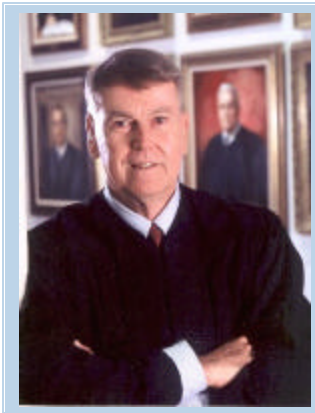


# FULL COURT PRESS

## *A Message from Chief Justice Anstead*



As we go into the summer, we should reflect on the state of Florida's justice system and prepare for future challenges.

As you know, the recent legislative sessions brought our courts some good news and some bad news. While our legislators were able to adopt a satisfactory plan for Revision 7 and identify the courts' core elements and the counties' local requirements, the new year's budget unfortunately cut positions and many proven children's programs.

The courts faced another challenge recently when Robin L. Lubitz resigned in June. The Supreme Court was faced with a tough decision: who would be the next State Courts Administrator? Well, we didn't have to look far and, fortunately, Lisa Goodner accepted the position. Lisa exemplifies the true Florida patriot and has served the Branch long and well. She is a person who deeply believes in justice for all, and will go to great lengths to ensure it happens. She has long represented the courts on Revision 7 funding issues beginning with the Con-

stitutional Revision Commission's consideration of the issue. She will continue to serve us well.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to praise Rob Lubitz for his contributions to Florida's justice system. During his tenure Rob made significant strides including: assisting the courts through the Revision 7 legislation; making diversity matters in OSCA a priority; reorganizing the OSCA; assisting in the restructure of the courts system committees; addressing environmental issues within the Supreme Court Building; releasing the 2002 Florida State Courts System Annual Report; and re-publishing the Full Court Press Newsletter. Rob, thank you for all you have done, and we wish you well.

These are trying times for us, but we must not lose sight of our responsibilities to Florida's citizens. We must continue to provide our people efficient and high quality service. I know you all are dedicated to "equal justice under law" and that is why Florida will continue to rank at the top when it comes to assuring justice for our citizens. Thank you for your passion.

### **What's Inside....**

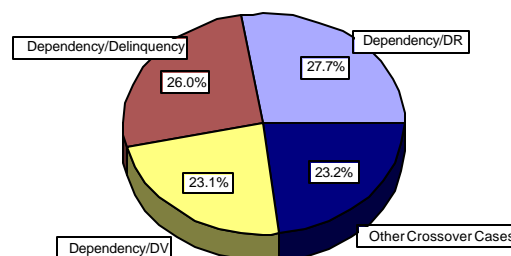
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## Family Court Pilot Projects

By Traci Paterson, Senior Court Analyst I, Office of Court Improvement

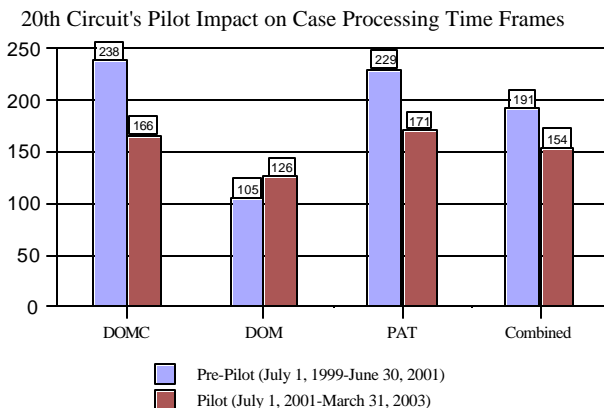
In 1999, the Florida Legislature authorized the expenditure of \$500,000 from the Family Courts Trust Fund to implement model pilot projects. The Sixth and Twentieth judicial circuits were the recipients of approximately \$200,000 and \$150,000 of Model Family Court Implementation Grants when funding was awarded in FY 2000-01. The remaining \$150,000 was distributed as Focus Grants to the Third, Seventh and Tenth judicial circuits. The Sixth and Twentieth judicial circuits have received continuation funding since the inception of the pilot projects. For FY 2003-04 the circuits were approved to receive funding to run their pilots for six months, from July 1-December 31, 2003; however, due to revenue shortfalls in the Family Courts Trust Fund, the full amount of funding to be received by each circuit may not be available. OSCA will conduct revenue analysis in early fall to determine whether there are sufficient funds to continue the pilot agreements through December 2003.

Sixth Judicial Circuit's Model Family Court  
Crossover Cases



The Sixth Circuit's model project involved establishing a unified family court (UFC) consisting of four judges in Pinellas County and a UFC with one judge in east Pasco County. The Pinellas UFC focused on children and families with the greatest need with the portal of entry being delinquency and dependency case filings. Related cases involving the same family, such as dissolution of marriage, domestic violence, criminal and probate proceedings, were either coordinated or reassigned to the UFC judge after being identified by a case management team. The East Pasco UFC established a case manager position that works closely with the clerk of court and the UFC judge to identify cases involving the same family in order to create an early disposition calendar, review all intake forms, coordinate related cases and make appropriate referrals.

