

Full Court Press

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Open To All, Trusted By All, Justice For All

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JUDGE ERIC T. WASHINGTON SWORN-IN AS CHIEF JUDGE OF THE D.C. COURT OF APPEALS

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

Judge Eric T. Washington took the oath of office as the chief judge of the Court of Appeals on August 5, 2005 in a special sitting of the Court held to administer the oath, which was effective on August 6. Outgoing Chief Judge Annice M. Wagner administered the oath as Chief Judge Washington's wife, Sheryl, held the Bible. Their children, his brother-in-law, who is Judge Paul R. Webber, III, and other family members were among the guests. Chief Judge Washington thanked his family and his colleagues for their support. He said, "I am grateful to my predecessor and mentor, Judge Annice Wagner, for her skillful leadership of the District of Columbia Courts. Along with Chief Judge King and the entire court family I intend to work tirelessly toward achieving our vision of being a court system that is open to all, trusted by all, with justice for all."

As chief judge of the Court of Appeals, Chief Judge Washington is now also the chair of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, the policy-making body for the District of Columbia Courts.

Chief Judge Washington was appointed to the D.C. Superior Court in 1995 and to the Court of Appeals in 1999. Chief Judge Washington served as co-chair of the D.C. Courts' Strategic Planning Leadership Council, which developed the Courts' five-year strategic plan, *Committed to Justice in the Nation's Capital*. He has been a member of the D.C. Courts' Access to Justice Commission, the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the D.C. Courts, and other court committees.



Chief Judge Eric T. Washington

Chief Judge Washington graduated from Tufts University and received his J.D. from Columbia University School of Law.

He was an associate at Fulbright & Jaworski in Houston, Texas, prior to moving to Washington, D.C. to serve as Legislative Director and Counsel to U.S. Representative Mike Andrews of Texas. After rejoining Fulbright & Jaworski in Washington, D.C. and practicing law for several years, Chief Judge Washington served as the Principal Deputy Corporation Counsel for the District (now Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia). Chief Judge Washington then became a partner at the law firm of Hogan & Hartson prior to his appointment to the bench. Chief Judge Washington and his wife, Sheryl, reside in the District and have three children.

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FAMILY COURT GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

On June 22, 2005, representatives from leading judicial organizations around the nation gathered at the Superior Court for the unveiling of a new curriculum. The curriculum, designed to improve the foster care system in the United States, is the product of a collaborative effort of many organizations, including the ABA Center on Children and the Law, the National Center for State Courts, and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. This initiative arose out of concern for children in the foster care system and the negative effects of long-term foster care placement. The curriculum is designed to assist systems nationwide in more

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E-FILING AT THE COURTS

By Melissa P. Tanguay, Executive Office Intern

Electronic filing, or e-filing, is the newest process being implemented to modernize the Superior Court by allowing electronic maintenance of court records. In 2001, a pilot program was put in place to introduce e-filing in Civil I cases. This pilot was very successful. Almost one million document pages have been filed electronically over the past four years, and employees and lawyers have become familiar with the system. E-filing must now become compatible with IJIS, the Court's new case management system.

On May 17, 2005, e-filing went "live" in the Civil Actions Branch. The IJIS e-filing process is as follows: e-files are sent from lawyers into an "e-post office" system that converts the files into the IJIS system using a vendor. This open filing system allows lawyers to e-file with the Court from anywhere at any time and without Court personnel scanning files into the system.

With today's increased sensitivity to security, e-filing offers a safe, quick and cost-effective alternative to mailing and scanning files. Not only are litigants able to receive filings as quickly as possible, but the manpower and financial savings along with the increase in accuracy and security without the risk of losing files makes e-filing a positive improvement for the Court. Because e-filing is such a simple process, little additional training will be necessary for judges and their staffs, lawyers and court employees. The U.S. District Court is already e-filing, so many members of the D.C. legal community are familiar with the process.

Security is a very important consideration in e-filing. Each user is given his or her own user name and password and precautions are taken against "hacking" and viruses. E-filing is also extremely convenient as the vendor can also partially or fully restrict access to files in the instance of sealed cases. The Court is committed to remaining vigilant about the customer service and security issues in e-filing.

The Court plans to expand e-filing to include Civil II, Landlord Tenant, Small Claims, Probate, and Tax. In future years, the entire Court will use e-filing for cases when parties are represented by lawyers.

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

BOOK PRESENTATION AT CHILD CARE CENTER

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

On June 30, 2005, the Friends of the Superior Court (FRIENDS) and members of the Pi Beta Phi sorority presented the Superior Court with an array of colorful and educational children's books as part of the Court's *Hooked on Books* program. Jean Bower, President of FRIENDS, opened the event with a formal presentation of the books, which was facilitated by Esther Namien, a member of both Pi Beta Phi and FRIENDS. Judge Anita Josey-Herring then thanked the women for their generous donations on behalf of the Courts and discussed the importance of the *Hooked on Books* program for young people.



