

JOURNAL

TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION

PROFESSIONALS MANAGING TEXAS COURTS

Volume 29, No. 2, April 2005



EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings:

The TACA Board of Directors met last week for our annual board retreat. Attending one of these has always been like getting a shot of adrenaline for me. I have always felt we get so much accomplished during our retreat. I come back to work feeling pumped and excited about what TACA has accomplished and how great the educational program will be. Unfortunately this year, I spent a day and a half in bed and visited the Galveston health clinic. Not fun at all when you are so excited to see your friends and get some much needed work done. Ed Wells, being the great person he is, did my talking for me in my presence and out. I can't report to you what all was accomplished since I was "under the weather," but knowing this wonderful group of people, I know all I had planned, plus much more was accomplished. Over the course of two and a half days, the Board, along with our two Curriculum Committee co-chairs, Cynthia DeJean and Sharon Jacquess, put together an excellent plan for the 2005 education conference, making the Dallas conference both educational and fun. Please consult the Journal for more information regarding the conference this year. We are continuing to move forward in our financial goals for TACA, and have met our financial obligations for last year. It is our goal to continue to provide quality education for our members. We can only accomplish this by maintaining a sound financial base.

I am looking at the thermometer on my computer which tells me it is 46 degrees outside. In just over three short months, it will be time for the Professional Development Program to be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, June 20-24, 2005 in Austin, Texas. If you have not participated in this program,

I encourage you to do so. If you have started and not finished, please make an effort to complete it. This is an excellent program sponsored by the Texas Center for the Judiciary, Inc. You will not only learn from the best, you will make friends and contacts that last a lifetime.



We have been trying since the first of October to get a contract from the San Luis Resort and Conference Center in Galveston, Texas. Unfortunately, they are not going to be able to meet the Association's needs. In an effort to keep rates reasonable for our members, the board has decided for 2006, we will sign a contract with the Omni Bayfront and Marina in Corpus Christi, Texas. The dates will be October 24-27, 2006. The 2007 conference will be held at the Omni San Antonio, October 9-12, 2007. Please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend.

This has been an exciting year for TACA. In addition to strengthening our education programs, we are trying to expand through partnerships. There are so many possibilities out there to provide each of us with knowledge and growth in the field of court administration.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, your board is here for you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrice 'Trisey' Eubanks".

Patrice "Trisey" Eubanks

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INSTITUTE FOR COURT MANAGEMENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

by
Kristy Harris

The mission of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) is to educate, inform, and support the management and leadership of the state courts. For those of us who strive to make their job a career – these programs may be for you. The two programs that ICM offers are the Court Management Program and the Court Executive Development Program.

Court Management Program

The Court Management Program (CMP) consists of two phases that address the training needs of the mid-level court administrator. Phase 1 courses are offered across the United States and are open to all. It is comprised of 5 courses that develop participants' knowledge, skills and abilities in areas such as caseload management, information technology, Court Performance Standards, fiscal management and human resources. These courses are identical to those of Phase 1 of the Court Executive Development Program.

The second phase of the Court Management Program is a one week course combining elements of leadership, management techniques, and specific court issues. This phase allows participants to interact as teams in order to understand the importance of good communication, allowing members to move to a higher level of critical thinking. At the conclusion of this seminar there is a formal graduation ceremony and awarding of CMP certificates.

Court Executive Development Program

The Court Executive Development Program (CEDP) consists of four phases used to develop and enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of court administrators. The phases build upon and challenge participants to develop analytical, administrative and communication skills. The courses are labor intensive and require dedication by its participants to understand their role within the court system. Admission into the program is limited to 30 participants annually.

Phase I of the Court Executive Development Program is identical to the courses offered in Phase 1 of the Court Management Program. Therefore, if you complete the Court Management Program and accepted into CEDP, you will have already accomplished the completion of Phase 1.