The Twentieth Circuit's model project focused on implementing all the key components of a UFC in Lee County to coordinate and track cases to reduce unnecessary court appearances by families, in addition to developing an automated case management information system. The Twentieth's UFC instituted differentiated case management tracks with corresponding appropriate time frames: **immediate** (domestic violence temporary injunctions, emergency shelter petitions, temporary support hearings within 24 hours); **fast track** (simplified dissolutions, cases involving stipulations and settlement agreements to be finalized within 30 days); **standard** (cases with no standout issues but no agreements in place to be referred to alternative dispute resolution) and **high conflict** (contested cases with unsuccessful ADR attempts, emotionally charged parties, or cases with numerous unresolved issues that may be intertwined with other cases involving the same family).



As part of their pilot project funding, the circuits were required to collect information on case characteristics and case processing time frames, in part to yield more information on judicial workload for families identified for a UFC docket. In the graph located on the prior page, you will find summary information obtained from the two model pilot projects. The Sixth Circuit data in the table illustrate case characteristics that comprise their UFC pilots. The frequency of families having case filings in other divisions of court concurrently or within recent time frames of occurrence strongly supports the need for collaboration on the use of community resources. In addition, the ability to identify families creates the opportunity to develop case management systems that reduce multiple appearances at different court hearings and minimizes the occurrence of conflicting court orders when families and their issues are coordinated. The Twentieth Circuit data shows the impact of the pilot on case processing time frames.

## **Improving Florida's Jury System**

### **Fiscal Necessity and Continued Responsibility**

By Greg Cowan, Court Operations Consultant and Greg Youchock, Chief, Office of Court Services

Appropriations to the State Courts System by the Florida Legislature to fund juror and witness expenses remained constant at just over \$5.1 million from FY 1997-98 through FY 2002-03. As with many appropriations in this year's budget, however, this fund sustained a reduction for FY 2003-04. Specifically, the fund incurred a \$600,000 reduction with an annual appropriation of approximately \$4.5 million.

The dollars in this fund are primarily expended on per diem for petit jurors. A proportionately small number of these dollars are expended on per diem for grand jurors as well as per diem and other expenses associated with witnesses, excluding expert witnesses.

Given the proportion of these dollars expended on juror per diem and the reduction in the appropriation, the implications related to the expenditures for juror per diem for FY 2003-04 are apparent. Specifically, these expenditures must be contained.

A recent review conducted by staff in the Court Services section of the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA), at the direction of the Trial Court Budget Commission (TCBC), provides insight into containing these expenditures. The review centered on an analysis of data from the Jury Management System Reports provided by the clerks of the circuit court or the trial court administrators, as well as, data related to juror per diem expenditures maintained by the Finance and Accounting section of the OSCA.

Results of the review indicate that courts in most Florida counties are currently exceeding the standards for panel sizes and other related indices. Further, results indicate a positive correlation between these indices and the amount of dollars expended in juror per diem. That is, the more a court exceeds the standard, the greater the expenditure.

Questions have been raised regarding the applicability of the current standards for a number of key indices. Many of the standards have not been altered for over a decade and considerable changes, such as the change in the source list from the voter registration to the driver's license database, have occurred during this period.

Notwithstanding these issues, the results of the review directed by the TCBC indicate further efficiencies may be achievable in the current jury management systems. Specifically, efforts to minimize the number of people to be brought in to serve as potential jurors should be pursued. Such efforts may include, among others, the review of procedures and data associated with the summoning of jurors, improving trial prediction, changing the number of prospective jurors reporting based on trial prediction, and a review of data associated with juror excusals.

Pursuing these efforts may not only provide fiscal benefits, but also improve juror satisfaction. Research indicates that juror satisfaction is related to the effective management of juror time and the opportunity afforded jurors to participate in the court process. By minimizing the number of people brought in to serve, courts should be able to better manage juror time and increase juror participation. For this process to work, cooperation and communication between the judges conducting trials and their respective jury managers are required.



In a separate report, the Jury Innovations Committee chaired by Third DCA Judge Robert Shevin highlighted both the reduction in juror per diem and the increase in juror satisfaction as benefits of minimizing the number of people brought in to serve. That Committee recommended that courts "should determine the minimally sufficient number of jurors needed to accommodate trial activity.

This information and appropriate management techniques should be used to adjust the number of individuals summoned for jury duty."

Minimizing the number of people brought in to serve as jurors is also consistent with objectives stated in *Horizon 2004: The 2002-2004 Operational Plan for the Florida Judicial Branch*. As expressed in the plan, "[e]fforts to improve Florida's jury system, including steps to decrease demands placed on citizens' time and to enhance the meaningful participation of jurors in the judicial process, should continue."