(Back row) Stephanie Minor-Harper (Family Court Coordinator), Dianne King (Director of Court Operations, Family Court), Kay Cartwright (PBP), Milmae Gray (PBP), Mary Foster (PBP), Marilyn Newton (Friends/PBP), Dorothy Coleman (Child Care Center Director), Martha Henderson (PBP), Esther Namian (Friends/PBP); (Seated) Jeanette Walker (Child Care Center Assistant Director), Jean Bower (Friends President), Judge Anita Josey-Herring, Nancy Mitchell (President-elect PBP) and Kimberly Baker (Judge Josey-Herring's Law Clerk/PBP)

All in attendance agreed that the book donation program is a perfect fit between the Courts and Pi Beta Phi, as one of the national organization's leading philanthropic efforts is the encouragement of literacy in the community. The group plans to expand its mission to finding books for teenage children as well, since the Court, in the words of Judge Josey-Herring, oversees children "from zero to twenty-one."

The *Hooked on Books* project began last year, and the collection of books for the program continues to grow. The Family Court is currently arranging assembly of bookshelves for the donations, which will be located in the courtroom of each Family Court judge and magistrate judge, in addition to the Family Court waiting areas. Stephanie Minor-Harper, Family Court Coordinator, announced that the program is creating a list of age and topic-appropriate books, so that people who are interested in purchasing books for the program, but who are uncertain of what to donate, will be able to check this resource. The goal of the program is to enable every child, parent, and caregiver to leave the Courthouse with a book to read and share with another child.

If you would like to make a donation of a new or gently used book, please call (202) 879-1798 or e-mail Friendsofthecourt@dcsc.gov for more information.

30th ANNUAL JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

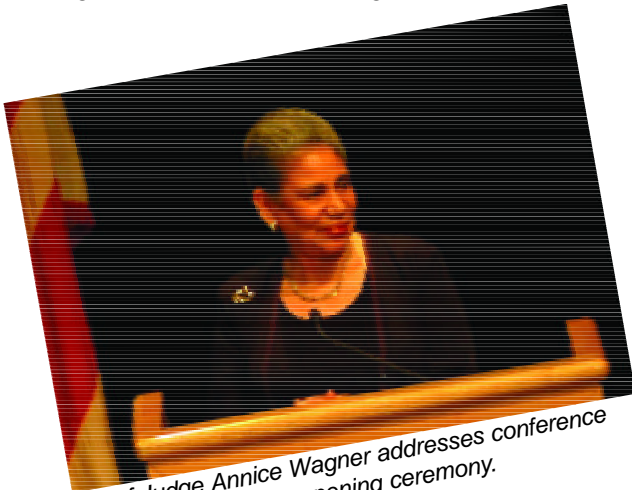
On May 19th and 20th, 2005, judges from the D.C. Court of Appeals and the D.C. Superior Court, staff members of the Courts, and area attorneys convened for the 30th Annual Judicial Conference of the District of Columbia. The event, held annually pursuant to Public Law 94-193 and D.C. Code §11-744 (2001), requires the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals to gather the judges of the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court together to discuss the state of the D.C. Courts. Judges are called to make recommendations regarding the judicial system, a task which is in line with the main objective of the Conference: to improve the administration of justice in the District.

This year, the Conference was held in the impressive International Trade Center – The Ronald Reagan Building – and was presided over by Chief Judge Annice Wagner of the Court of Appeals. The theme, *The Changing Face of the Law: The Impact of Demographic Changes and Immigration on the D.C. Courts*, encouraged a variety of panel discussions on related topics. The Superior Court’s own Judge Hiram Puig-Lugo moderated an interesting session entitled “International Child Abductions,” which included panelists from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Office of Children’s Issues of the United States State Department, and a visiting U.S. District Court Judge from New York City. Other

topics included homeland security and the treatment of immigrants, the demographics of jury pools and jury panels, and gangs and the justice system.

Many members of the Courts played important roles in the planning of the event. The Committee on Arrangements was chaired by Court of Appeals Judge Inez Smith Reid and vice-chaired by Court of Appeals Judge Eric Washington. Superior Court Judges Patricia Broderick, Kaye Christian, Stephanie Duncan-Peters, Ramsey Johnson, Robert Morin, Thomas Motley, and Hiram Puig-Lugo were members of the arrangements committee as well. Clerk of the Court of Appeals, Garland Pinkston, Jr., was Secretary to the Conference, assisted by John Dyson, Gregory Taylor, Leta Walters, and Sandra Strawder. Judge Steven Glickman served as Parliamentarian, and Alvin Milton, Ricardo Green, and Willie Conyers were on-hand as the Conference Recorders/Photographers.

In between the panel presentations, attendees enjoyed the discussion of conference topics as well as catching-up with co-workers. Other highlights of the conference included the report on the Judicial Branch by Chief Judge Annice Wagner and the report on the Superior Court by Chief Judge Rufus King, as well as the D.C. Bar report, presented by John Keeney, Esquire, D.C. Bar President.



Chief Judge Annice Wagner addresses conference members during the opening ceremony.



Judge Hiram Puig-Lugo listens to comments made during his panel's discussion.



Conference registration.

