



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justice Clement Touts Benefits of Treatment Courts at Veteran Resilience Conference in Muskegon

LANSING, MI, May 30, 2019 – As Military Appreciation Month comes to an end, Michigan Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth T. Clement delivered remarks honoring the resilience of military veterans and the importance of Michigan’s veterans treatment courts (VTC) today during the 2nd Annual ReCon Veteran Resilience Conference in Muskegon.

“Today, I think resilience has another meaning. As I think about what our veterans have been trained to do and the hardships they have faced, what they have trouble with is change. In fact, to be successful in the military, you must be single-minded, focused, and driven by a force of will to overcome obstacles. But sometimes that singlemindedness—that belief you can do things alone—doesn’t get the results you hope for,” said Justice Clement, who serves as the MSC liaison to problem-solving courts. “Every veteran has gone through a series of difficult changes and hardship. Treatment court programs give veterans the tools to push through these difficult experiences to get to a point of recovery and self-understanding.”

The conference was presented by Muskegon-based HealthWest Behavioral Wellness with support from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National Resilience Institute. It’s goal is to focus on veteran, family, and community resilience by bringing together a network of stakeholders to support veterans and help them grow skills of resilience through training sessions, discussion panels, collaboration among peers, a resource fair, and networking opportunities.

Medal of Honor recipient James McCloughan also spoke during the event about his experiences as a combat medic in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He currently volunteers as a veteran mentor in the West Michigan Regional Veterans Treatment Court, which serves Allegan, Ottawa, and Van Buren counties.

The Michigan Supreme Court has long been committed to supporting military veterans in the criminal justice system through VTCs across the state, and Michigan is a national leader with 27 of these courts. [MSC data](#) shows that unemployment dropped more than three-quarters for VTC graduates in Fiscal Year 2018.

In addition, MSC has partnered with WMU-Cooley Law School and the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency to develop a new [VTC Mentor Manual](#), which provides guidance and support to veterans who volunteer their time in these courts as mentors to their brothers and sisters who are struggling.