## **Eighteenth Circuit Holds Dependency Court Improvement Summit**

Hoping to improve the manner in which abused, abandoned or neglected children move through the court system, **Circuit Judge Lisa Davidson** recently held an intensive eight-hour training program for professionals involved in the dependency court system.

The Dependency Court Improvement Summit, the first of its kind in Brevard County, brought together a host of experts with tremendous knowledge and real world experience. Among the distinguished speakers were Deborah O. Day, Psy.D., Kathryn Kuchnle, Ph.D., Joel D. Shuy, Psy.D., Jennifer Taylor, Esquire, and Tom Salette, Senior Human Services Program Specialist with the Department of Children and Families.

Summit speakers provided the latest research and in-depth information on the following topics:

- Domestic Violence and its Effect on Children;
- Child Support and Caregiver Funds;
- Sexual Abuse: Perpetrators and Victims; and
- Co-occurring Disorders.



Circuit Judge Lisa Davidson addresses the Summit Participants

In addition to the seminars, the demanding syllabus included a working lunch and highly interactive breakout sessions where participants addressed specific problems and developed recommendations for improvements. Participants reconvened for a final plenary session where facilitators from each breakout group outlined their discussions and shared their findings. Those in attendance also received a wealth of curricular material and continuing education credit for their various professions.

The training involved months of planning and additional work for Judge Davidson, but with 170 participants benefiting from the curriculum, it was clearly worth the effort. **Dependency General Master Valerie Brown, Trial Court Staff Attorney Ashley Hardee, Guardian Ad Litem Attorney George Paulk, Senior Deputy Court Administrator Susan Phillips, Contract Attorney Kelly Swartz, and Department of Children and Families' Attorney Kelly McKibben**, all members of the Summit steering committee, contributed to the event's success - bringing their individual skills and expertise to the extensive planning process.

## Sixth Judicial Circuit Donates Computers For Tarpon Springs Youth Program

Chief Judge David A. Demers of the Sixth Judicial Circuit announced that the circuit has transferred ownership of more than 20 computers and assorted peripherals to the Tarpon Springs Police Department's Cops & Kids program.

The equipment, which has been replaced within the circuit by more up-to-date equipment and was considered surplus, will be used in the police department's program that teaches youths how to build, use, repair and update computer equipment. The program also lends computers to economically disadvantaged youths for use in their school work.



Judge Demers chats with one of the program participants.

## Fourth DCA Donates Computers to Schools

When the Fourth District Court of Appeal (DCA) upgraded its automation system, it was left with the question of how to dispose of its older Intergraph PCs. The court decided that the best place for them was in the hands of students and teachers. The court donated the PCs to different schools within the three circuits served by the Fourth DCA. Limited access to computers by schools was used as part of the criteria.

Chief Judge Mark Polen noted that dwindling financial resources raise the public's expectation that public dollars will be wisely used and stated, "Providing these computers to our students and teachers is good public policy. It's what the taxpayer expects of us." Dr. Arthur Johnson, Superintendent for Palm Beach County schools, agreed, commenting upon receiving the donation that, "Parental, community and business involvement with the education process is vital to student academic success."



Chief Judge Mark Polen



## New Program Offers Hope for Mentally Ill Defendants

By Michelle Kennedy, Communications Director, 18th Judicial Circuit

For decades, the intersection of mental illness and criminal justice has been a busy one. Several developments account cumulatively for the current involvement by persons with mental illness in the American criminal justice systems. The deinstitutionalization movement in mental health during the 1960's and 1970's diverted greater numbers of persons with serious mental illness into the community. As the hoped-for community-based mental health treatment system was not effectively realized, by default the criminal justice system increasingly encountered individuals who were not able to function acceptably and independently in the community.

People with severe mental illness frequently have contact with police for disruptive behavior or minor infractions that occur because they are experiencing psychiatric symptoms or social disruptions related to their disability. These police encounters oftentimes result in arrest, leading to large numbers of mentally ill misdemeanants held in jails and processed through the court system. Although some people with mental illness do commit offenses for which incarceration is the most appropriate disposition, many are confined as a result of arrests for minor infractions. In these cases, confinement does not alleviate, and may exacerbate, the original problem - that is, an individual with mental illness is experiencing a crisis episode that has led to inappropriate behavior. If the goal is to reduce the likelihood of future episodes of that behavior, then mental health treatment may be a more appropriate disposition.

In 1997, Florida's Seventeenth Judicial Circuit pioneered the nation's first "mental health court," in a creative attempt to address the growing number of misdemeanants with mental illness. The mental health court concept seeks to expedite early intervention through timely identification of candidates. Mental health courts - which have spread across the nation, have been implemented in several Florida jurisdictions, and are now eligible for limited federal grant funds distributed through the Department of Justice - share the objective of preventing the jailing of individuals with mental illness and/or of securing their release from jail to appropriate services and support in the community.

