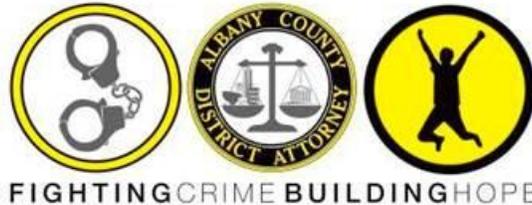




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Albany County Ranked #11 in State for DWI Convictions



ALBANY, NY - District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that Albany County has been ranked 11th in New York State for conviction rankings for Driving While Intoxicated crimes. The New York State Stop-DWI compiles these rankings annually based on the Department of Motor Vehicles Data Services.

When DA David Soares took office in 2005, Albany County was ranked 61 out of 62 counties due to the ease of pleading down a DWI charge at that time. This abysmal ranking was unacceptable to DA Soares, and over the past 6 years the Office has improved our standings dramatically to:

55 in 2006
47 in 2007
29 in 2008

24 in 2009
17 in 2010
21 in 2011
16 in 2012
11 in 2013

In 2008 we devoted even more resources to these crimes by creating the Vehicular Crimes Bureau, appointing Mary Tanner-Richter as the Bureau Chief and devoting additional prosecutors to the Unit. Since that time our office has increased trainings for our prosecutors and provided assistance to local law enforcement to ensure that everyone is following the best-practices for all traffic stops relating to alcohol impaired or drugged driving.

We still have a way to go until we reach number 1, and we are continuing to strengthen our law enforcement partnerships and toughening our approach to combating DWI and drugged driving in Albany County until we reach that goal. DWI's are some of the most horrific, yet most preventable crimes that occur, and they can occur anywhere, at any time, and can affect the lives of so many innocent people.

The Office of the District Attorney will continue to fine-tune our policy and work with our partners in law enforcement to bring the best practices to Albany County to make our streets the safest streets in New York State.

"It is a reality that every day citizens take their lives into their own hands when they get behind the wheel of a vehicle," commented DA David Soares. "Keeping families safe from irresponsible and impaired drivers is a priority for my office, and we will continue to aggressively combat this problem until we reach #1."

"Driving while intoxicated is not a "mistake", it's a crime; it's a crime that is vigorously prosecuted by this Office and will continue to be until people finally get the message, commented Vehicular Crimes Unit Bureau Chief Mary Tanner-Richter. "We hope that the strict stance that we have chosen to take will go a long way in getting that message across to the public. No one has the right to drive while intoxicated and put our families at risk. If you chose to drink and drive, understand that there will be severe consequences for such choices."

Since 2005, we have:

- Created DWI Policy prohibiting plea reductions for anyone that registers a blood alcohol

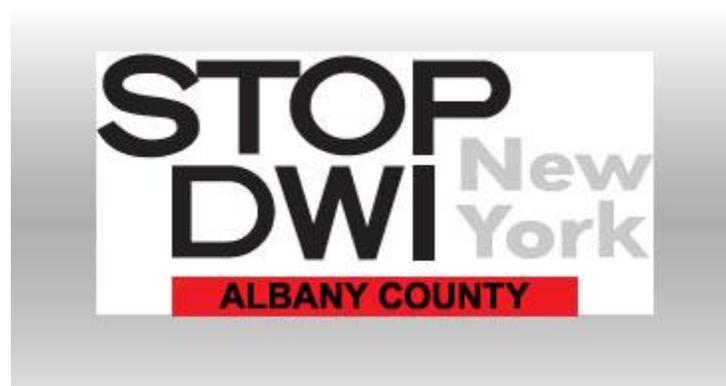
content (BAC) over .15 – tougher than the State law at .18

- Updated the DWI Policy to prohibit plea reductions for individuals who do not submit to a breathalyzer or blood test.
- Sent more people to State Prison for felony DWI.

Created a Compliance Task Force to:

- Conduct Compliance checks at several local bars and shut down bars that do not comply
- Coordinate raids, some uncovering more than 250 underage drinkers found on one night
- Set up vehicle check points on local roads, where dozens of drunk drivers are found in very short periods of time
- Develop educational programs for restaurant and tavern owners, with over 130 responsible owners attending first program at SUNY and more than 150 in attendance at our second training at the Palace Theater
- Provide scholarships to train more Drug Recognition Experts as the use of prescription drugs has increased dramatically
- Had our DWI Prosecutor trained in accident reconstruction to assist in trials
- Worked with REMO – the Regional Emergency Medical Organization – to expand blood drawing capabilities to include advanced EMT's

For more information please contact Cecilia Walsh, (518) 275-4710.



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