



PRESS RELEASE

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Macomb County Prosecutor's Office REDIRECT Diversion Program Successful in Sterling Heights

Mount Clemens, MI - On Tuesday, September 5, 2023, Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido recognized two amazing people who completed the REDIRECT program along with Sterling Heights Police Chief Dale Dwojakowski and Ret. Judge Linda Davis at the Sterling Heights City Council Meeting.

REDIRECT is a collaborative effort between Families Against Narcotics (FAN), the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office, and Sterling Heights Police Department. The overall goal of REDIRECT, which is grant funded, is to reduce both drug-related crime and overdose mortalities among people in Macomb County who may have committed a minor, non-violent offense by offering them a referral to treatment, in lieu of arrest and prosecution of criminal charges.

At the meeting, Sterling Heights Police Chief Dale Dwojakowski introduced FAN Executive Director Ret. Judge Linda Davis and Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido. Chief Dwojakowski spoke about the REDIRECT program, which is in its first year, and the program's 70% success rate. He also talked about the challenges his department faces with crimes due to the disease of addiction and the consensus of the Sterling Heights Police Department, the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office and FAN to implement the REDIRECT program, which offers up to 18 months of treatment and resources, to treat the individual instead of incarceration.

Prosecutor Lucido praised the "Godmother of the Streets" Ret. Judge Linda Davis and Sterling Heights Police Chief Dale Dwojakowski for their dedication in getting the grant funding and creating this partnership for the REDIRECT program. "We would much rather get someone help instead of incarceration... God bless those who take the initiative to help others, who can not help themselves," said Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido.

FAN Executive Director Ret. Judge Linda Davis spoke on the importance of having trusted partners with the Sterling Heights Police Department and the Macomb County Prosecutor's

Office when starting a new program like REDIRECT. Ret. Judge Davis also stated that Prosecutor Lucido is the only prosecutor in the state doing a true diversion program.

Police Chief Dwojakowski and Prosecutor Lucido both presented challenge coins to Amber Palmer and Crystal Hinkle who recently finished the REDIRECT program. Amber had an interaction with the Sterling Heights Police Department for Simple Possession of a Controlled Substance and was referred to the REDIRECT program. Amber has been sober since January 2023. She works full time as a supervisor and continues to engage with her FAN peer recovery coach. Crystal was referred to REDIRECT in November 2022, after an interaction with Sterling Heights Police Department for Retail Fraud. Since November 2022, Crystal has gotten sober, received her GED and works as a manager. She hopes to continue to go to school for social work.

REDIRECT creates a safer community by reducing criminality and recidivism, improving the relationship between the law enforcement and judicial community and the general public, and reducing the stigma associated with the disease of substance use through education and outreach. REDIRECT is about connections, not convictions, and ultimately, reducing the harm substance users cause to themselves, to others, and to our communities.