

E-SJI News

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FY 2009 2nd QUARTER APPLICATIONS AND STATUS OF APPROPRIATIONS

SJI received 19 grant applications requesting a total of **\$674,701** for the 2nd quarter of FY 2009. The Board will meet on April 24, 2009, to make decisions on grant awards for the 2nd quarter. The results of this Board meeting will be available the following week.

SJI is currently operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) (P.L. 110-329) through March 6, 2009. While under a CR, the Board of Directors will approve new grant requests for FY 2009, but will not make any awards until SJI's final appropriation is available.

On February 25, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act (H.R. 1105). The Omnibus includes \$4.1 million for SJI in FY 2009; an increase of \$340,000 over FY 2008. It is expected that the Senate will take up the Omnibus Bill next week.

FEDERAL IMMIGRATION POLICY & THE STATE COURTS

The Center for Public Policy Studies (CPPS), has recently released a document that includes essential questions and answers on federal immigration law/policy and the impact on state courts. Specifically, the Q&A document addresses: 1) the impact of state and local court actions have on the effectiveness of federal immigration policy; 2) the impact of federal immigration law/policy on the state courts and other local justice agencies; 3) why it is difficult to get the immigrant composition of state and local court cases; 4) what the SJI Strategic Initiatives Grants (SIG) program is doing to help the state courts with immigration issues; and 5) the projected outputs from the SIG pilot sites. **(continued on page 2)**

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The document can be found on the SJI website:

[http://www.sji.gov/PDF/Federal Immigration Policy and the State Courts.pdf](http://www.sji.gov/PDF/Federal_Immigration_Policy_and_the_State_Courts.pdf)

SJI began using the Strategic Initiatives Grants (SIG) program in FY 2008 to address immigration issues in the courts at a national impact level. Two grants were awarded; one to the CPPS; and another to support a collaborative effort between the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and the National Judicial College (NJC).

STRATEGIC PLANNING PRODUCES SIGNIFICANT RESULTS FOR TWO MICHIGAN COURTS



The 20th Circuit Court and Ottawa County, Michigan, Probate Court received initial funding from SJI in 2004 to begin a comprehensive strategic planning project. This project built on previous strategic planning efforts, to include the Visioning and Strategic Planning Core Competency Guidelines published by the National Association for Court Management (NACM). Since 2004, the two courts have remained focused on their strategic priorities, and have successfully implemented the strategic plan. A recent article in *Court Manager* (Volume 23, Issue 2) describes the strategic planning experiences of these two courts, including a description of the planning and implementation processes they used, and lessons learned. With NACM's permission, the article has also been made available on the SJI website:

[http://www.sji.gov/PDF/Strategic Planning 20th Circuit Court and Ottawa Co.pdf](http://www.sji.gov/PDF/Strategic_Planning_20th_Circuit_Court_and_Ottawa_Co.pdf)

SJI CONTINUES TO SUPPORT COURTS IN U.S. TERRITORIES



In addition to grant funding to the 50 states, SJI has also supported numerous grants to courts located in U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam. SJI grants are vital to these courts, as they seek to improve their judiciary and provide access to justice with limited resources. For example, SJI provided grant funding to Guam for the reorganization of the judiciary following enactment of federal legislation recognizing the Guam Supreme Court as the appellate court for Island residents, and vesting all administrative authority of the judicial branch in the Chief Justice. (continued on page 3)

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The State Justice Institute is a private, non-profit corporation established by Federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in state courts, and foster innovative, efficient solutions to common issues faced by all courts. SJI is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

A recent SJI grant to Puerto Rico helped establish a judge mentoring program for newly appointed judges, and judges who are transferred from other duties. This project also helped the Judicial Academy of Puerto Rico to meet its mandate of providing professional development and training to the judiciary per the Commonwealth's Judiciary Act of 2003. While support to the U.S. territories is a very small component of SJI's grant programs, SJI will continue to fund worthwhile projects that benefit these courts.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next grant and scholarship application deadline: May 1, 2009 (3rd Quarter, FY 2009).
- The FY 2009 SJI [Grant Guideline](#) is available on the SJI website.
- All SJI forms are available on the website under the following tab: <http://www.sji.gov/forms.php>.

