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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commissioner Joe Mullins celebrates recovery with Drug Court graduates

January 22, 2019 – Commissioner Joe Mullins celebrated his 7 years of recovery with the seven January 17 graduates from the Flagler County Adult Drug Court.

Mullins spoke of his father’s death when he was a toddler, his mother’s death in 2013, and idolizing his successful older brothers.

“This is about second chances,” Mullins said, as he told the graduates of his life working as a sports agent, and the drugs and alcohol that were commonplace in the profession. “I didn’t have a stereotypical bad childhood.”

Mullins keynote address followed the graduation awards and comments from the participants.

“Today is my daughter’s 12th birthday,” said one of the graduates through her tears. “When I was drinking, I thought about her and how I was going to be able to help her if she was out somewhere and I got a call from her.”

Mullins said if the convergence of their stories wasn’t a “God thing,” he doesn’t know what is.

“My mom said to me on August 14, 2011: ‘I had to bury my husband, and I am not going to bury my son.’ I entered rehab on August 16, 2011,” Mullins said. “My last day of treatment was November 23 – my son’s birthday.”

Drug Court is a specialized court that offers nonviolent offenders struggling with addiction the chance to receive treatment while resolving their criminal cases. The program involves regular court appearances, close supervision, treatment and counseling, and random drug testing.

There is no set length of time for participation; it varies based on the individual and how much time each needs to get better. Participants are also required to work or attend school, to ensure they have the skills to lead sober, productive lives.

Charles Ericksen, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Joe Mullins
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

All of the graduates expressed thanks for the life-changing opportunities afforded them through the Drug Court program, which is funded through Flagler County's General Fund. Some \$106,000 is budgeted for the 2018-2019 fiscal year – an increase of more than \$10,000 over the last fiscal year.

“I embraced my addiction and surrendered to God,” Mullins said. “Second chances are phenomenal.”

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