Another core ingredient of the mental health court's approach is the emphasis on creating a new and more effective working relationship with mental health providers and support systems, the absence of which in part accounts for the presence of mentally ill offenders in the court and jail systems. Mental health courts provide supervision of participants that is more intensive than would otherwise be available, with an emphasis on accountability and monitoring of the participants' performance. The judge has a core role at the center of the treatment and supervision process, to provide the therapeutic direction and overall accountability for the treatment process.

Initially, the program was considered too costly and too complex for implementation in the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit. That is, until County Court Judge Cathleen Clarke took to the task. Judge Clarke presided over the inaugural session of Brevard County Mental Health Court in January 2003. Like its predecessor, it is designed to divert mentally ill or mentally retarded people from jail to appropriate treatment programs. While Judge Clarke is widely praised for her efforts, she insists she was merely a cheerleader. "Our task force had such incredible people on it," says Judge Clarke. "We definitely had the heavy hitters involved."



Executive Assistant Public Defender Blaise Trettis represents a mentally ill defendant before Judge Clarke

Those "heavy hitters" helped guide the program from concept to docket by contributing their considerable knowledge and expertise. Judge Clarke credits Wayne Holmes, Chief of Operations for the State Attorney's (continued on next page)

Office and Executive Assistant Public Defender Blaise Trettis, for laying the foundation for mental health court. "They knew the pitfalls from setting up drug court," says Judge Clarke. "Their experience saved us a lot of time and frustration." Pam Hasselbring, mental health coordinator for the Brevard County Housing and Human Services Planning Team, provided research, statistics, and funding estimates. Public Defender James "J.R." Russo allocated funds for the critical case management position.

However, Judge Clarke reserves her highest praise for former Chief Judge Bruce Jacobus. "We would not have mental health court if not for Judge Jacobus," says Clarke. "He thought it was the right thing to do and used his leadership position to make it happen."

What has happened so far is promising. The jail now screens more thoroughly for individuals with mental illness. Lisa Krupa is on board as the court's full-time coordinator. Law enforcement agencies receive special training on handling the offenders with mental illness. Doctoral students from Florida Institute of Technology volunteer their services. And, of course, the state attorney and public defender play key roles in the courtroom. The specialized court can provide faster case processing times, improved access to public mental health treatment services, and reduce recidivism.

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## Eleventh Judicial Circuit Employees Go Above & Beyond Their Job Duties

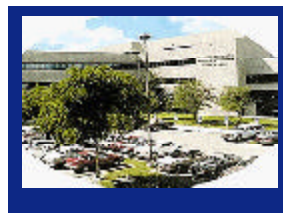
By Victoria Arias, Media Relations Specialist, 11th Judicial Circuit

As the largest circuit in the State of Florida, one might think that working in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Monday through Friday would be tiring enough. But, for some very special employees it's the work they do as volunteers "off the clock" that proves to be just as rewarding. The Eleventh Judicial Circuit recently recognized members of its staff who selflessly dedicate themselves to those who need help, a hand, or a hug. By volunteering their time and talents to those in need, these very special volunteers impact the lives of others!

The Office of Government Liaison & Public Relations', **Vivian Gonzalez**, works on reading fundamental skills with her "little brother," Jonathan. Vivian has been a BIG SISTER for three years. She takes part in the T.A.G.S. Program (Taking A Giant Step) - a school-based mentoring program of the BIG BROTHERS/ BIG SISTERS of Greater Miami.

**Annette Lizardo and Kris Lukasik** from the Legal Department share duties at Santa Clara Elementary School. Together they participate in the BIG BROTHERS/ BIG SISTERS of Greater Miami's In-School Mentoring Program. Each week Annette and Kris help their little brothers and sisters in reading fundamentals.

**Abby Cynamon**, also from the Legal Department, is a volunteer member of the Family Advisory Council at Miami Children's Hospital. The Council is composed of parent members and hospital staff whose goal is to help improve communication between the parents of pediatric patients and the hospital staff.



**Jennifer Glazer-Moon**, Director of the Administrative Services Division, is a mentor with the University of Miami's School of Business. Her protégés have been students in business administration and public administration. Jennifer assists students in the transition from college/graduate school into the workplace.

**Michele L. Zukovich**, M.S. of the Court Evaluation Unit volunteers her time with the Women of Tomorrow Mentor and Scholarship Program. The Program consists of “the most distinguished professional women in South Florida who are dedicated to improving the self-esteem of future lives of teenage girls in the area.”

Another member of our Legal Department, **Lucretia Pitts**, volunteers her time with students from Lillie C. Evans Elementary School. Lucretia is an attorney/mentor who volunteers her time to help broaden the students’ perspectives of the available opportunities for their lives.

She’s more than the AOC’s receptionist she’s **Saki Alonso**, Volunteer Coach and President of Miami Xtreme Youth Football League Cheerleading Association! The organization is a spin off of the Pop Warner League and with the help of the Orange Bowl Miami Xtreme Youth Football League was able to get started. The Orange Bowl/FedEx is a non-profit organization that oversees leagues, holds competitions and playoffs.