Phase II – *Leadership and Management in the Courts and Justice Environment* is a three week course offered in Williamsburg, Virginia, in June. Participants sharpen their conceptual and interpersonal skills while exploring the roles and purposes of courts, the external and internal environments in which they operate, and modern leadership and management theory and practice as applied to court management. From January until May, in preparation for their arrival for Phase II, students participate in online learning modules covering a broad array of topics.

Phase III – *Court Improvement Project* (Independent Study) – Phase III enhances the participants' analytical and writing skills. Each participant prepares a comprehensive research paper evaluating a key court function or proposed activity in their home jurisdiction. The research paper should reflect the equivalent of approximately fifty days of effort over a nine month period and be considered a master's level work.

Phase IV – *Concluding Seminar/Summation and Review* – During Phase IV, participants make an oral presentation of the results of their projects to their colleagues. Participants are challenged by their colleagues and a facilitator during the oral presentation.

During our TACA 2004 Education Conference, participants were surveyed as to an individual's vision of their future role. Attendees were split on whether they saw themselves taking on a leadership role for courts and the future. 56% of the participants responded that they believed they would or probably would assume leadership responsibilities. For the 56% of our members wanting more from their lives — the ICM programs would help open doors that you weren't even aware of. The following two articles were submitted by two graduates of the Court Management Program (CMP). One of these was submitted by a member that has been profiled in our TACA Journal — Tommy Munoz. For more information on these programs: www.ncsconline.org.

AROUND THE STATE IN A MINUTE

In Laredo, Webb County, the Honorable **Elma Teresa Salinas Ender**, Judge of the 341st District Court was sworn-in January 1, 2005, by the Honorable **George P. Kazen**, a Federal Court Judge. Judge Salinas Ender was sworn in for her fifth term in office. She was appointed in 1983 by Governor Mark White. She is the first Mexican American Woman District Judge in Texas and the United States. Also in Webb County, the Honorable **Oscar Hale**, Judge of the 406th District Court, sworn in January 1, 2005. This is Judge Hale's first term. The Honorable **Lorraine Raggio** was sworn in as Judge of the 162nd Civil District Court in Dallas County, January 1, 2005. **Tommy Munoz**, the senior court coordinator for Brazos County Court at Law #2, recently completed the Court Management Program of the Institute for Court Management. The Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct issued a public reprimand against District Judge **Luis Aguilar**, El Paso – for making sexist and derogatory remarks about women. **Alicia Key** has joined the Office of Attorney General as Director of Child Support. Key previously headed the Office of Court Administration. The Dallas Bar Association honored Judge **John Creuzot** of Criminal District Court No. 4, with the Martin Luther King Jr. Justice Award for establishing a diversion program for nonviolent defendants with addictions.

THE VALUE OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS, COURT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

By
Kristene K. Coe
Poulsbo, Washington

Several years ago, naïve and eager to advance, I jumped head first into a boiling pot. I accepted, without any hesitation, the position of "Interim Court Administrator" for my Court. Five years of college and ten years experience (six of which were back-up for this position), I had no doubt that I could perform this job with my eyes closed. I probably could have — in a bubble. Unfortunately, my predecessor, having been convicted of numerous felonies, left behind an auditor's nightmare, and worse, many betrayed, hurt, confused, disgusted and angry employees.

Overnight my world changed. My co-workers became "employees," my friends became rivals, and without warning, I found myself drowning in a sea of intertwining, often clashing, manipulative, patronizing, sometimes genuine, mostly hardworking, occasionally honest personalities. "Did I miss a class in school?" Painfully, I realized that no matter how qualified I was to do "the work;" none of my training had prepared me to do "the job."

I immediately registered for a course offered by the National Center for State Court's (NCSC) called "Managing Human Resources." I desperately needed some help reigning in this monster I had inherited. The course was incredible. It gave me so many tips, tools, and ideas; I was beside myself with relief. It was there that I learned about NCSC's Institute for Court Management (ICM) Programs. Becoming a "fellow" by completing the flagship "Court Executive Development Program" really appealed to me, however, the condensed "Court Management Program" easily met my more immediate needs.

