

# Northern Hills Drug Court

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## Northern Hills Drug Court Mission Statement

The Northern Hills Drug Court's mission is to increase community safety, foster healthy families, and proficiently utilize public funds. This will be accomplished by streamlining and coordinating services to felony offenders whose crimes are substantially related to the abuse or dependence upon a controlled substance with a primary consideration given to methamphetamine abuse or dependence. The Northern Hills Drug Court will increase long term abstinence by holding offenders accountable and ultimately reducing drug-related crimes.



Lawrence County State's Attorney John Fitzgerald accepts a certificate of appreciation from Lt. Governor Daugaard for his continued referrals to the drug court program.

Others recognized for their support were: Meade County State's Attorney, Jesse Sondreal, Butte County State's Attorney, Michael Trump, 1<sup>st</sup> Western Bank, Sturgis Rally Charities Foundation., Realtors Against Meth, Crisis Intervention Shelter, Meade County Jail-24/7 Program and Meade County Housing.



Judge Jerome Eckrich looks on as Lt. Governor Dennis Daugaard gives a commencement speech on May 15, 2009, for Northern Hills Drug Court's National Commencement Day ceremony.

May was designated as National Drug Court Month. In recognition of the occasion, the Northern Hills Drug Court in tandem with drug courts across the nation, scheduled a graduation ceremony on May 15, to coincide with a national celebration at the site of the first drug court in Miami Dade, Florida.

NHDC was very fortunate to welcome Lt. Governor, Dennis Daugaard as keynote speaker. Daugaard addressed the issue of drug abuse in South Dakota and its negative impact on every community. He shared a poignant and personal story of how drug abuse resulted in the death of a distant relative and the devastating impact it had on the family.

The graduate, a female and habitual drug offender whose life revolved around drugs and a jail cell, talked about some of her struggles as a participant in drug court. But she also credited the drug court program for her success in maintaining a drug and alcohol free lifestyle. She experienced some trepidation of her pending graduation and did some soul searching. She asked herself, "If I saw a bag of meth lying on the ground, what would I do?" She answered, "I would use my foot and grind it into the dirt and then nobody else would be able to use it either." This participant told everyone gathered for her graduation ceremony, that by honestly reflecting and answering her own question, she knew in her heart she was ready to graduate the Northern Hills Drug Court Program and move on with her life.

The Northern Hills Drug Court extends a special THANK YOU to the Rockingtree Floral for providing beautiful centerpieces and Jerry's Cakes and Donuts for the delicious cake which made our National Commencement Day reception very special.

THANK YOU for your support!!



### Comparison Between Drug Court Models and Standard Criminal Law Due Process Courts

**Due Process Courts** are *Event Oriented*, i.e., did a certain crime happen as alleged: Historically, this is the jurisprudential link between the criminal courts and the community. **Drug Court** is *process* oriented, i.e. does the offender have a drug/alcohol addiction and can treatment benefit the offender? This process is considered in far more limited types of criminal charges.

**Due Process Courts** are *Offense-specific* whereas **Drug Courts** are *Behavior-specific*.

**Due Process Courts** determine the guilt and imposition of sentence and is essentially the end of the criminal law process. **Drug Courts** determine the addiction and referral to drug court is essentially the beginning of the process.

**Due Process Courts:** Judicial interaction exists only with the representatives of the parties. **Drug Court:** Judicial interaction exists directly with the offender.

**Due Process Courts:** Responsibility equals atonement and punishment. The relationship of the offender to the community is one where, as a result of the adjudication of guilt, the offender is removed from or placed in a condition that protects or shields the community from the offender. **Drug Court:** Responsibility equals behavioral changes leading to restoration of mental and spiritual health. The offender is viewed as a part of the community. As the offender will generally be treated while an outpatient in the community, behavioral change is designed to reduce conflict by reducing addictive behavior.

### Northern Hills Drug Court Wish List

The Northern Hills Drug Court is in need of Sponsors to provide:

- Family or individual memberships to community health centers.
- Donations for recreational and leisure activities
- “Dining out” certificates
- Movie passes
- Folding felt board for presentations
- Donations of school supplies (paper, pens/notebooks, etc) for college-bound participants. Funding for books.

### Northern Hills Drug Court

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### TEAM MEMBERS

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|----------------------|------------------|
| Judge Michelle Percy | Mike Pisciotta   |
| Bruce Hubbard        | Jesse Sondreal   |
| Ron Merwin           | Mary Wood-Fossen |
| Joe Gutierrez        | Mari Denker      |