

Full Court Press

Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

Open To All, Trusted By All, Justice For All

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MAGISTRATE JUDGES ROOK AND WINGO INSTALLED

By Tobi Alamutu, Executive Office Intern

On August 18, 2006, the Superior Court held an installation ceremony for Magistrate Judges Mary Grace Rook and Elizabeth Carroll Wingo. Chief Judge Rufus King, III greeted the audience, which included the families and special guests of the Magistrate Judges, and made opening remarks. Associate Judge Joan Zeldon spoke and Magistrate Judge Joan Goldfrank read remarks by Magistrate Judge Carol Dalton both praising Judge Rook's abilities and expressing their pleasure in having her join

them as a colleague. D.C. Attorney General Robert Spagnoletti presented a convincing closing argument on behalf of Elizabeth Carroll Wingo, detailing all the facts in evidence as to her excellent qualifications.

Magistrate Judge Rook was then sworn in by Chief Judge King, as her three children, Conor, Devon and Morgan, held her Bible; her husband Albert then robed her. Magistrate Judge Wingo was sworn in next, with her daughter Hailey holding the Bible; her husband, Harry Wingo, assisted her with the robing process.

Magistrate Judge Rook has a long career in family law, having worked as a social worker and a CCAN attorney and at the Public Defender Service's



Chief Judge King installs Magistrate Judge Mary Grace Rook as her children hold the Bible.



Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Carroll Wingo is assisted by her daughter Hailey, as Chief Judge King administers the oath.

Included in this issue:

- 2 D.C. Courts' Website Ranked in Top Ten
- 2 Annual Back to School Bash
- 3 **Employee Profile - Jeannie Adams**
- 3 Real-Time Arguments on the Web
- 4 Family Court Truancy Diversion Program
- 4 Hooked on Books
- 5 New Court Employees
- 6 Understanding Courts
- 7-8 **RAVE REVIEWS**

Juvenile Services Program. She was part of the Truancy Working Group that developed the Family Court's Truancy Diversion Program that was implemented last year by Judges Lee Satterfield and Anita Josey-Herring. Magistrate Judge Wingo, a life-long resident of D.C., has been active in the criminal justice system in D.C. for many years, including service to the city as both an Assistant U.S. Attorney and Chief of the Criminal Section of the D.C. Office of Attorney General.

D.C. COURTS' WEBSITE RANKED IN TOP TEN WORLDWIDE

By Molly Gannon, Executive Office Intern

Justice Served, a court management and technology organization, has ranked the District of Columbia Courts' website one of the top ten court websites worldwide in 2006. Justice Served has been ranking court websites for the past eight years.

Out of the 3,500 court websites that were evaluated this year, Justice Served highlighted the variety of online services offered on the D.C. Courts' website, such as the interactive jury duty registration and deferral webpage, e-filing services, and a child support calculator, as evidence that set the website apart from the others. In addition, Justice Served noted that the site – which has information pages in Amharic, Chinese, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese – has “the ability to accommodate multiple languages to better serve a culturally diverse jurisdiction.”

“We are thrilled that Justice Served has recognized all the hard work that has gone into developing a user-friendly, accessible, informative, and helpful website,” said Courts Executive Officer Anne Wicks. “One of the Courts' strategic goals is to provide the public with information that is easily understandable and readily available; the website is one way in which we are addressing this goal and serving the public in the District.”



Wicks congratulated the Web Kiosk Committee, led by H. Clifton Grandy, Senior Court Manager. Members of the Committee included: Suzanne Bailey-Jones, Kim Beverly, Yuan Burns, Joy Chapper, Rosann Colovos, Duane Jackson, I.T. Director Ken Foor, Leah Gurowitz, Dianne King, Linda Kumi, Jed Miller, Dung T. Nguyen, Jon P. Peterson, James Plunkett, Marie Robertson, Dennis Shipley, Nick Vallerani, Roy Wynn and Monica Wilkerson. “We have an innovative I.T. Division at the Courts, and the Web Kiosk Committee worked with them and others to produce a first-rate website. This award recognizes that achievement.” Ms. Wicks also expressed appreciation to James

Plunkett, the Courts' Foreign Language Coordinator, who supervised the translations of key information into the five other languages.