It took me a little over two years to complete the program, from first class to graduation. The program consisted of two phases; phase I was a series of courses addressing the basic

aspects of Management in a Court environment. Not just the "same ole stuff," but "the same ole stuff" with fresh, up to date, information and ideas. Perhaps more importantly, though, the courses provided a forum to discuss pressing issues, draw upon the expertise of others, and foster invaluable relationships with other leaders in our field.

Phase II was spent at the National Center for State Courts Headquarters, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Wow, where more appropriate to gather leaders of a profession, than a place where they can witness their field in both the past, Colonial Williamsburg, and the future, Courtroom 21, within minutes of each other?

I gained an abundance of knowledge, information, and ideas from the courses offered in phase I. I made friends, shared stories, and had fun, but phase II in Williamsburg, was more than a course, Williamsburg was a "lesson." A lesson in "the human psyche" and what makes us tick. The instructors were relentless, constantly, and yes purposefully, pushing each of us to operate "outside of our comfort zone," forcing us to examine situations from several directions, we began to understand the "why" in what people do and say. Forced to examine ourselves, we learned much, getting to know each other, we learned more.

I left Williamsburg with not only an empowering sense of accomplishment, and seventeen new friends, but also with the confidence of knowing that, no matter where life takes me, I am capable of doing more than just "the work," I can do "the job." Thank You NCSC.

A New Source of Communication

With the continuing evolution of modern technology, and the assistance of Sam Houston State University, TACA members are now able to communicate with each other via, the new list server. What is it exactly? It is a bulk email messenger where you can post jobs, articles, conference info, etc. Each TACA member will have to submit their own information to be a member.

Please go to the web site listed below to sign up. It is a free service that is provided to our members.

lists.shsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/taca

Once you become a member of the list server, you can send your email to:

taca@shsu.edu

This is a great opportunity to communicate with others in the field of court administration.

MY WILLIAMSBURG EXPERIENCE

By
Tommy Munoz, Court Coordinator

On Monday, November 15, 2004, eighteen individuals from across the United States and Canada came together in Williamsburg, Virginia, to embark on the last phase of the Court Management Program. Over the course of the weeklong seminar, participants collaborated on many activities that reinforced methods for successful teambuilding, communication, and leadership. Throughout the program, participants were encouraged to reach beyond their comfort zone, so as to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities as professional court managers.

As I embarked on this journey to Williamsburg, I am indebted to many individuals, beginning with our Judge Jim Locke, the court support staff, Kara Sustayta, Sharon Rose, Sharon Scully, the Brazos County Commissioners, TACA who supported me 100% through the Chief Justice Tom Phillips Scholarship, the Texas Center for the Judiciary, Toni Grainer with the National Center for State Courts, and last but certainly not the least, my wife, Margaret, who courageously sacrificed keeping our domestic environment going while maintaining a job.

I embarked on this journey that began almost four years ago, beginning with a seminar in San Antonio, Texas, which was facilitated by Dr. Ingo Kelitz and Richard Callanan on **Trial Court Performance Standards**. Many local TACA members attended this seminar for their continuing education training. My next stop was a seminar on **Partnership Texas Fundamental Issues of Case flow Management** held in Dallas. Geoffrey Gallas and George Gish facilitated this seminar that was hosted by the **Texas Center for the Judiciary**. My next stop was to Savannah, Georgia, during September 11, 2002, for the **Court Financial Resources** seminar. I took in some of the sights and sat on the same park bench that Tom Hanks sat with his box of chocolates in the movie "Forrest Gump." My journey then took me to Kansas City, Missouri, to attend **Managing Human Resources**. This was facilitated by two outstanding ladies, Deborah White and Mary Sammon from the National Center for State Courts.

The last stop of my journey was in Williamsburg, Virginia, for the final **Concluding Management Seminar**. The week held many highlights, one of which included the exploration of Colonial Williamsburg with regards to the formation of the American government and its court system. We were able to participate in a 16th Century mock trial. Additionally, we visited Court 21 which is a courtroom of the future with all the high-tech gizmos. I was extremely impressed with their presentations.

