



**Department of Veterans Affairs
Mid South Healthcare Network (VISN 9)
1801 West End Avenue, Suite 600
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 695-2200**

June 28, 2016

Honorable Judge Sledge and distinguished guests:

On behalf of Mr. John Patrick, Network Director for the Mid South Health Care Network (VISN 9) and the entire VISN staff, we wish to extend our congratulations to USMC Michael Mc Grail and USMC James Wood on their successful completion of the Loudon County Veterans' Court Program. We commend them for the hard work and commitment to themselves, their families and their communities that resulted in their graduation today and wish them the very best in all future endeavors.

The recognition that untreated or poorly controlled symptoms of PTSD and other mental health disorders can predispose Veterans to behaviors that result in involvement with the judicial system led judges and district attorneys like yourself and Mr. Johnson to work with Veteran Advocacy Groups such as the Knoxville Regional Mental Health Council, the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs, Vet to Vet Tennessee, the Helen Ross McNabb Military Services Center and the Department of Veterans Affairs to address these issues. Recognizing that providing treatment of underlying mental health conditions leading to the problematic behaviors and legal consequences results in improved outcomes for Veterans and the community at large, these court programs give responsible, hardworking Veterans like those we honor today the opportunity to pursue a path to improved health and well-being.

Thank you to all who have gathered today to celebrate this special event and to all who have collaborated to make these programs possible, as well as to support the Veteran participants. VA recognizes that we cannot do it alone and is proud to team with all of you to provide these much needed services for the brave men and women who so selflessly sacrificed themselves in service of our country.

Cecilia Farina-Morin - MD, MS
Cecilia Farina-Morin, MD, MS
Chief Medical Officer

Robert Campbell - LCSW, BCD
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