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PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2012

PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES FIRST GRADUATIONS FROM INNOVATIVE DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAM

TUCSON, ARIZONA - An innovative program created by Pima County Attorney Barbara LaWall to rehabilitate nonviolent drug offenders will hold its first graduation ceremony this week.

Two women who successfully completed the first stage of the 36-month Drug Treatment Alternative to Prison (DTAP) program will mark the milestone at a March 27 ceremony in Pima County Superior Court.

"These women are proof that drug recovery support services can and do work," said LaWall, who created the program three years ago. "DTAP is making a positive difference in people's lives and in our community."

DTAP requires participants to live in a residential treatment center, work closely with drug counselors and be supervised by a drug court judge and probation officer. Local organizations such as the Primavera Foundation, The Haven and Compass Behavioral Health Care are instrumental in the rehabilitation effort.

Both women, Arlene Shideler and Denise Hotchkiss, were repeat drug offenders. "The DTAP program saved my life," said Shideler. "Going through The Haven gave me the tools and counseling to be a productive member of society. It has brought me back to my family and allowed me to stand on my own two feet. I am a better mother to my children and a better daughter to my mom."

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"These individuals were motivated to get clean and stay sober," LaWall said. "In helping them get their lives back on track, we help make our community a safer and better place to live."

The DTAP program is a collaboration of the Pima County Attorney's Office, the Superior Court, the Public Defender's Office, the Probation Department and the Sheriff's Department. It is one of only 28 similar programs in the country. It is funded by a $1 million grant from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services.

Media is welcome to cover both ceremonies, but cameras will not be permitted inside the courtroom.

- Graduation of Arlene Shideler and Denise Hotchkiss (photos attached)
  Tuesday, March 27, 2012
  8:30 a.m.
  Pima County Superior Court - 3rd floor
  Courtroom of the Honorable Judge Teresa Godoy

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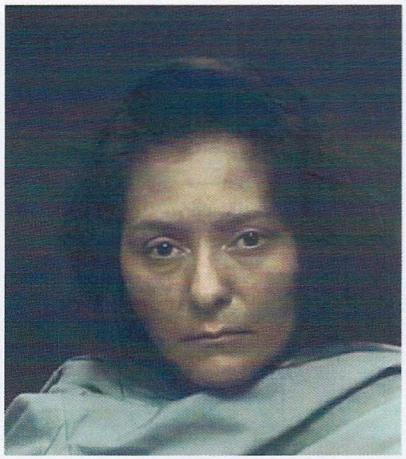
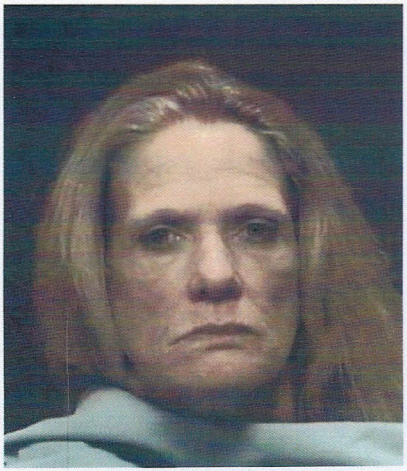
BEFORE DTAP



Arlene Shideler



Denise Hotchkiss

AFTER DTAP