**Isabell Martin**, Administrative Assistant from the Court Evaluation Unit, has for the last nine years read, recorded and produced a weekly radio broadcast on WLRN. This special service is provided for the benefit of people who are sight-impaired. The broadcast is transmitted 24 hours a day and includes readings of supermarket listings to poetry, to information about politics – and everything in between.

## What Happens to a Life That’s Been Touched by Volunteering?

By Victoria Arias, Media Relations Specialist, 11th Judicial Circuit

**Andrew Graubard** from Court Information Technology Services (CITS) knows first-hand how priceless and important being a volunteer is in the life a child. He was on the receiving end when, at five years old, his parents divorced. Being a single mom with two boys to raise, Andrew’s mother recognized the value of providing her children with a role model, so she enrolled Andrew and his brother in the BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS program. Little did she realize that the friendship her son made with Chuck Girard when he was just in kindergarten would last a lifetime, survive personal upsets, and cross many state lines.

Andrew’s first recollection of his BIG BROTHER Chuck, was that Chuck was “huge” standing over 6’ feet tall! Their relationship started with conversations on the phone that led to mini-trips and lots of teaching along the way. Lessons such as “respecting others” and “staying on the straight and narrow path.” Chuck worked on “odd jobs” with Andrew teaching him how to use a hammer and how to make things by hand. According to Andrew it was “a perfect match” and “one of the only constants in my life.” When Andrew turned seventeen, Chuck “the mentor” became Chuck the “best friend” and for the last twenty years, Andrew and Chuck have remained in each other’s lives via phone calls and emails.



“Chuck is the father I never had, the brother I always wanted and the best friend I couldn’t live without,” is how Andrew describes this special friendship and the positive impact Chuck has had on his life. He sums up what volunteering means to him, “it’s doing something for a much higher purpose.”



## Supreme Court Interpreter's Committee

Frank Funderburk, Senior Court Analyst I, Office of Court Services

As the Florida State Courts System continues to evaluate and move forward with the implementation of the Article V funding transition, a number of ancillary issues have arisen regarding the protection of due process rights for Florida's citizenry. One of the unresolved issues facing the court system involves identifying whether the need exists for a rule of court containing guidelines on the qualifications requirements, compensation and general use of foreign language court interpreters. In February 2003, Chief Justice Anstead appointed the Supreme Court Interpreter's Committee to make this determination. The Committee, comprised of five chief judges from a cross-section of Florida's judicial circuits, will submit its final report to the Court in October 2003. Committee Chair Joseph Farina, Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit, understands the importance of ensuring equal access to the courts for all of Florida's culturally diverse population. Given that Judge Farina hails from one of the most diverse areas of the state, he also understands the unique challenges the future will bring as non-English speaking populations grow throughout the state.

"As Florida's population continues to grow and becomes more diverse, trial courts across the state are experiencing an increased demand for foreign language interpreter services. It is critical that Florida's courts are prepared to serve the needs of those citizens unable to speak or understand English. The challenge will involve educating the judiciary on how to identify the need for these services, as well as on what constitutes the appropriate use of foreign language interpreters. This is not just a Central and South Florida issue anymore - it is a statewide issue. We hope the work of this committee will result in a better understanding of how these services can be effectively employed."



- Chief Judge Joseph Farina

To date, the Committee has met twice to consider information collected from a number of sources, including several member states of the National Center for State Courts' *Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification*. The Committee has reviewed the proposed budget for the current court interpreter testing program administered through the OSCA, as well as cost comparisons by language type, legal and practical need, population statistics and alternative funding sources. Ultimately, the Committee will use this and other relevant information to formulate its recommendations to the Supreme Court. As a part of its charge, the Committee is also considering the advisability of a formal court interpreter certification program for the State of Florida, as the current testing program does not offer certification.

The Supreme Court Interpreter's Committee membership includes Chief Judge Edward Fine (15<sup>th</sup> Circuit), Chief Judge Judy Pittman (14<sup>th</sup> Circuit), Chief Judge Manuel Menendez, Jr. (13<sup>th</sup> Circuit), Chief Judge Stan Morris (8<sup>th</sup> Circuit) and Chief Judge Joseph Farina, Chair (11<sup>th</sup> Circuit). OSCA staff Richard Cox, Lisa Bell, Frank Funderburk, and Gregory Youchock provide support to the Committee. Questions may be directed to Lisa Bell or Frank Funderburk at 850-922-5094.

## Eighth Judicial Circuit Holds Annual Dinner

On Thursday, June 12, the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association held its annual dinner, with Justice Fred Lewis as the keynote speaker. The dinner was held in the lobby of the Alachua County Courthouse Criminal Justice Center, which is due to open in January, 2004. Justice Lewis, his wife, Judy and daughter, Lindsay, sang "America the Beautiful" along with members of the bar association, as several members of the Eighth Judicial Circuit judiciary led the singing.