EMPLOYEE PROFILES

TERRELL THOMAS: ALWAYS WILLING TO LEND A HELPING HAND

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

You may have noticed the warm, friendly smile appearing from behind the window at the Mail Room on a trip to the JM Level, always accompanied by a readiness to assist anyone. Perhaps you saw the same smile around the Courthouse, delivering packages and letters to offices and divisions. Or maybe you smiled along after a prank was played on you in the Mail Room. Who is the person behind that smile? None other than Terrell Thomas, Lead Mail Clerk and Driver for the Courts. Terrell has been a hard-working employee of the Courts for a little over three-and-a-half years. Most likely, the only times he is not smiling when at the Courthouse is while he is hard at work on an individual project or posing for a photograph! Even when he isn't smiling, however, he has a strong personal spirit from



within. A self-described "people's person," Terrell possesses a great amount of energy, evident in his willingness to engage in interaction with "anybody at anytime."

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Terrell attended H.D. Woodson Senior High School. With a passion for drums, he later attended Delaware State on a music scholarship. Before coming to the Courts, Terrell held positions at Hecht's Warehouse and National Tire and Battery (NTB). When the opportunity arose to enter the D.C. Courts, Terrell, characteristically drawn towards chances for advancement, applied for the position. This professional drive led Terrell to his recent promotion to Lead Mail Clerk, of which he is most proud (and modest!). His determination does not end, either. According to Terrell, one of the best parts about a job at the Courts is the

advancement opportunity presented to workers within the Courts.

Terrell is not only a leader at work, but he is also a role model at home. After their mother died last November, Terrell took on the responsibility of being the main support and example for his younger brother, who is a football player at Marshall University. Terrell is very proud of his brother and his accomplishments, and cannot wait until his brother's graduation from college. In addition to watching out for his brother, Terrell takes care of his four-year-old son, Antoine, who is a mirror image of his father. Terrell takes pride in being a mentor for both of these important people in his life.

Handling his positions at the Courts in a professional and courteous manner, Terrell also knows when a light moment is needed. He is known around the Mail Room as the office "jokester," and enjoys playing pranks on his co-workers.

JAVIER SOLER: SPANISH LANGUAGE INTERPRETER

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

Javier A. Soler began work as a Spanish Interpreter for the Courts in the Office of Court Interpreting Services in May 2005. Javier is not unfamiliar with the operations of the courthouse, however, having worked for the Superior Court as a contractor since November 1999.

Born and raised in Santurce, Puerto Rico, Javier received a Bachelors of Science in Industrial and Labor Relations from LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York. He later commenced graduate study in Education and became a language teacher, teaching Spanish in Syracuse, New York and New York City. He returned to Puerto Rico to continue his graduate studies in Translation at Universidad de Puerto Rico, where he was also a Research Assistant in the Linguistics Department. While in Puerto Rico, Javier taught English at Universidad Politécnica de Puerto Rico before working for several years at a translation company as Director of Translation Services. He then obtained his Federal Interpreter certification and continues to work as a freelance



interpreter.

In Puerto Rico, Javier worked in private-sector civil matters. He decided he wanted to "round out" his career experience, so he moved to the D.C. area in 1999 to focus on criminal work. Javier also continues to serve as an Interpreter Trainer for the Administrative Office of the Courts in Maryland, as he has for the past four years. Javier came to the Courts "after years of packing and unpacking" and finds that "a desk is a welcome change." The birth of his daughter, now eight months old, has encouraged him to stay close to home. Javier feels lucky that he enjoys both his teaching and interpreting positions, even in their stressful moments, and is happy that he is able to combine both careers. If his background isn't interesting enough, Javier has been researching his family genealogy since he was 12 years old, traveling throughout Europe to reestablish family ties and visit long-lost family members. Currently, he has been able to go back as far as 1495! Welcome aboard, Javier!

NEW CIVIL DIVISION EMPLOYEES

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

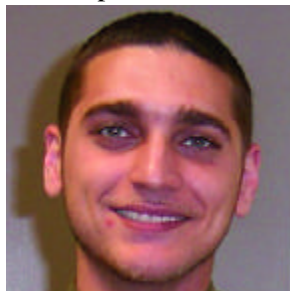
Sharron Smith joined the Courts in November 2004 as one of the hard-working Deputy Clerks in the Civil Actions Branch of the Civil Division. A resident of Maryland, Sharron attended Fairmont Heights Senior High School in Capitol Heights, Maryland, before receiving her degree from Strayer University in Washington, D.C. Prior to working for the Courts, Sharron served as a secretary for the Director of the National Institute of Nursing Research, a section of the National Institutes of Health. Sharron also worked at AT&T for 13 years, holding four positions - Communications Assistant, Customer Resource Care Member, Trainer/Coach, and Methods Observer. After her AT&T office closed, Sharron decided she was interested in the Courts. "I did not know exactly what it was I wanted to do within the system, but I knew that it was where I wanted to be," she notes. Since beginning her employment at the Courts, Sharron most enjoys the people she interacts with daily as a result of her position. Her cheerful disposition is most definitely a welcome addition to the Courthouse!



