
NEWS RELEASE



Judge Nancy Margaret Russo Teaches Re-Entry Class at NERC

Cleveland: Re-Entry Court Judge Nancy Margaret Russo recently finished teaching a re-entry class called "Rising" to several dozen women being housed in the Northeast Reintegration Center (NERC) in Cleveland.

Assisted by Staff Attorney Lauren Bailey, Judge Russo's six-week program touched on a different topic each visit.

Bailey says each class focused on different areas of self-confidence, self-improvement, and tools that would help the students strengthen relationships and re-enter society upon release. Judge Russo says it was more of a conversation format rather than a structured agenda.

Judge Russo says she was pleasantly surprised at how receptive the women were. "They were open and honest about what they had done and why they ended up in prison," she said.

Bailey says they presented topics such as Power of Identity, which examined personal history, Finding Your Voice, which explored conflict management and personality styles, and Re-entry Realities.

"One of Judge Russo's former re-entry court graduates joined us and spoke about her experience with re-entry, including the non-profit she and her mother started, *Rosie's Playhouse*, which helps children whose lives have been affected by a loved ones addiction," says Bailey.

Graduation Day for 17 women was Friday, October 19th. The program has received such positive feedback that Judge Russo and Bailey have been invited back to start a new teaching "Rising" session in January.

Opened in 1998, the NERC currently houses just under 600 women.

