



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

JACKSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
415 East 12th Street • Kansas City, Missouri 64106 • jacksongov.org

NEWS RELEASE

For media contact information: [REDACTED]

Taking Action!

Jackson County joins with other local governments to fight overdose and addiction epidemic with Rx drug monitoring program



KANSAS CITY (JANUARY 24, 2017) – Deaths from prescription drug overdoses have become a public health crisis in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). To curb this epidemic, 49 state—all but Missouri—have established Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMP).

While the Missouri Legislature has yet to create a statewide PDMP, Jackson County is joining other local governments from eastern and central Missouri to take action. They are establishing a program to monitor the dispensing of prescription drugs within their respective jurisdictions.

Tuesday—from opposite sides of the state—Jackson County Executive Frank White, Jr., and his counterpart from St. Louis County, Steve Stenger, signed the special PDMP agreement.

“Jackson County is proud to partner with St. Louis County in establishing a program that will support coordinated care, better pain management, and the fight against opioid abuse,” said County Executive White as he prepared to sign the official documents at the Truman Medical Center in Kansas City.

-MORE-

“Working with the Jackson County Legislature, my administration has taken action on this important issue.”

Stenger joined White via simulcast from the St. Louis County Department of Public Health in Berkley. “Heroin is a deadly epidemic in our region,” he said. “Many [heroin] abusers begin with prescription drugs.”

Missouri not having a PDMP has made the state a “tourist destination,” Stenger added, for prescription drug abusers to “pill shop.”

The need for a PDMP is urgent, stressed White. A recent Kansas City Health Department study estimates that 26,000 people in Jackson County are addicted to prescription drugs.

PDMPs collect data about how many drugs are being prescribed and dispensed within a given area. The database is accessible only to authorized users, such as medical professionals and law enforcement officials.

A U.S. Department of Justice Services study describes the “essential role” PDMPs can play in preventing prescription drug abuse. PDMP data can, for example, alert emergency room doctors that a patient seeking opioid painkillers may already have multiple prescriptions for these narcotics.

“Quite simply, prescription drug monitoring programs save lives,” Stenger stated. “I commend Jackson County Executive Frank White and the County Legislators for partnering with us to combat the rapidly growing opioid and heroin abuse in our state.”

White praised St. Louis County for being “a leader in taking action to help reverse this destructive trend and provide the tools that will enable us to take action.” He recognized County Legislators Crystal Williams (2nd District At-Large) and Dan Tarwater (4th District) for helping lead the effort to establish a prescription drug monitoring database for Jackson County—“and the entire County Legislature for their unanimous support.”

Williams emphasized, “Since the Missouri General Assembly hasn’t been unwilling to pass life-saving legislation, it has been left up to the counties to help address the opioid crisis.”

The cities of Independence and Kansas City are, likewise, partners in this localized PDMP initiative. Joining those cities, as well as Jackson and St. Louis counties, are the City of St. Louis, St. Charles County and St. Genevieve County.

In lieu of a state PDMP, White said it was crucial that these local governments—representing the most populous areas in Missouri—develop their own data collection programs. One in three Missourians lives in Jackson, St. Louis or St. Charles County.

“Here in Jackson County, we are going to do all we can to keep our people safe,” White said, “and to ensure that they will have a happy, healthy future.”

###



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

JACKSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
415 East 12th Street • Kansas City, Missouri 64106 • jacksongov.org

NEWS RELEASE

For media contact information: [REDACTED]

Another Historic First For Jackson County

Nilda Serrano becomes the first woman and first Hispanic to be promoted to captain in the Corrections Department



KANSAS CITY (JUNE 24, 2016) – Nilda Serrano smiled proudly as she received the double gold bars insignia for her uniform. She has become not only the first woman but also the first Hispanic to ever rise through the ranks at the Jackson County Corrections Department to be promoted to captain.

The Corrections Department operates both the Jackson County Detention Center and Regional Correctional Center, adjoining facilities located just a block from the Jackson County Courthouse in downtown Kansas City. This week Serrano assumed her new duties as one of only three captains in the Detention Unit. The unit's captains, according to Corrections Director Joe Piccinini, essentially serve as frontline commanders, supervising each shift and assuring "everything is running smoothly and everyone is safe and sound."

"I know there were a lot of other candidates for this position, and that we were all qualified," Serrano said. "I am humbled. I am excited to accept this position. Whatever's for the betterment of the department is what matters most, as usual."