Mia Brent started work as a Deputy Clerk in the Civil Actions Branch on January 27, 2005. After graduating from Central High School in Capitol Heights, Maryland in 1998, Mia received a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Virginia Union University in 2002. Mia currently resides in Temple Hills, Maryland. Before coming to the Courts, she worked in retail at Bebe in Georgetown, as a Customer Support Representative at the Circuit City Store Support Center, and did temporary work at NIH. Continuing her interest in the judicial system, Mia decided a job at the Courts would be "great for experience and would give me another aspect of the justice system, besides law enforcement." The best part of the job is that there is "never a dull moment at the courthouse, no matter what division." (We'd have to agree!) She is also looking into taking classes for her Paralegal Certificate this upcoming year. Mia is the oldest of three children and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. When she is not working hard at the Courts, she enjoying dancing, reading, and doing puzzles. She even performed at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York with her high school dance team!



Houmehr Aghabozorgi, one of the newest additions to the Civil Actions Branch, started work at the Courts as a Deputy Clerk on April 18, 2005. Born in Iran, Houmehr moved to the D.C.



area in 1986 and attended T.C Williams High School before going on to receive a Bachelor's degree from George Mason University in Virginia. Houmehr is not new to being helpful and a team player – prior to arriving at the Courts, he was an intern at Fortis Investors, an Assistant Teacher (student teaching), and a paralegal at a settlement firm. The Courts provide a "fast-paced environment," which Houmehr enjoys, as well as a forum to exercise his public service skills. He also likes the opportunities the Courts present to learn legal procedures and the opportunities provided to workers to move within the Courts. Houmehr finds that his co-workers and the exciting working environment are the best parts of his job. Outside of the Courts, Houmehr's hobbies include computer technology, music, soccer and basketball. He also has an out-of-court family, which includes an older brother and sister, and a 5-year-old brother. Welcome, Houmehr!



Monique Walters joined the Small Claims Branch of the Civil Division as a Deputy Clerk on May 31, 2005. Originally from the Bronx, New York, Monique has been in the District of Columbia for about three years. Monique received a Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Mass

Communications from Virginia State University and also holds a Legal Assistant Certificate from Georgetown University. Prior to working at the Courts, Monique held various teaching positions as an instructor for Computer/Media, Creative Writing, and Adult Education classes. Upon completion of her Legal Assistant Certificate, Monique worked as a contract paralegal with various law firms throughout the area. Monique's interest in a career at the Courts came from serving jury duty, where her first-hand observations of "the inner workings of the court and the important roles of each member...in maintaining an effective environment for judicial proceedings" sparked this interest. The aspects of the job that Monique enjoys the most include learning the CourtView system, interacting with the public, and watching how the Courts process cases from the initial complaint to the final judgment. In her leisure time, Monique is an active member of the Virgin Island Dance Troupe. She is also on the Board of Directors of United Nation of Individuals Fighting Impossibilities (U.N.I.F.I, Inc.), a non-profit organization that sponsors marches, fundraisers, and other events with the goal of community improvement through encouragement and education of non-violence. Monique also participates in various other fundraisers and events in the D.C. area. Welcome aboard, Monique!

D.C. COURTS HOST THE COURT ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

By H. Clifton Grandy, Senior Court Manager, Executive Office

May 5 – 6, 2005, the D.C. Courts hosted a meeting of the Court Access Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is working to address a variety of challenges to access in court facilities nationwide. The U.S. Access Board created the advisory committee to help clarify existing accessibility guidelines, which apply to courthouses covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968. The need for clarification and technical assistance to courts was



Judge Broderick discusses the accessibility features of her courtroom with Advisory Committee members.

underscored by a recent decision by the Supreme Court, *Lane vs. Tennessee*. In *Lane*, the Supreme Court held that an individual can sue a state for failing to provide disability access to a court.

Customarily, and symbolically, courts were built on a hill and the entrance was elevated and accessible only by steps. In addition to this challenge, architects and designers are faced with elevated spaces within the courtroom (such as the judge's bench, witness stand, and jury box). Space limitations compound the challenge. History also plays a role because courthouses are often historical sites. It can be difficult to alter a courthouse or courtroom to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities while preserving its historical character.

The Access Board established the advisory committee to undertake outreach activities that highlight accessibility within a particular sphere or focus area to increase awareness. The goal is to supplement the Access Board's technical assistance and training programs, improve compliance with access requirements, and showcase best practices for



Chief Judges Wagner and King address advisory committee visitors.

accessible design. The Access Board acted because court access has not been well-understood and supplementary guidance is needed.

The Advisory Committee's membership includes designers and architects, representatives of disability groups, members of the judiciary, court administrators, representatives of the building, electrical, safety and fire codes community, standard-setting entities, government agencies, manufacturers of accessibility equipment, and

others. Judge Patricia Broderick, Roy S. Wynn, Jr., (representing the National Association for Court Management), and H. Clifton Grandy are members of the Advisory Committee.

