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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2024

I am extremely pleased to announce that Conneaut Municipal Court is a recipient of the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funds for 2024.

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program allows states and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control drug trafficking, drug related crime, and violent crime. Based on their own local needs and conditions, agencies are provided with the flexibility to prioritize and place justice funds where they are needed most.

JAG funds can be used for state and local initiatives, technical assistance, training, personnel, equipment, supplies, contractual support, and information systems for criminal justice for any one of the following Program Purpose Areas:

- Law Enforcement Programs
- Crime Prevention Programs
- Adult and Juvenile Corrections, Community Corrections and Reentry Programs
- Courts, Specialty Dockets, Defense, Prosecution, and Victim Services Programs
- Cross-agency and Cross-system Collaboration, Training and Research Programs

OCJS prioritizes programs and practices that have been shown to be evidence-based. The Bureau of Justice Assistance, which oversees the federal JAG Program, has placed strong emphasis on improving the quantity and quality of programs and strategies that are effective in the criminal justice system. They have defined 'evidence-based' as those programs and practices whose effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. The strength of causal evidence will influence the degree to which they consider a program or practice to be evidence-based.

OCJS JAG funding is awarded with step-down funding. Step-down funding follows these guidelines: an eligible project may apply for 75% of its total operating cost for the first two years. The local match requirement is 25%. For the third year of funding, the project can only request 50% of its total project operating cost and must then provide 50% match. For the fourth year of funding, the project can only request 25% of the project and must provide 75% match.

Conneaut Municipal Court will be receiving the sum of \$29,847.19 for 2024 for the operation of “Renewal Court.”

“Renewal Court” is a Substance Abuse Mental Illness (SAMI) specialized docket court certified by the Ohio Supreme Court in June 2023. Conneaut Municipal Court is only one of three courts in all of Ohio to receive this year’s JAG grant. A total of over \$5.3 million was awarded in 2024 to various treatment agencies committed.

“Renewal Court” addresses the unique needs of offenders who suffer from any mental health disorder or from co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders that have contributed to an underlying criminal offense, and which increase the likelihood of future criminal justice involvement.

The funds awarded will be utilized to pay for the wages of the Renewal Court Coordinator who administers the Renewal Court under the supervision of the Judge.

Special thanks to Miriam Walton and Patricia Wagner of the Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board for their substantial assistance to Renewal Court in the application process, and for their unfailing commitment to the success of Renewal Court.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

***Nicholas A. Iarocci, Judge
Conneaut Municipal Court***