-MORE-

Jackson County Executive Frank White, Jr. was among the first to shake Serrano's hand when her promotion was announced.

"This has been a great 2016 for Jackson County," he said. "We've got our first female chair of the County Legislature (Crystal Williams), I'm the first African-American to hold the position of County Executive, and now you are the first female and Hispanic captain in the Corrections Department. Congratulations and best of luck to you."

After serving in the Army eight years, Serrano embarked on her career with Jackson County Corrections in 1992. Her family briefly relocated to Buffalo, N.Y., but she resumed working as a corrections officer at the county's Detention Center within a week of returning to Kansas City and now has more than 20 years of total experience working there.

Serrano has served on the Corrections Policy Review Team since 2007 and is emphatic that "our policies are *the law* for the Department of Corrections."

She earned her stripes with a promotion to sergeant eight years ago and was again promoted two years ago to lieutenant.

Her other duties have included translating visitation policies and inmate rules into Spanish, supervising the inmate workers program, and teaching inmate supervision classes in the academy Jackson County recently launched for correctional officer recruits.

"We had exceptional candidates for this captain's position, both internally and externally," said Piccinni. "Nilda was the ideal candidate. She has the experience, the knowledge, the respect of her peers and of the inmates. She has a passion for her job and performs her duties with compassion."

Serrano, who has three children and five grandchildren, called the Corrections Department "my second family" and said, "I love my job. I love working with people. I love helping people. I love being here."

In her new role as a captain, Serrano intends to emphasize ongoing training for all corrections officers, "new and old," and living by these words in the Corrections Officer's Creed: "We are the inmates' keeper."

"Security is always the top priority," she said, "but it is our responsibility to take care of these inmates while they are under our supervision in this facility. We're not only correctional officers, but are, in part, also caseworkers. We're here to help."

###



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

JACKSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
415 East 12th Street • Kansas City, Missouri 64106 • jacksongov.org

NEWS RELEASE

For media contact information: [REDACTED]

A High-Flying Salute

Jackson County Hosting Special Airborne Event To Honor Veterans



KANSAS CITY, MO (MAY 28, 2014) – Jackson County’s “Salute To Veterans” Saturday, June 14 at the National Airline History Museum will feature a tribute that is literally sky high. To cap off the special ceremony honoring the men and women who have served in the United States military, the county will be offering veterans a chance to take to the air aboard a World War II-era bomber built in Kansas City.

All veterans and the general public are welcome to participate in this free event, which will begin at 9 a.m. June 14 with a Veteran’s Breakfast, to be followed at 9:30 by a ceremony featuring Jackson County Executive Mike Sanders and guest speaker Mary Eisenhower, granddaughter of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The flights over Kansas City in a vintage B-25 Mitchell will begin at 10 o’clock. **Veterans interested in taking a flight on the B-25 should register at airlinehistory.org because space will be limited.**

The National Airline History Museum is located in Hangar 9 of the Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport (201 NW Lou Holland Dr., Kansas City, Mo. 64116).

-MORE-

“Flag Day seems an especially appropriate day to salute our veterans,” said County Executive Sanders, a former Army officer. “Old Glory continues to fly high as a symbol of freedom around the world due to the brave men and women who have defended our nation.

“We’re also honored Mary Eisenhower will be joining us. Her grandfather, of course, was the supreme allied commander of the D-Day invasion at Normandy, which we will mark the 70th anniversary of on June 6.”

The B-25 Mitchell symbolizes, Sanders added, the contribution local civilians made to America’s war effort in 1940s. More than 6,600 B-25’s rolled off the assembly line at the North American Aviation Fairfax plant in Kansas City. The twin-engined planes were named after General Billy Mitchell, the famous U.S. military aviation pioneer.

National Airline History Museum officials will be announcing the arrival of another historic plane at their facility – the first aircraft ever to be designated “Air Force One.” During his first year in office, President Dwight D. Eisenhower traveled across the country aboard the Columbine II, a propeller-driven, four-engine airliner that First Lady Mamie Eisenhower named after the state flower of Colorado, her home state. The “Air Force One” call sign was established for security purposes in 1953 after an Eastern Airlines commercial flight had been given the same call sign—8610—as the Columbine II, causing confusion when the two aircraft accidentally entered the same airspace.

SPECIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITY: The news media are invited to an 8:30 a.m. flight of the B-25 with County Executive Mike Sanders and special guest Mary Eisenhower aboard

###