Chief Judge Annice M. Wagner and Chief Judge Rufus G. King, III welcomed the advisory committee to the D.C. Courts and invited them to examine what has been done to enhance access for persons with disabilities. Judge Broderick showed how her courtroom and chambers are accessible for a judge using a wheelchair. Garland Pinkston showed the access features of the D.C. Court of Appeals courtroom and Public Office. Judge Rafael Diaz, the former chair of the Improving Access Subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access, described the process used to involve persons from the various disability communities in determining access enhancements. Francis Burton made a presentation on the Office of Court Interpreting Services and services for court users who are deaf or hard of hearing, such as sign language interpretation and assistive listening devices. Mike Kazan, from the architectural firm of Gruzen Samton, described the accessibility features of the Family Court renovations on the JM Level, and the new portico that will serve as the entrance to the Old Courthouse on its north facade which will eliminate the barriers of elevation and step.

Several senior court managers lead small groups of the advisory committee members on courthouse tours. Also showcased were the accessibility features of the Family Court Intake Center, the new Family Court courtrooms, JM Level courtrooms that were added in the late 1990's, and courtrooms that were partially refurbished in the late 1990's. Following the tour, Mary Ann Satterthwaite answered lingering questions about the new construction and renovations.

The advisory committee has been charged with promoting access to courthouses, which pose unique design challenges, by identifying issues and barriers, developing solutions and best practices, gathering resources, and exploring ways to disseminate the information it develops most effectively to various audiences. The advisory committee will complete its work in 2006.

SUPERIOR COURT LAUNCHES NEW INTERACTIVE JUROR SERVICES WEBPAGE

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

In May, the D.C. Superior Court announced the implementation of a new interactive Juror Services webpage (see below) that allows city residents who receive a petit jury summons to view their last date of jury service, complete the juror questionnaire, look up their next scheduled date of service, or defer service up to 90 days from the originally scheduled date, online. The Juror Services webpage is available seven days a week and can be accessed by the user's computer wherever they are located.

"Jury service is a civic duty which ensures a fair trial for both the civilly and criminally accused. The Superior Court appreciates the assistance of the District's residents in fulfilling this duty, and we hope the new computerized system, in addition to the existing automated phone system and helpful Jurors Office staff, will make jury duty as convenient as possible," said Chief Judge Rufus King.

The Juror Services webpage is the latest step in Superior Court efforts to facilitate jury service and enhance court access. All District residents are required to serve on a jury if they are U.S. Citizens over the age of 18, speak English, and are physically able to serve. The Superior Court utilizes a "one trial or one day" system - if a person serving jury duty is

not selected for a jury on his/her first day of service, he/she is excused. If a person is selected for a jury, the juror must serve until the trial is over. After the trial is complete, the juror's obligation is fulfilled until the juror is summoned again, usually in about two years.

Once on the Juror Services website, prospective jurors can select one of four juror options at the click of a button. The prompts will guide them to enter identifying information such as name and juror bar code number, which appears on the summons. This information is sent over a secured site to verify the identity of the juror and allow the juror access to make requests, such as completion of the juror questionnaire.

The Court is hopeful that this new system will ease the process of reporting for and rescheduling jury duty for area residents, including our Court employees! Many thanks go to the Jurors Office and IT Division staff who developed the site.

The new, secured site is located at:

<http://www.dccourts.gov>, then select the *Juror Services Quick Link* under Superior Court

OR

<https://www.dccourts.gov/secure/jurorservices/juror/index.jsp>

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Superior Court of DC Juror Services homepage. The address bar shows the URL: <https://www.dccourts.gov/secure/jurorservices/juror/index.jsp>. The page features a blue header with the Superior Court of DC logo and the text "Superior Court of DC Juror Services". Below the header, there is a "Welcome" section with a brief introduction to the site's purpose. A list of options is provided for users to select: "Last date of service", "Juror Questionnaire", "Next scheduled date of service", and "Deferment options". At the bottom of the page, contact information for the Moultrie Courthouse is listed, along with links for Feedback, Accessibility, Privacy & Security, and Terms & Conditions.

JUDGE KEARY SPEAKS WITH AND HEARS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Since becoming the Presiding Judge of the East of the River Community Court (ERCC) on February 15, 2005, Judge Ann O'Regan Keary (who is also the Deputy Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division) has been speaking at community meetings held in neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River. So far Judge Keary has spoken at a meeting of the 6th Police District Citizens Advisory Council, 7th Police District Citizens Advisory Council, Police Service Area 701, and Fairlawn Citizens Association. And she will continue to speak at community meetings. Of note, community residents have expressed openly their deep appreciation of Judge Keary's presence. They have repeatedly stated that it really means something when they see a judge interacting with their community and in their neighborhood. Residents like the fact that Judge Keary is coming to their community meetings to let them know about the ERCC's problem-solving approach to low-level crime. They like the fact that the Court is showing a desire to learn more about their neighborhoods and their community concerns.

Already familiar with several neighborhoods East of the River due to her many years working as a lawyer at St. Elizabeth's Hospital before she became a judge, Judge Keary has enjoyed the opportunity to have direct contact with community residents. "When you attend these community meetings, you get a vivid picture of the significant impact that crime, even low-level misdemeanors, has on the quality of life for the residents of many of our most vulnerable neighborhoods," Judge Keary explained.

