



MEDINA COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

Probate and Juvenile Divisions

93 Public Square, Room 104, Medina, Ohio 44256

KEVIN W. DUNN
Judge

MEDIA RELEASE

January 17, 2017

Leadership Medina County Class of 2017 Summoned to Juvenile Court on Mock Felony Charge



Left to right: Court Administrator Sharon Danko, Public Defender Tim Lutz, Esq., Karen Gaub, LMC '17, Judge Kevin Dunn, Amy Annico, LMC '17, George Brown, LMC '17, and Juvenile Court Intake Officer David Jenks.

MEDINA – Three members of Leadership Medina County Class of 2017 had the opportunity to experience a simulated juvenile court case, playing the roles of a troubled teen charged with a felony aggravated possession of drugs, and her concerned parents.

The morning began when Leadership Medina County Class of 2017 stopped by the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC) during their annual Government Day January 11. During their visit, Judge Kevin Dunn spoke to the class about the process and programs of the Court, the Court's focus on restorative justice, as well as the unique challenges he and his staff face when dealing with juveniles.

“Juveniles are challenging,” Judge Dunn said. “Many do not see the world beyond the screen of their iPhone.”

Judge Dunn explained that evidence-based programming is offered to Juvenile offenders through the Court to assist with rehabilitation. Programs range from awareness about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse through Juvenile Drug Court, to increased self-perception and appropriate boundaries in Girls Circle, even addressing parent education during Parent Project.

“We spend time addressing the family as a whole to ensure that the environment at home continues to be beneficial to their recovery,” Judge Dunn said.

MCJDC Superintendent Ron Stollar added to the Judge's sentiments by explaining that protocol at the detention center encourages juveniles to make better decisions, such as a new incentive-based levels program where residents can earn their way to various rewards and levels of trust.

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“We don’t look at these youth as ‘dead ends,’” Stollar said. “They made a mistake and there are consequences, but that doesn’t mean that they can’t work to get themselves back on the right path.”

Later that afternoon, the Leadership class was given various scavenger hunt scenarios, all pre-planned by the Leadership Government Day Planning Committee. Three members of the class were given the task to arrive in Juvenile Court for a mock trial, a scenario organized and planned by Court Administrator Sharon Danko, LMC ’05, and Chief Magistrate Susana Lewis, LMC ’14, who sit on the Committee. The classmates acted out roles as an alleged delinquent child, played by Amy Annico, charged with felony aggravated possession of drugs, while the other two members played the role of parents.

The classmates met with the Juvenile Court Intake Officer and Public Defender prior to their hearing before Judge Dunn. During the mock hearing, Judge Dunn explained the rights of an alleged juvenile offender and the possible consequences Annico may face. Those consequences include a license suspension, verbal house arrest, random toxicology screens, and a possible suspended commitment to the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

“This will have a greater impact on your future than I believe you realize,” Judge Dunn said, then asking Annico if she has plans to attend college or the military. Judge Dunn explained that Annico may not be eligible for financial assistance with a felony drug conviction and it may impede enlistment in the branches of the military.

The Leadership class members boasted after the mock hearing about how interesting the experience was, and that although the court orders and protocol at the Juvenile Detention Center seem strict, they see the purpose when dealing with a juvenile population.

“The goal of Juvenile Court is to restore kids back as good citizens in our community,” Judge Dunn said. “Punitive measures are not our primary focus. Poor decision making, complicated by social pressures and hormones all mixed together, makes our task a challenge. But our goal is to show them that it is possible to move forward after mistakes and we are going to help them do that.”

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