Members of the Eighth Judicial Circuit bench prepare to lead the singing of "America the Beautiful" at the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association's annual dinner on June 12, 2003. Pictured are Judge Robert Cates; Pan Zetler, outgoing president of the bar association; Judge Ysleta McDonald; Judge James Nilon; Judge Chester Chance; Judge Toby Monaco; Judge Elzie Sanders; and Judge David Glant.

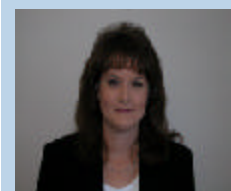
## Lisa Goodner Receives Kenneth R. Palmer Award

The Florida Conference of Circuit Judges has established the Kenneth R. Palmer Award of Distinguished Excellence in Judicial Administration. Lisa Goodner, then Deputy State Courts Administrator, was the first recipient of the award in June 2003. In presenting the award, Chief Judge Belvin Perry, Conference Chair, and Judge Susan Schaeffer, Chair of the Trial Court Budget Commission, praised Ms. Goodner's efforts in planning and advocating for implementation of Revision 7 - from the constitutional amendment's passage in 1998 through the 2003 legislative session.



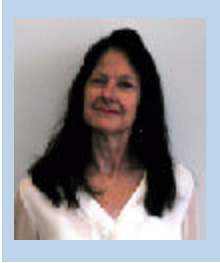
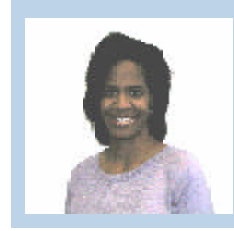
## Personnel Changes in OSCA

On January 1, 2003, Charlotte Jerrett was appointed to Director of Administrative Services. Ms. Jerrett has worked for OSCA for over nine years and most recently served as Budget Director for three years. Her knowledge and experience in the budget and administrative fields are an enormous asset to the State Courts System.



Dorothy Burke has assumed the position of Budget Services Manager in OSCA under the direction of Charlotte Jerrett, Director of Administrative Services. Dorothy has been the acting manager since March of this year. She has extensive budget experience and has worked closely with both the DCA Budget Commission and the Trial Court Budget Commission.

Lavitta Stanford joined OSCA on January 21, 2003 as the new Finance and Accounting Manager. Previously, Ms. Stanford worked for the Department of Financial Services in the Statewide Financial Reporting Section. She brings over thirteen years of government experience to the courts.



OSCA also announces the appointment of Laura Rush as the new General Counsel. As most of you know, Laura has been serving as Acting General Counsel since February of this year. Laura brings a wealth of legal experience with her, including nearly seven years with the OSCA, and has a deep understanding of the legal complexities of the State Courts System.

## Retirements

### After 146 years of working for the State they are calling it quits!

On June 11, Chief Justice Harry Lee Anstead and the Supreme Court honored five Tallahassee members retiring from the court system. Their years spent working for state government total 146! Justice Anstead acknowledged each of the retirees, telling stories that go along with the years of service. (You can only imagine the stories of 146 years spent at the Court!) Congratulations to:

**Sara Gainey** more than 47 years of service -- a term of service exceeding any prior employee or even Justice;  
**Nancy Shuford** nearly 28 years of service;  
**Barbara Maxwell** almost 25 years of service;  
**Ruth Sampson** almost 25 years of service; and  
**Sharon Ratliff** more than 21 years of service.



## In the Circuits...

<b>Anne Epstein</b>	Case Coordinator, 7th Circuit
<b>June Deckard</b>	Judicial Assistant, 1st Circuit
<b>Gwendolyn Roth</b>	Judicial Assistant, 1st Circuit

If you would like to have your retirement included in the *Full Court Press*, please email Jennifer Hirst at [hirstj@flcourts.org](mailto:hirstj@flcourts.org).

## Domestic Violence Court Assessment Project

by Joanne Snair, Senior Court Analyst II, Office of Court Improvement

In July of 2000, the Florida Supreme Court issued an Administrative Order directing the Family Court Steering Committee to conduct an assessment of how courts are handling domestic violence cases. The Steering Committee requested that the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) develop and implement a statewide domestic violence assessment. This effort was greatly assisted when in January, 2002, the OSCA was awarded a STOP Violence Against Women grant through the Department of Children and Families in the amount of \$237,000. The overall goal of the Domestic Violence Court Assessment was to document state judicial processes in civil domestic violence cases and to develop recommendations for model court practices. Data was collected through site visits, interviews, and observations as well as from case file reviews in 14 counties throughout Florida. The Domestic Violence Subcommittee of the Steering Committee on Families and Children in Court will conduct a further review of the assessment project's findings in order to develop additional recommendations and specific implementation guidelines. Below are the recommendations made by the Committee thus far.

### Recommendations

**Assistance should be provided to petitioners at intake and thereafter** to assist them in identifying the relevant aspects of their cases, preparing for court hearings, and considering whether additional legal avenues should be pursued to resolve other family law issues.

**Case management services should be provided to petitioners and respondents** to ensure that they are informed of court processes and hearings, receive information about and referrals to appropriate community resources, and to ensure that compliance with provisions of injunction orders is documented and enforced.