As Co-Chair of the D.C. Courts' Strategic Planning Leadership Council, Judge Keary noted that the East of the River Community Court is one of the Court's best programs for achieving the fifth goal of the Courts' 2003 Strategic Plan, "Building Public Trust and Confidence."

Judge Keary's attendance at community meetings (along with the attendance at community meetings by the ERCC Community Court Coordinator, Michael Francis, and representatives of ERCC's partner agencies such as the United States Attorney's Office, Pretrial Services Agency, Superior Court Trial Lawyers Association, and Criminal Justice Coordinating Council) is all part of the ERCC's ongoing community engagement efforts. These efforts, which have also included interviewing community stakeholders, conducting focus groups, and holding community forums, are designed to establish and strengthen relationships with community residents. In addition, this community outreach will provide the Court with information that will help the ERCC achieve the goals of enhancing the quality of life of East of the River neighborhoods and enhancing the operations and effectiveness of the community court programs.

DELEGATION FROM QATAR VISITS COURTHOUSE

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

On June 14, 2005, Chief Judge Rufus King, Judge Brook Hedge, and Mr. Greg Hale, IJIS Project Manager, met with a delegation from Qatar, a country located on the Persian Gulf, adjacent to Saudi Arabia. The delegation, led by Sheik Abdulaziza A. Rahman H. A. Al-Thani, included four judges, one of whom is working for the Qatar Courts "on loan" from Egypt.



Delegates pose with Judge Hedge in front of the Courthouse.

The group visited the Superior Court to observe the use of CourtView, the case management software being implemented in the IJIS project. The meeting included a demonstration of the Superior Court's version of CourtView and a discussion of implementation methods for a similar system in Qatar.

Several years ago, the Emir of Qatar established a constitutional form of government in the country, similar to that of the United States, which includes a Judicial Branch. The judiciary is making plans to develop a "paperless court" now that they are going to a computerized system of records and data. The government of Qatar hired BearingPoint and Maximus to develop and install CourtView, in Arabic, for their court system.

In between CourtView sessions, the group observed the Civil Clerks' Office in action and gathered for a group photograph in front of the Moultrie Courthouse.

(Special thanks to Judge Hedge for background information on the event!)

NCPC APPROVES JUDICIARY SQUARE MASTER PLAN

At its August 4, 2005, meeting, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved the Judiciary Square Master Plan, prepared by the D.C. Courts at the request of the NCPC. Judiciary Square is an important, historic green space originally identified in Pierre L'Enfant's 1791 plan for the Nation's Capital. The Square, located on high ground between Capitol Hill and the White House, was originally planned to be the site of the U.S. Supreme Court. Although the Supreme Court was located in the Capitol until the 20th century, Judiciary Square has housed courts since the 1820's when court operations moved into the Old Courthouse, which remains the centerpiece of Judiciary Square.

As the Courts prepared to restore the Old Courthouse and to modernize Buildings A and B, which date from the 1930's, the NCPC requested that the Courts prepare a master plan to coordinate the Courts' capital projects with other development in the square. The Judiciary Square Master Plan, essentially an urban renewal plan for the Square, is the result of a great deal of research, coordination, and compromise with our neighbors.

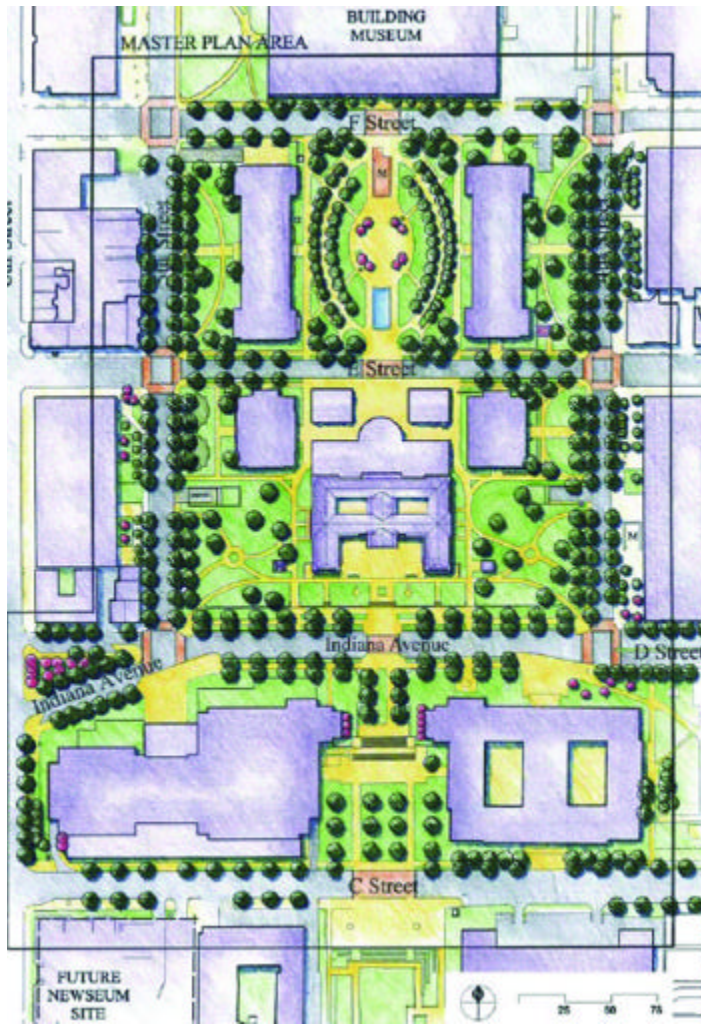
The Courts, with experts from Gruzen Samton LLP, Metropolitan Architects and Planners, and Karn, Charuhas, Chapman & Twohey Inc., began work on the Judiciary Square Master Plan in January 2003. Historic ele-