The District of Columbia shares top ten recognition with seven other national court websites and two international court websites, the Federal Court of Australia and Supreme Court of Singapore. This is the first time D.C. Courts has received this honor.

'BACK TO SCHOOL BASH' PROVIDES A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL

By Molly Gannon, Executive Office Intern

Last month, FRIENDS of D.C. Superior Court, the Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect and the Courts' Child Care Center co-sponsored the 8th annual “Back to School Bash” for children in court. About 45 children attended the event, accompanied by their parents or caregivers. “We were delighted so many children, parents and caregivers participated,” said Esther Namian, a FRIENDS board member.

The bash provided pizza and cake for the attendees. A clown performed and a magician delighted the children. Door prizes were given out to the first child to arrive and the last child to arrive.

Continued on page 8.



Members of FRIENDS of D.C. Superior Court, the Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Courts' Child Care Center with children at the Back to School Bash.

The Full Court Press is published by the District of Columbia Courts to provide information about the D.C. Courts. Inquiries should be submitted to Room 1500.

*Leah Gurowitz, Editor
Dennis Shipley, Creative Director*

PROFILE -- JEANNIE ADAMS

CONFLICT RESOLUTION ANCHORED IN QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

By Tobi Alamutu, Executive Office Intern

The Superior Court has named a new director of the Multi-Door Division, Jeannie Adams. A native of Boston, Massachusetts (“Go Red Sox!,” she says), Jeannie is passionate and committed to providing high quality dispute resolution services and has been a practicing mediator, facilitator and trainer for many years.

Jeannie earned her undergraduate degree in Legal Studies and a Master’s in Conflict Resolution, both at the University of Massachusetts. Before joining the D.C. Courts this year, she held various positions in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs in her native Massachusetts. From ADR Coordinator for the Superior Court of Massachusetts to Director of Public Sector ADR Programs for the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution, Jeannie has spent over 15 years doing that which she is passionate about: helping people shape their own outcomes.

Jeannie says she moved to the D.C. Courts for the professional challenge. Having worked in ADR for years, she is committed to providing appropriate alternative dispute resolution services to the community. “It takes a concerted effort to collaborate with others and create a meaningful dialogue about the problems the community faces and how we can best serve them.” In order to ensure that the Division functions well, Jeannie believes that the staff must continue



to assess how effective current services are, and work toward defining the vision of the Multi-Door Division as it moves into the future. With support from the Court, she says, they can enhance current programs and change what is not working well in order to meet the current needs of the D.C. community.

“Multi-Door staff are fully committed to preserving the integrity of the mediation process,” Jeannie says. As she previously taught Ethics in

the Graduate Program in Dispute Resolution at the University of Massachusetts, it is not surprising that she believes that the Multi-Door Division has a responsibility “to make sure the services we provide are of the highest quality.” Jeannie enjoys the collaborative process and creating systems of conflict resolution that work well and are fully integrated with other court processes. “The system needs to be anchored in quality and accountability,” she says, and that is what inspires her to do the work she does.

Jeannie has one son of college age and enjoys going back to Massachusetts. She also really enjoys D.C. – “the people have been really kind” – and in her spare time enjoys gardening, biking, softball, traveling and caring for her pets.

D.C. COURT OF APPEALS’ ARGUMENTS NOW AVAILABLE REALTIME ON WEB

By Molly Gannon, Executive Office Intern

The D.C. Court of Appeals began web streaming oral arguments on the Internet on June 7, 2006. The arguments can be heard via the Court’s website at www.dcappeals.gov. This is the latest step taken by the D.C. Courts to make the courts more accessible to the public.

“One of the D.C. Court’s strategic goals is to be ‘Open to All’. By web streaming our oral arguments, we enable anyone with access to the Internet and Windows Media Player to listen in on what is happening in the courtroom,” said Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric T. Washington.

While all oral arguments will be available on-line in real time, there is a limit on the number of ‘simultaneous users.’ On each of the first two days, over 100 users visited the site, and there were 312 visits within the first week of the arguments’ availability.

“It’s a really efficient way to listen to a colleague’s argument. We can tune in from our desk and get a sense of how the argument is going without having to spend all morning in court,” said Mary Wilson, an Assistant D.C. Attorney General.

