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Veterans courts seek to rehabilitate offenders outside jail

October 28, 2010 | By Michael Martinez and Casey Wian, CNN

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"I don't see that me spending six months in county jail ... I don't see how that would have helped me change how I look at my life. I would have just gotten through it and probably reverted back to my old ways," Daniel said.

Another veteran, Shahab, a "graduate" who successfully completed his treatment program, told the judge that he was jobless and "had nothing to live for" when he first came into the courtroom.

His life is different today, he told the judge. Under the program, he found a job working in a mental-health facility.

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"You're a godsend," Shahab told the judge. "Seriously, you could be a saint. Nowadays we don't believe in those things, but it's true."

But Lindley isn't afraid to throw a wayward veteran behind bars for a night.

"Don't give me any garbage about how you were in the room and someone else was smoking marijuana because that doesn't cut it," the judge told one veteran who tested positive for drugs.

"I really need you to examine yourself as to why you thought it was a better option to lie than to just own up to it and deal with it," the judge said. The veteran was handcuffed and taken to jail.

"You are going to get an overnight, you'll get out tomorrow at 6 a.m.," the judge told him.

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