ments were identified; traffic patterns were studied; and existing conditions were documented. An Environmental Assessment and the historic review process were conducted. The project brought together the U.S. General Services Administration, the District government, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, and the local community,

like green space for public enjoyment, while reflecting the important public business conducted here. It seeks to define more strongly the perimeter of Judiciary Square through a combination of landscape and open space treatments that enhance its historic character. The plan also seeks to resolve technical issues, such as

access, service, circulation, and security.

It is a broad plan that lays out many elements to improve Judiciary Square. For example, the Master Plan removes surface parking, including the lots outside of Buildings A and B, replacing them with an underground garage. Several years in the future, this employee garage is to be located between 4th Street and Building B. The Master Plan narrows E Street, providing space for additional trees while making it easier for the public and court staff to cross this busy thoroughfare. It also narrows Indiana Avenue and reduces street parking, in favor of a municipal garage for the police officers who now park there. It maintains the lovely, curved pathways that cross Judiciary Square and recommends improved



Judiciary Square Master Plan

including the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, the National Park Service, and the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, Inc. in a collaborative effort to resolve the complexities of this important urban site. The NCPC approved a draft Judiciary Square Master Plan in July 2003.

The Master Plan envisions a Judiciary Square returned to a park-

landscaping. The Master Plan lays out security elements, such as a plinth wall that takes advantage of the sloping ground in the Square.

The improvements envisioned in the Judiciary Square Master Plan will be implemented over time. As Chief Judge Wagner told the NCPC, we look forward to the realization of the vision.

D.C. COURT OF APPEALS RESTORATION PROJECT: CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

By Marie Robertson, Executive Office

Courthouse staff and visitors have undoubtedly noticed the construction fences and mounds of dirt rising in the southern end of Judiciary Square. They are part of the Old Courthouse Restoration Project, which has two main construction phases: restoration of the Old Courthouse itself and the Old Courthouse Garage.

Old Courthouse

Following many months of design work by Beyer Blinder Belle and approvals from the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, the construction phase of the Old Courthouse Restoration began in March 2005 with the removal of hazardous materials. This work was completed in July 2005.

The next step is to hire a contractor for the major construction work: building the new entrance and the new ceremonial courtroom, restoring the interior and exterior, and building the offices, chambers, and courtrooms that will be inside the existing building. This work will also include meeting ADA accessibility and fire safety standards. The Courts have solicited bids for this work and expect to select a contractor in September.



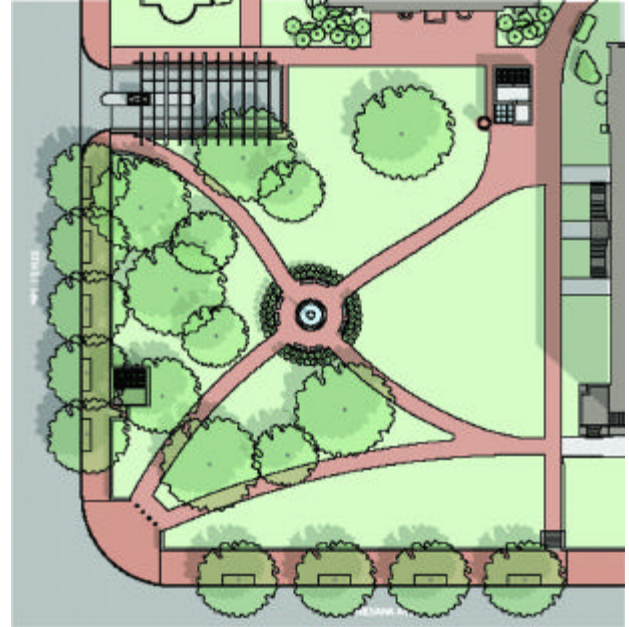
New Main Entrance of the Court of Appeals

Old Courthouse Garage

More visibly, the construction of the new garage for the Old Courthouse is progressing. The garage will replace the surface parking lot north of the Old Courthouse, as the new entrance to the Court of Appeals will be in that area.