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROGRAM ENJOYS A DOUBLE DOSE OF SUCCESS

By Molly Gannon, Executive Office Intern

In June, the Family Court Truancy Diversion Program celebrated a successful completion of its first full year at Garnet-Patterson Middle School and first semester at Kramer Middle School, with each school graduating the majority of those students enrolled in the program. Started last fall, the Truancy Diversion Program is an effort to help students and their parents confront the underlying issues that cause repeated unexcused absences. It was founded by Judge Lee Satterfield and Tommy Wells, a member of the D.C. Board of Education.

At Garnet-Patterson, Judge Satterfield was pleased to report the graduation of eight out of his 11 students. Family Court Presiding Judge Anita Josey-Herring experienced similar success at Kramer with the graduation of eight out of 12 students. These graduates demonstrated improved behavior, better grades and, most importantly, increased school attendance.

With the help of regular meetings with parents and students, Judge Satterfield was able to stress not only the importance of school attendance, but also the importance of how one's attitude can positively or negatively affect one's success. He kept abreast of the students' progress throughout the semester with the aid of Garnet-Patterson's attendance counselors. Judge Satterfield also stressed the importance of punctuality as a basic life skill.

Attendance counselors tracked students' promptness and truancy rate. They play a critical role in the truancy prevention

process. They have embraced this new court initiative. The Truancy Diversion Programs augment their efforts to keep kids in school.

At Kramer Middle School, Judge Josey-Herring enjoyed the benefit of enthusiastic parental participation, however, apathy on the part of the students presented a serious challenge. With the help of a strong truancy prevention team and the parents, Judge Josey-Herring was able to energize the students and disabuse them of their poor attitudes about education.

The judges also faced other challenges such as helping parents understand the value of their children's education and helping kids fend off pressure to cut school and join gangs. "This process is all about letting students know that they are important and that the broader community is concerned about their success," said Judge Josey-Herring.

The Task Force, which met over the summer to discuss program improvements, includes members from the Family Court Social Services Division, the D.C. Public School Board and D.C. Public Schools. The Child and Family Services Agency and its community collaboratives are also important stakeholders. The Truancy Diversion Program is expanding this fall. A third school, the Walker-Jones Educational Center, located in Northeast D.C., will be added to the program, with Judge Laura Cordero at the helm.

PHI BETA PHI SORORITY DONATES BOOKS TO FRIENDS OF D.C. SUPERIOR COURT

By Molly Gannon, Executive Office Intern

On Wednesday June 14, 2006, the Phi Beta Phi Sorority presented FRIENDS of D.C. Superior Court with children's books collected to support the "Hooked on Books" program. In a brief ceremony, Judge Anita Josey-Herring, Presiding Judge of the D.C. Family Court and founder of the program, was honored for the second year in a row.

Nancy Mitchell, the president of the Phi Beta Phi sorority local alumni chapter, made the presentation at a small ceremony in the Child Care Center. The sorority collected a total of 100 books for the program. The majority of those books will go to Family Court.

The "Hooked on Books" program, now in its third year, developed after children began to take home the books provided in the waiting area of Family Court. The program allows children to take home a book of their choice, while replenishing the bookshelves for other children and parents.



FRIENDS of Superior Court led by President Jean Bower (front row, center) present books to Dianne King, Director of Family Court Operations, Judge Anita Josey-Herring, Presiding Judge of Family Court, and Dorothy Coleman, Child Care Center Director, at the event.

The program is designed to encourage interest in reading among those children who visit the court and it provides bookshelves of donated children's books for the courtrooms of all Family Court judges and magistrate judges, as well as the waiting areas in Family Court.

The program also benefits the Court's Child Care Center. Dorothy Coleman, Director of the Center, explained that the program has given the children an "enthusiasm for the written word" and she

hopes that this interest in reading will give them a positive attitude in school.

"Hooked on Books" is generously assisted by the FRIENDS of D.C. Superior Court through its efforts to promote a child-friendly atmosphere in Family Court. The program's goal is to provide every child, parent or caregiver who appears in Family Court with a book to take home after they leave. They are currently accepting donations of new or gently used books.