**Circuits and counties should develop mechanisms for effective interagency coordination** of processes and services.

**Courts may wish to consider placing more of an emphasis on respondent treatment and accountability** through inclusion of treatment provisions for respondents whenever appropriate and increased enforcement of compliance with required treatment programs.

**Timeliness of the court's actions should be emphasized** to avoid having substantial time pass between the filing of petitions or motions and the courts responses to those filings.

**Law enforcement agencies should make every effort to accomplish timely service** on respondents as well as rapid notification of the Clerks of the Court that such service has been accomplished.

**Key participants should avail themselves of training** related to the dynamics of domestic violence, dealing with angry individuals, and the laws, processes, and procedures related to domestic violence injunctions.

For a copy of the report in its entirety, please contact Joanne Snair at (850) 410-1889. It will be available on OSCA's website and in print toward the end of August.

## Telephone Committee Explores Options

By John Cook, Information Systems Support Manager, Information Systems Development

In an effort to reduce the cost of services and provide enhancements to the existing telecommunication systems located in the Supreme Court Building, the Supreme Court and OSCA established a telephone committee to conduct a review of new phone system technologies. Using the State Contract listing of telephone systems vendors, the telephone committee evaluated traditional PBX, key based systems and the newer Internet based technology known as Voice over Internet Protocol or (VoIP). Of the various technologies available, the committee recommended adoption of the new VoIP technology.

The committee unanimously agreed that the rationale behind converging traditional circuit-switched networks with the new packet networks is as compelling as ever. Savings can be realized by converting the traditional POTS ("plain ol' telephone system"), which use circuit-switched, voice-oriented network connections, over to the newer packet based digital networks, which leverage the use of the Internet Protocol. Realized savings are based on several factors including a highly competitive market, ability to leverage existing resources, and flexibility of the technology.

The technology market place is competitive. Although there are various ways to measure communications resources, there is no question that packet-based data communications is growing more rapidly than voice. Increased volume leads to a market favorable to competition, which in turn leads to consumer savings.

Today, many courthouses have an IP-based Local Area Network with staff proficient with Internet based technology. Merging voice onto the existing data/computer infrastructure minimizes the necessity of learning new technologies. This was realized in part over the past few years, as the State Courts System expanded the existing court network to accommodate a new Internet-based videoconferencing service. This integration provides reduced operating expenses as the courts adopt use of new multimedia technologies.

VoIP technology is flexible and can be customized to enhance productivity. As demonstrated by the personal computer (PC) industries, software continues to be instrumental in promoting new functionality. For example, as the dominant player in software and operating systems for PC's, Microsoft bundles many new multimedia capabilities into each new release of Windows. Windows XP includes a new multimedia communications product called Windows Messenger that provides instant text, voice, and video based communications. Moreover, Microsoft's real-time communications clients are now based on VoIP technology, allowing the computers to work with a variety of communications applications and telephone systems.



In June, Sprint demonstrated new PC-based service offerings, including web portal-based "follow-me" calling functionality and unified messaging, to name a few. These new features alone offer court personnel increased flexibility and productivity. For example, whereas traditional telephone systems require voice mail messages to be listened to using a telephone device, unified messaging on the new VoIP systems allows a user to read text voice mail on his/her email software program. Also, because the phone is, in essence, a digital computer, it is expected that as the technology matures, quality phone calls will be capable of being placed over any personal desktop or notebook computer not only from the office, but also from home or a hotel room.

Quality of services and availability are concerns people have in making changes to the telephone infrastructure. Skeptics believe that packet based communications are unable to provide for a quality conversations.



The quality of VoIP phone call, however, is comparable, if not better than, a POTS voice call. In fact, packet-based communications have become the normalcy of all voice calls over long distances for several years now. In addition, use of VoIP technology promotes high availability through a fault tolerant design of the Internet standards. With proper planning and design, Internet-based technologies can provide an important role without sacrificing quality or availability.

Benefits through integration and consolidation of information technology are expected for not only the user of the systems here in Tallahassee, but state-wide as well. According to local telecommunications representatives at the State Technology Office and Sprint, other local exchange service providers are gearing up to provide similar packet-based (Internet) telephony technology servicing governmental needs statewide.

Beginning in August, the Supreme Court and the State Technology Office will be participating in a joint pilot project to prove VoIP capabilities. Depending upon a successful outcome of the pilot project, the Supreme Court may decide to upgrade the POTS telecommunications infrastructure to provide VoIP support to all employees.

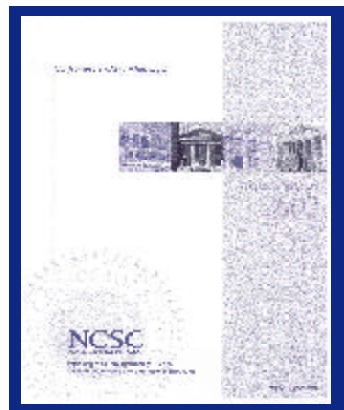
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## The National Center for State Courts' New State Court Trends Report Looks Further into Future

By Lorri Montgomery, Communications Manager, National Center for State Courts

The National Center for State Courts recently released its annual *2002 Report on Trends in the State Courts*, which for the first time includes *An Environmental Scan for State Courts, 2002*, as a way to provide a longer-range look to the future to help courts better anticipate and manage change.