The official groundbreaking ceremony for the garage was held in April, but the heavy equipment and visible construction began more recently, after all the needed

plans and permits were complete. During the construction, the Darlington Memorial Fountain, the golden statue of Diana, will be removed and restored. Once construction is complete, the statue will be returned. The nineteenth century brick ventilation shaft, currently covered with ivy, will also be removed, restored, and returned to serve as an exhaust shaft.



Old Courthouse Garage Plan

Like the existing surface lot, the garage will be shared with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces (USCAAF), which will occupy about 25% of the 219 parking spaces. Vehicles will enter the garage from 5th Street, and it will be connected underground to both the Old Courthouse and the USCAAF.

After construction is complete, the park above the garage will be reconstructed in accordance with the Judiciary Square Master Plan and will be very similar to what was there before construction began. Trees will be planted along the street and within the park. Grass will be planted, creating an open, green area. A plinth wall, similar to a low retaining wall, will line the sidewalks to provide security.

The Old Courthouse Restoration Project, which will return this architectural jewel and historic landmark to use as a courthouse, is scheduled to be complete in December 2007.

FIELD TRIP TO THE COURTHOUSE

By Meredith J. Saladyga, Executive Office Intern

Third-graders from Phoebe Hearst Elementary School in Northwest Washington joined Judge Josey-Herring for a mock trial at the Superior Court in June. The program focused on whether Larry the Litterbug was guilty of littering fast-food restaurant wrappers on the students' school grounds. The day included a trip to the Executive Office for a few pictures and pizza. Court staff enjoyed seeing the bright and smiling young faces on a rainy day!



Cont. from page 2.

rapid and efficient disposition of foster care cases.

The Superior Court was selected as the location for the public announcement of the new curriculum in large part because of the significant improvements the Court demonstrated in the management of foster care cases in recent years. These positive outcomes are a direct result of the implementation of the Family Court, led by Judge Lee Satterfield, and the “one family, one judge” focus of by the Court. Tommy Wells, Executive Director of the Consortium for Child Welfare, observed that the Superior Court, with the Family Court in action, has seen a notable increase in the number of adoptions per year of children coming through the foster care system, to note one accomplishment. The Superior Court has impressed many with its handling of foster care cases. Howard Davidson, Director of the ABA Center on Children and the Law, noted that “The Family Court for the District of

Columbia ... has become a model for court, agency, and community partnerships” in the speedy resolution of such cases.

Chief Judge Rufus King and Judge Satterfield, Presiding Judge of the Family Court, also spoke at the event. Both Judges emphasized the importance of collaboration in improving the Nation’s child welfare system. Chief Judge King will lead a delegation from the Courts to a leadership summit this fall in Minneapolis, which focuses on the protection of children to further this effort. Congratulations to the Family Court for their continued hard work in serving these most important interests of the community!

NEW ARRAIGNMENT COURT COORDINATOR

The Criminal Division recently announced the promotion of Ms. Alicia Shepard to Arraignment Court Coordinator. Ms. Shepard began her career with the Superior Court in 1996 as a Court Aide, later moving to the position of Probation Assistant with the Social Services Division. In 1998, Ms. Shepard joined the Criminal Division as a Courtroom Clerk and later became the Victims Rights Coordinator

with the Quality Assurance Branch. Ms. Shepard also served as the Interim Arraignment Court Coordinator.

As the Arraignment Court Coordinator, Ms. Shepard will oversee the daily operation of C-10, the Arraignment/Presentment Court, and the Intake Office, coordinating work assignments and ensuring efficient courtroom operation. Congratulations, Ms. Shepard!

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

Dear Mr. Delaney,

This communication is in reference to an employee of the court. Seldom are persons commended for the exemplary job that they do. I felt that Ms. **Debra Johnson**, the Deputy Clerk in the Small Claims Division be recognized for being extremely helpful and informative in assisting my Mother and Myself in filing appropriate and concise paper work to the court. Ms. Johnson was professional and in a friendly manner gave the help that made an unnerving situation of the filing process very easy. I appreciate and believe the individuals that provide excellence in service be recognized. Please thank Ms. Johnson my behalf. I also would appreciate it if you would provide her with a copy of this letter. Thank You.

Billy Becker 6-7-05

Ms. Grimes -

I just wanted to thank you for your help in gathering the full transcript for our case (M-13158-04).

Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Chelsea Drew
-Assistant to Billy Becker

RE: Letter of Commendation for
Mr. Houmehr Aghabozorgi

Dear Ms. Barnett:

I write to commend Mr. Aghabozorgi for the professionalism, knowledge and courtesy he demonstrated in dealing with me on June 21, 2005. I called to learn more detail about the process for honoring a subpoena from another jurisdiction. Mr. Aghabozorgi was extremely helpful and knowledgeable about the topic, and he patiently explained the documents, fees, and process involved. In the end, I am sure that he saved both me and your office time and frustration by ensuring that I had all of the information I needed for doing the job right the first time.

Perhaps just as important as Mr. Aghabozorgi's knowledge and professionalism was his courtesy and willingness to help. I, along with all of the other attorneys in my firm greatly appreciate this kind of service, and we hope that Mr. Aghabozorgi remains with the D.C. Superior Court for a long time to come.