NEW EMPLOYEE PROFILES

By Tobi Alamutu, Executive Office Intern

Ronald Williams

Ronald Williams joined the Courts earlier this year as a Substance Abuse Counselor. As one of the counselors for the Juvenile Drug Court Program, Ronald deals with tough situations on a daily basis. This has not deterred him from continuing his work, especially with youth. Originally from Paterson, New Jersey, Ronald studied Human Services at Passaic Community College, and received his Masters Degree in the same field from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. He also received training from the National Council on Drug Addiction and Alcoholism. Ronald has held previous jobs as a Program Analyst for the City of Paterson's Department of Human Services, as Residential Counselor for adolescent males who were referred by Drug Court and Division of Probation at Vantage Health Systems and as a Substance Abuse Counselor for Northern State Prison in Newark, New Jersey.



His motivation at his job comes from "seeing young men overcome tough circumstances and experience success." The commitment to "community and family involvement" and its "excellent opportunities for professional growth" were what led Ronald to join the D.C. Courts. Ronald would like to "conduct research that would lead to the development of programs to meet the needs of underprivileged people, through doctoral studies." He is also a big sports fan and enjoys movies as well as reading on a variety of topics.

Carmella Ealey-Smith

Carmella Ealey-Smith has joined the Court Social Services Division as a



Substance Abuse Counselor. Carmella received her Bachelors degree in Human Relations at Trinity University, in Washington, D.C. and is a Certified Addictions Counselor. Born in Washington, Carmella spent a great deal of time as a child in "a little small town in Louisiana called St. Martinsville."

Prior to working at the Courts, Carmella worked as a Substance Abuse Counselor for the Alcohol Prevention Recovery Administration, Washington, D.C. and the Phoenix Program in Arlington, VA. She also worked as a Mental Health Specialist for the D.C. Department of Mental Health at the Oak Hill Youth Center. Carmella says she "enjoys working with young people in the area of mental health and substance abuse issues" and "enjoys interacting with the adolescent and their families."

Carmella says her move to the Courts is "a challenging endeavor that I look forward to exploring" and she will take a "hands on approach meeting with the youth and their families at home, school, and social activities."

Although she is a twin with five siblings and is married with two children, who are the joys of her life, she still finds time to coordinate the Holy Comforter-St. Cyprian Liturgical Dance Ministry.

Martha Gutierrez Shepard

Martha Shepard began working at the Courts as an interpreter earlier this year. A native of Bogota, Colombia, Martha says it is an easy guess that summer is her favorite season. After completing high school at the Colegio Nueva Granada in Colombia, Martha received her undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Central Florida and her Master's degree in Legal Interpreting from the University of

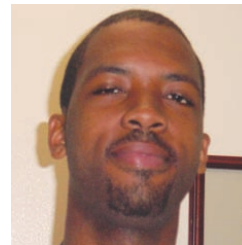


Charleston, South Carolina. Martha previously held jobs at the International Programs Office in Walt Disney World, and was a Staffing Supervisor and also an Adjunct Professor at the University of Charleston. She also previously worked as a free lance interpreter at the Courts, which led to her interest in a full-time position. She continues to enjoy her job because of "the people I work with" who hail from many different nationalities and backgrounds.

Martha loves dancing and enjoys picnics and spending afternoons in the park, mostly in the summer of course.

Terrence Smith

Terrence Smith recently joined the Courts as a Family Court clerk. A graduate of Oxon Hill High School, Maryland, Terrence hails from Suitland.



Having worked previously as a barista at Starbucks and as an archives aid at the Washington Records Center in Suitland, MD, the

opportunity for advancement drew him to the file clerk position at the Courts.

Terrence considers it an added bonus that he can "interact with and meet new people everyday." Terrence enjoys working on computers, listening to music and playing basketball. He also plans to go back to school and study technology.

Sheila Ward

Sheila Ward joined the Courts earlier this year as a Family Court Deputy Clerk. She has enjoyed working for the judicial system, a fact that led her to take a job at the D.C. Courts after moving back to her home,



Continued on page 6.

