps to facilitate meetings and coordinate with community partners to establish this problem solving court. This year, Chief Judge Sam Salamey signed the local administrative order establishing the VTC, which was approved by the Supreme Court on January 23, 2018.

According to the Supreme Court, Michigan is a national leader with the number of VTCs. Furthermore, extensive follow-up analysis by the Supreme Court shows that unemployment among Michigan VTC graduates was reduced by more than half in Fiscal Year 2017.

The grant funding will help the 19<sup>th</sup> District Court to be a part of Michigan’s success. The funds will support a part-time a program coordinator and will help provide services such as drug testing and transportation for program participants. The coordinator will oversee program and grant compliance, state certification and data reporting requirement, and assist in the overall growth of the problem-solving court.

Problem-solving courts are non-traditional courts that focus on nonviolent offenders whose underlying medical and social problems have contributed to recurring contacts with the criminal justice system. As a problem-solving court, the VTC promotes sobriety, recovery, and stability through a coordinated response that involves collaboration with the traditional partners found in drug courts and mental health courts. In addition, the court works diligently with the Department of Veterans Affairs, volunteer mentors, and various organizations that support veterans and their families.

Judge Hunt serves as the veterans’ treatment court judge. The judge provides leadership to the treatment court team and plays an important part in guiding participants through the program. “We are elated that the Michigan Supreme Court is committed to providing funding to help support our veterans’ treatment court here in Dearborn,” said Judge Hunt.

“Securing this grant is one more success for the Dearborn Court among the many others accomplished during recent years designed to enhance and improve the court’s operations and saving taxpayers money at the same time,” said Chief Judge Salamey.