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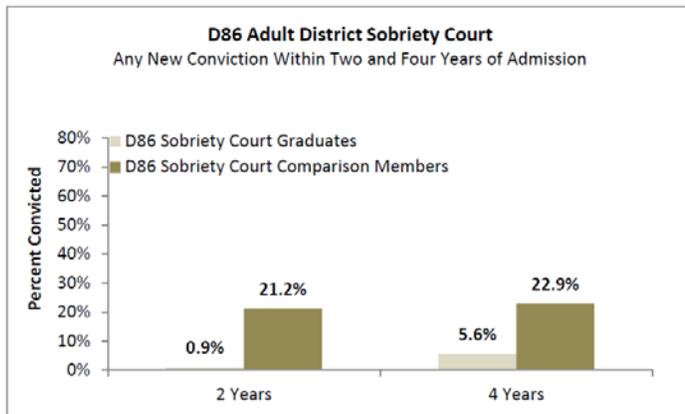
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

86th District Court Succeeds in Reducing Crime, Making Communities Safer

TRAVERSE CITY, MI, September 9, 2016 – During National Recovery Month, the Michigan Supreme Court today highlighted the successful efforts of the 86th District Court in reducing crime and making communities safer. In particular, the work of Recovery Court was recognized for an amazing reduction in re-offense rates for participants. Presided over by Judge Michael Stepka, Recovery Court focuses on reducing drunk driving in Grand Traverse, Antrim, and Leelanau counties.

“Judge Stepka and his Recovery Court team are proving that the treatment court model works in helping participants stay clean and sober,” said Michigan Supreme Court Justice Joan Larsen. “With fewer than one percent of program graduates convicted of any crime after two years, we have clear evidence that the program is reducing crime and making the community safer.”



“Frequent drug and alcohol screening, regular hearings, intensive supervision and treatment are making a difference,” said Judge Stepka. “By being tough and smart in dealing with drunk driving, the entire region is benefiting from the results.”

As shown in the chart, 0.9 percent of graduates of the 86th District’s Recovery Court are convicted of any new crime within two years of admission to the program. That is in stark contrast to the 21.2 percent conviction rate for

similar offenders who did not participate in the program.

Statewide, there are 179 problem-solving courts, including drug, sobriety, mental health, and veterans treatment courts. 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. According to the 2015 MSC annual report [“Solving Problems, Saving Lives,”](#) graduates of Michigan sobriety courts are more than three times less likely to commit another offense after two years than offenders who don’t go through a treatment court program. Unemployment among graduates was also reduced by 75 percent.

Founded by Judge Michael Haley in 2001, the 86th District Recovery Court was designated by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals as a National Academy Court in January 2008. Through this program, Recovery Court is used as a model to teach other courts around the country to begin or enhance an existing program.