UNDERSTANDING COURTS - STEP UP TO THE FRONT OF THE CLASS

By Lula Raye, Secretary, Executive Office

An exciting new training course, offered by the Center for Education & Training, is a must-have experience for every court employee. *Understanding Courts*, presented by Duane Delaney, Clerk of the D.C. Superior Court, focuses on the entire judicial process. In this two-day session, court employees are engaged in interactive discussions on the history and purpose of courts and why they operate the way they do. Mr. Delaney's presentation acquaints participants with how the state and federal courts operate, including the U.S. Supreme Court. Participants discussed the criminal, civil and grand jury processes, as well as judicial appointments and how these components work together in our legal system.



Participants in the summer's training along with Superior Court Clerk Duane Delaney, far right.

At first glance, one might think the course would be ... well, dry. But, in fact, those attending were enlightened and challenged, and they experienced what a court is and does. Students learned how the courts were formed, beginning with the Declaration of Independence through the formation of the D.C. Court System. They were given an in-depth history of circumstances that lead to landmark decisions that affect our everyday life, including *Marbury v. Madison* and *Roe v. Wade*. Mr. Delaney's understanding of the courts, knowledge of historic cases, and proficiency to weave this information into clear explanations made it an enjoyable and informative experience.

The final segment of the course was a tour of the U.S. Supreme Court. The class actually sat in the famed courtroom where landmark cases have been argued.

This training is available to all court employees and is highly recommended. Be sure to check the Center for Education & Training's monthly schedule.

Continued from page 5.

Washington D.C., from previous jobs as Paralegal with the Jackson County Detention Center and Court Clerk II (Civil and Criminal) with the 16th Circuit Court, both in Kansas City, Missouri. Sheila also held previous positions such as her job as Secretary (Office Automation) with the Centers for Disease Control, in Atlanta, Georgia; as an Office Automation Clerk with the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C.; and a temporary job which included working as a Office Assistant with the D.C. Department of Corrections' Office of Contracts and Procurement.

Sheila was born in Norfolk, Virginia and attended Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School, Washington D.C., and the Philadelphia Training Center where she took courses in Business Administration and Accounting. The "interesting and rewarding" aspects of her work in Missouri led her to consider working for

the D.C. Courts. She enjoys scanning documents and helping customers at the counter. Sheila enjoys traveling "anywhere she can," both within and outside the United States.

Barbara A. Shields

Barbara Shields recently joined the Courts as a Deputy Clerk in the Civil Actions Branch.

Originally from Greensboro, North Carolina, Barbara enjoys her position as Deputy Clerk because it means constant work. After receiving her education at Jefferson College, Barbara held jobs in the Federal Government and AT&T.

"The job seemed interesting," Barbara says about her decision to join the Courts.



***** **Rave Reviews** *****

From: Mahoney, Beverly
Sent: Thursday, June 22, 2006
To: Wynn, Roy S.
Subject: **Sue Bailey-Jones**

Mr. Wynn,

Good morning. I just want to write you and tell you what a pleasure it is in doing business with Sue Bailey-Jones. She is always extremely professional, efficient, courteous, and pleasant. I have spoken to her many times in the past on the phone, and she has always provided excellent service and has done an excellent job in keeping me updated with regard to which Judges were waiting for juries, which has been extremely helpful when we have been short on reporters. Most importantly, she is wonderful in assisting our Division with regard to us providing a realtime court reporter for hearing impaired jurors. I had the wonderful pleasure of meeting Sue for the first time in person this morning, and she is even more lovely in person.

This morning is the first time I have ever had the occasion to visit your Division, and I found it very interesting. You seem to have a great thing going on down there. I observed how the jurors were lined up in the hallway and being checked in at the counter, and it just seemed to be such an extremely efficient operation.

Beverly

March 13, 2006

Ms. Barbara Caine
D. C. Superior Court
Small Claims Court Division
409 E Street, N. W., Building B - Room 102
Washington, D. C., 20001

Ms. Caine,

I am writing this letter re: **Mrs. Brown**. I had occasion to call your office today and admittedly, I was a nervous wreck. I have some horrible experiences over the telephone and in person with employees of the government. Mrs. Brown was a very pleasant surprise and a welcomed change.

