

SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE AND COURT COORDINATOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Whitfield County, GA – On Thursday, February 2nd, The Conasauga Domestic Violence (DV) Court recognized two individuals for completion of their twelve-month program.

“The biggest message is that our circuit is addressing the issue of domestic violence,” said Superior Court Judge Cindy Morris. “And we are hoping to take action that is going to break that cycle, and help families in the future.” Judge Morris has been a Superior Court Judge in Whitfield County for more than 20 years, and has seen the effects of domestic violence in our community. “Domestic violence is a learned behavior, so we consider this a completion of the program, but they are going to continue learning throughout the rest of their lives.”

DV Court was introduced in 2014 without any official funding. “Basically, everyone just agreed to do extra work,” said Judge Morris. In 2021, Conasauga Accountability Courts was awarded the grant, and was able to hire a DV Court Coordinator.

Laura Mares, DV Court Coordinator, and her team screen participants for the program. After the screening process, participants are assessed for compatibility with the program. “We’re trying to see if the individual is willing to take accountability for their actions,” said Mares. “We’ve had five participants complete the program, but the latest two individuals who finished, really had an impact on me wanting to keep this program going because they were able to complete this twelve-month program sober, and sanction free. This allowed them to rebuild relationships with the victim and their families.”

Upon completion of the program, the participants write letters to Judge Morris, and the DV Court team, about the impact of the program on their lives. “The best thing about this program is the education I received. It’s rare to learn something that can alter the course of your life.”

For more information on the Conasauga Domestic Violence Court please visit:
<https://www.whitfieldcountyga.com/sc/dvcourt.htm>