

Business Buzz - Caddo DA program selected as national model

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The pretrial diversion program established by Caddo Parish District Attorney James E. Stewart Sr. has been selected as a national model by one of the nation's major monitoring companies.

A formal presentation of the case study to DA Stewart will take place at 10 a.m. Monday at the Caddo Parish District Attorney's office in the Francis P. Bickham Building, 525 Marshall St., in downtown Shreveport.

The full case study is available online at www.scramsystems.com/case-studies/alcohol-monitoring-supports-caddo-parishes-alternative-to-incarceration.

The Caddo Parish District Attorney's Pretrial Diversion Program offers lower-risk defendants to take part in comprehensive rehabilitation. Launched by DA Stewart and Chief Deputy District Attorney Wilbert Pryor, it offers defendants a second chance while holding them accountable for their offense.

The diversion program, which averages nearly 500 participants each a year, helps defendants understand the impact of their actions and choose a better path. Participants must pay court fees and restitution, make progress toward education goals, attend MADD victim impact panels, attend counseling and behavior classes and report to the program monthly. Nearly 90 percent of participants complete the program.

Participants with alcohol abuse issues also undergo monitoring through Shreveport-based Innovative Monitoring Network, which is associated with SCRAM Systems. The company works closely with the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office and has monitored 210 of the program's participants since January 2017.