Mrs. Brown was very gracious and helpful. She demonstrated professionalism in speech and skill. An excellent knowledge base was exhibited throughout the telephone conversation. When the conversation ended, I was almost in tears with relief. To say that I was fearful in making this call is an understatement. Mrs. Brown completely turned my fear into joy and confidence.

Mrs. Brown proved that she is an asset to any team and to me a breath of fresh air. Again, I thank Ms. Brown for all of her assistance and kindness. She and her skills are greatly appreciated. Mrs. Caine, you truly have a jewel.

8/02/06

To whom it may concern,

Monique Walters (here in the Small Claims Court Division) helped me greatly this evening. Her professionalism, kind nature and pleasant attitude are much appreciated. I found her quite knowledgeable and an asset to your office.

Thank you
and thank you to
Ms Walters.

Re: **Blanche Richardson**
Civil Actions Branch

Blanche,

Thanks so much for all of your hard work, dedication, + professionalism! I appreciate all that you have done to assist me in my court filings + answering all of my questions. Thanks again,
Tonya

June 8, 2005

The Honorable Rufus King Judge,
D.C. Superior Court
500 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Judge King:

I write you concerning Ms. **Tanna McDowell**. She is the Courtroom Clerk assigned to courtroom 120, commonly known as Traffic Court. As you know, on any given day that calendar may have over 40 matters, from status hearing to trials.

Each time I have a case in there I am amazed at Ms. McDowell's ability to run an extremely hectic calendar with poise, efficiency and courtesy. Ms. McDowell is pleasant and professional to all parties and defendants. That calendar only proceeds in a fair and effective manner because of her hard work and meticulous organizational skills. She is a pleasure to work with.

Rave Reviews cont.

July 23, 2006

April 6, 2006

D.C. Superior Court
500 Indiana Avenue
Room 3148 Washington D.C. 20001
ATTN: Ms. Anita Alexander
RE: EXCELLENT SERVICE

Dear Ms. **Lane Azeez**,

I want to thank you so much for assisting me with my fiances appeal form. As I explained to you on the phone in mid March my fiance's court appointed attorney ignored the request for the appeal and told me that my fiance didn't have that option. If it weren't for you the appeal wouldn't have been filed in time. It's been my experience with establishments overall that when you need help they're quick to "pass the buck" whether it's a transfer to a voice mail or they give you a number to call and that person normally is not very helpful either. You were very patient with me and you made me feel like I was not just another phone call. ... I just wanted to let you know that you're doing a wonderful job and I'm very grateful to have received your assistance. Thanks again and have a great day.

Mr. Dennis Shipley
Executive Office

Dear Mr. Shipley:

Although I thanked you in person at the time, I am writing to "officially" thank you very much for your assistance in preparing the Power Point presentation concerning the Superior Court Magistrate Judges.

The presentation was very well received by the Committee on the Selection and Tenure of Magistrate Judges in March 2006, at the meeting which Judge Turner graciously scheduled. Chief Judge King took the time to see the presentation during a meeting with Magistrate Judges Melendez and Lee. The Chief Judge commented on the professionalism and high quality of the presentation. He also suggested that the portions on the history and the assignments of the Magistrate Judges would be very useful as part of the training of new judicial officers.

Thank you for sharing your time and energy in the midst of your busy schedule. Your assistance and instruction was essential to the success of the presentation. With your expertise and patience as a teacher, you helped us to transform ideas into colorful words and images which provided helpful information.

I hope that this presentation will help more people to understand the history and role of the Magistrate Judges, and that that understanding will help all of us to more effectively serve the Court and the citizens of the District of Columbia.

It is a pleasure to work with you, Dennis. Thank you again.

Gratefully,
J. Dennis Doyle

Continued from page 2.

After the event, the children were treated to backpacks full of school supplies, such as notebooks, folders, pens and pencils: all the essentials for back-to-school. The school supplies were generously donated for the event by the FRIENDS of Superior Court.

Dorothy Coleman, Director of the Child Care Center, thought the event was a great success for the children. "Many hearts and hands throughout the Courthouse joined together to make the 8th Annual Back to School Bash a tremendous success! The parents and children were fed and entertained, and the children were given school supplies!"



Parents and children enjoying the clown and magician entertainment during the annual Back to School Bash.