



# PRESS RELEASE

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**New York State  
Unified Court System**

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**Hon. Kathie E. Davidson  
Administrative Judge  
Ninth Judicial District**

**[www.nycourts.gov/press](http://www.nycourts.gov/press)**

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## **Court Targeting Young Adult Offenders to Open in Mount Vernon**

**Mount Vernon, New York**—Ninth Judicial District Administrative Judge Hon. Kathie E. Davidson today joined local officials at Mount Vernon’s City Hall Plaza to announce the launch of a specialized part in Mount Vernon City Court tailored to eligible offenders between the ages of 18 and 25. The Mount Vernon Emerging Adult Court offers meaningful alternatives to conventional prosecution, sentencing and incarceration for young adults charged with misdemeanors, violations and certain nonviolent felonies.

Youth of color make up a disproportionate number of the young adult offender population, with many having a history of poverty, substance abuse and trauma. The new court, a partnership between the Ninth Judicial District and the Westchester County District Attorney’s Office and local defense bar, aims to reduce criminal conviction and incarceration by linking young adult offenders to age-appropriate interventions and services, including counseling, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, educational services and job training. Mount Vernon City Court Judges Nichelle Johnson and Lyndon Williams will preside over the Emerging Adult Court.

Eligibility for the specialized court will be determined based on a review of the charges, past criminal history, potential adverse collateral consequences and any other relevant facts and circumstances of the case. Participation is voluntary.

Once a case is deemed eligible for the part, and upon consent of the defendant and defendant's attorney, the matter will be adjourned and transferred to the Emerging Adult Court. The participant will then be referred to the Youth Shelter of Westchester County, a Mount Vernon-based organization with a successful track record of working with at-risk youth involved in the criminal justice system.

After a case is transferred to the Emerging Adult Court, it will remain there through disposition. Successful completion of the program may result in dismissal or reduction of the charges. Should the participant fail to comply with the requirements of this specialized part, the case will be promptly returned to Mount Vernon City Court's criminal part.

"This innovative court will promote the public safety, holding young adult offenders to a high level of accountability, at the same time providing a range of critical, age-appropriate services to enable participants to avert a criminal record and turn their lives around," said Judge Davidson. "I am extremely thankful to Judges Johnson and Williams and Supervising Judge of the Ninth Judicial District's City Courts, Hon. Sam Walker, for their tireless efforts in making this court a reality. I would also like to express my gratitude to the District's many justice partners and stakeholders for their support of this important endeavor, including the Westchester County's District Attorney's Office, the Legal Aid Society of Westchester, the Assigned Counsel Resource Center of Westchester County, the Youth Shelter of Westchester County, Westchester's County Executive's Office, the Westchester County Board of Legislators and Mount Vernon's Mayor's Office."

The Emerging Adult Court calendar will be held every other Friday, starting next month.

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