



Administrative Office of the Courts

244 Washington Street, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334

Press Release

For more information, contact
Philippa Maister, 404-651-6327

For Immediate Release

Judicial Council Announces Appointment of State's Drug Court Advisory Committee

Atlanta, August 29, 2003: The Judicial Council of Georgia has announced the appointment of 16 members to the Drug Court Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council of Georgia. The Committee will advise policymakers, judges and officials who work in drug courts on strategies to prevent and reduce drug abuse and its results.

The Committee is chaired by Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham, a longstanding advocate of drug courts. Superior Court appointees include Judge John Girardeau of Gainesville, Judge James Bass, Jr. of Savannah, Judge Doris Downs of Atlanta, and Judge Amanda Williams of Brunswick. Two State Court judges, Jeannette L. Little of LaGrange and Chief Judge N. Kent Lawrence of Athens, were named to the Committee, along with Juvenile Court judges Thomas Matthews of Macon and Billy Waters of Covington. Judge Willie Titus Yancey II of Thunderbolt Municipal Court was also appointed.

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Four District Court Administrators were named to the Committee: Daniel DeLoach of Savannah, Nolan Martin of Lyons, Cathy McCumber of Decatur and Jody Overcash of Cartersville.

Also appointed was Rocio Woody, executive director of The Road to Recovery Inc. in Doraville, a bilingual and bicultural outpatient treatment and counseling center for Hispanic and English-speaking individuals with substance-abuse and other problems.

Tracy Wilson, executive director of Resolutions Counseling and Educational Services in Carrollton, was also named to the Committee.

A drug court is a special program given the responsibility by local judges to handle cases involving people charged with using illegal drugs. Drug courts are intended to change offender behavior through a team approach that involves judges, district attorneys, public defenders, case workers, probation officers and treatment providers.

Georgia's drug courts and the judges who preside over them earned praise from the Director of the White House Office on National Drug Control Policy, John P. Walters, when he visited Atlanta in May.

"Georgians should be proud of their drug courts and their success in getting people with substance abuse problems the help they need to become healthy, productive members of society," Mr. Walters said.

The Administrative Office of the Courts helps provide technical assistance to courts in planning and implementing drug court programs. For more information, contact Debra Nesbit, Assistant Director, Legislative and Government Affairs, or James Banks, Drug Court Coordinator, at (404) 656-5171.