

## **Veterans Treatment Court Held True to Their Oaths**

It is universally accepted that no matter who you are, rich or poor, old or young, privileged or otherwise, that one will inevitably face not one, but often a series of difficult situations in life. Often, when hard times befall us, two crucial elements can mean the difference between overcoming an obstacle or being crushed under its weight - will power and a strong network of support. In regards to the latter, there are countless points in my own life that, without the intervention of caring individuals, the outcomes would have surely left me broken, discouraged, and lost. One particular situation occurred while I was participating in the Veterans Treatment Program. After a criminal offense, I was facing possible jail time and a conviction on my record that would have undoubtedly had serious negative consequences for many years to come. The Veterans Treatment Court offered me the opportunity to not only avoid jail, but supported lifting the offense from my record upon completion. I was hesitant to accept, and little did I know then, that when I finally chose to participate in this new unique program. I would set out on a journey of personal reform that would change my life forever.

I had been participating in the program for well over a year, and while the road to that point was, at times rocky, I had made great progress, and was nearing completion of the program. And while things were going well in court, at home my world was quickly crumbling beneath me. A financial hardship had left my family deep in debt, and facing imminent eviction. Pride kept me silent for a long time as I struggled, in vain, to dig myself free from the hole I found my family and myself in. It wasn't until one day before my eviction that, reluctantly, I decided to inform the Friends of the Macomb County Veterans Treatment Court of my situation. I was unsure, of what if anything could be done, and, in all honesty, I wasn't really sure as to why I had called at all. But I remembered the promise of the program, their devotion to veterans, I remember hearing time and again, from each member on the treatment panel, that if we, as participants, had a problem to bring it up; that by communicating with the team of supports, they would do all they could to help the veteran in resolving whatever matter that may come up. I took the leap of faith.

Upon hearing plight, The Friends of the Macomb County Veterans Treatment Court were quick to jump into action on my behalf. My landlord was immediately contacted after my phone call. Contact was made with the mentor coordinator for the courts and a prominent military veteran, and together they worked on a solution. In barely more than an hour, with the aid of The Veterans Treatment Court and its supporters, the Friends of the Macomb County Veterans Treatment Court found a way to not

just give us more time in our home, but collected enough funds to pay the remaining balance on my back rent. To say I was merely grateful would be a gross understatement.

At a time when I had seemingly exhausted all resources, the Veterans Treatment Court held true to their oath to serve the veterans, and with no other motive than to serve those who have served. While my time with the program is now over, I remain forever grateful for the men and woman of the Veterans Treatment Court have done for not just myself, but those before me and will continue to do for those who are to come. Grateful for their involvement in such an innovative and remarkable program, designed with our veterans and communities in mind. I am grateful for their compassion, their devotion to their fellow man, and their dedication to a program that does, and shall change lives for the better. And last, but most sentimental to me, I am grateful for their belief in me, and helping to restore my belief in myself.

To the members of the Veterans Treatment Court, its supporters and mentors, I would like to express my sincerest thanks, on behalf of myself the other graduates, and the graduates to come.