For many years, the National Center has published the *Trends Report*, which profiles recent issues and developments, explains how they are relevant to the courts, and offers examples of how the courts can best deal with them. As significant as this information is, the *Trends Report* alone was not sufficient to assist courts in anticipating change and making strategic plans. Another resource was needed that would look farther into the future and assist courts in thinking and acting strategically before trends become a reality. Therefore, the National Center, with Futurist.com, prepared an environmental scan to complement the *Trends Report*. An environmental scan can help to recognize and to possibly influence trends before they affect the courts. These two documents were printed in one publication, which is available on the National Center's Web site at [www.ncsconline.org](http://www.ncsconline.org).



## Recent Appointments by Chief Justice Anstead

By Debbie Howells, Executive Assistant, Office of the State Courts

The District Court of Appeal (DCA) Budget Commission oversees the preparation and implementation of the district court component of the judicial branch budget. The following chief judges were recently appointed to serve on the Commission through June 30, 2005: Chairman **James R. Wolf** of the First DCA, **Chris W. Altenbernd** of the Second DCA, **Alan R. Schwartz** of the Third DCA, **Gary M. Farmer** of the Fourth DCA, and **Thomas D. Sawaya** of the Fifth DCA.

Chief Judge **Joseph Farina** of the Eleventh Circuit, Chief Judge **Robert Bennett** of the Twelfth Circuit, and Judge **Thomas Bateman**, of the Second Circuit were appointed to serve as the State Courts System representatives on the Article V Indigent Services Advisory Board. Pursuant to HB 113A, the purpose of the Advisory Board is to advise the Legislature on qualification and compensation standards for the entire range of due process services; take into consideration local variations and market conditions and availability of attorneys and other providers in making its recommendations; and advise the Legislature on cost containment.

Chief Judge **Belvin Perry** of the Ninth Circuit was designated to serve as the State Courts System's representative on the Clerk of Court Operations Conference. The Conference was established in HB 113A and given responsibility for recommending to the legislature changes in court-related fines, fees, services charges, and cost schedule; establishing a process for review and approval of clerk court-related budgets; certifying clerks deficits; performance and accountability measures and performance standards; and publishing a schedule of maximum fines, fees, service charges, and costs.

The following individuals were appointed to the Revision 7 Communication Advisory Group, which provides leadership to the Florida justice community on dispensing quality information in an effective way on the impact of Revision 7 and the corresponding urgent need to protect and maintain the outstanding services provided by our trial courts in local communities throughout Florida: Judge **Frederick Tygart**, Chair-Elect of the Florida Conference of Circuit Judges; Judge **A. B. Majeed**, President-Elect of the Florida Conference of County Court Judges; **Ms. Kelly Overstreet Johnson**, President-Elect of The Florida Bar; Judge **Gary Farmer**, President-Elect of the Florida Conference of District Court of Appeal Judges; and Judge **Paul Hawkes**, First District Court of Appeal.

In accordance with a recommendation by the Executive Committee of the Trial Court Budget Commission (TCBC) and revised rule 2.053, Rules of Judicial Administration, Judge **Nelly Khouzam**, Chair of the Florida Conference of Circuit Judges, and Judge **Jeffrey Arnold**, President of the Florida Conference of County Court Judges, were appointed as ex officio, nonvoting members of the TCBC.

Judge **Robert Rouse** of the Seventh Circuit and Judge **Sandy Karlan** of the Eleventh Circuit will serve as the State Courts System representatives on the Guardian ad Litem Qualifications Committee, which is responsible for recommending to the Governor a minimum of three candidates for the position of the Guardian ad Litem Executive Director.

**August**

- 2 - 8** National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks Annual Conference, Asheville, North Carolina
- 5** Trial Court Budget Commission Meeting, Tampa
- 7 - 12** American Bar Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California
- 14 - 16** Conference of Court Public Information Officers Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington
- 20 - 24** National Association of State Judicial Educators (NASJE) Annual Conference, Reno, Nevada
- 27 - 29** Dependency Court Improvement Summit, Orlando

**September**

- 1** Labor Day - Court Holiday
- 3 - 6** Florida Bar General Meeting of Sections and Committees, Tampa
- 7 - 10** Florida Conference of District Court of Appeal Judges' Education Program
- 12** Child Support Forum, Tampa
- 15 - 17** Florida College of Advanced Judicial Studies, Orlando

**Courtside  
Events**

**Harry Lee Anstead**, Chief Justice  
**Lisa Goodner**, State Courts Administrator  
**Jennifer Hirst**, Art Director & Editor

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