Finally, the last course was the **Technology (E-Court)**, hosted in Las Vegas, Nevada, late in 2004. Many folks from across the country were there. Computer background personnel, as well as, Judges and court staff were represented.

This was a long hard journey and some of you may ask if it was done for a promotion or a pay raise. The answer to that is certainly "NO." This sacrifice was made for personal satisfaction and gratification. I had almost a two-year break before I was able to complete the program. This was due to scheduling conflicts and attributed to our travel budget monies. In the long run, I accomplished it and reached my goal of completion.

As I reflect back on my experience, I am reminded of a poem that one of my fellow graduates shared with me.

Leaders Don't Quit

**When things go wrong
as they sometimes will,
When the road you're
trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low,
And the debts are high,
And you want to smile,
But you have to sigh,
When care is pressing
You down a bit—
Rest if you must,
But don't you quit.**

**Success is failure
turned inside out,
The silver tint of
the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell
how close you are,
It may be neat when
It seems afar.
So, stick to the fight
When you're hardest hit—
It's when things go wrong
That you mustn't quit.**

By Kristene Coe

I took many ideas from many great people and made new friends throughout the USA. I encourage others within my profession to step out of your box and enhance your career by attending this program. The question has been posed as to whether or not I would do it again? I adamantly say yes, I would!

TEXAS CENTER FOR THE JUDICIARY'S P.D.P. PROGRAM

by
Kristy Harris

During the summer of 1997, I attended my first year of the Professional Development Program (PDP) hosted by the Texas Center for the Judiciary. At the time, the program was held in Huntsville, Texas, and in order to advance on the coordinator career ladder, we were required to attend. Little did I know that this would be the beginning of my journey with PDP.

The Texas Center's Professional Development Program is a three year program that consists of Trial Court Coordination, Trial Court Management and Trial Court Administration. The program is designed to provide a plan for the professional education and development of persons employed as court coordinators, administrators and managers. The program consists of topics ranging from caseload management, leadership skills, ethics, criminal and civil procedure. It combines instruction from judges and coordinators from across the state. The program is labor intensive and students spend approximately 25 hours in class over the course of the week. These hours qualify for our annual continuing education (CE) credit.

As a new coordinator in an unfamiliar world, the first year program was difficult at best. As if walking into a room of unfamiliar faces wasn't intimidating enough, the fact that our court had the biggest backlog of cases in our county wasn't exactly inspiring to my peers. By the end of the week, I felt like I finally had a grasp on what my own expectations were for our court. It was encouraging to know that I could go back to work and intelligently discuss issues with my judge — secretly hoping that we could implement some of the things I had learned over the course of a week.

During my second year at PDP, I was more intimidated by the instructors than the students. I walked into the classroom faced with the prospect of spending the week with Bob Wessels. Not only did I get to pick Mr. Wessels' brain, but I had the opportunity

to create a proposal that would improve caseload management for my court. This proposal was then reviewed by Mr. Wessels. I felt like I was in high school all over again.

By the time I attended my third year, Trial Court Administration, I felt like I was well on my way to being proficient, efficient and effective in my position. Little did I know that I would be asked to think out of my little box and use creative problem solving to enhance my position as Court Coordinator. During the last year, I forged even more friendships and built a support system of coordinators from across the state.

My experiences with PDP have helped shape me into the coordinator that I am today. In the summer of 2002, I once again made the trip to Huntsville, Texas, this time not as a student, but as an instructor. I once again walked into a room of unfamiliar faces, this time knowing that I had something to share. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought that I would be co-teaching with the instructors that had taught me so much.

There is nothing that I enjoy more than sharing my knowledge and expertise with coordinators across the state through teaching. I think I would be doing an injustice to the field of Court Management by ceasing to share my ideas. I feel that my experiences with the Professional Development Program will open doors for me to eventually advance in the field of Court Management. I welcome the opportunity to give back to a field that has given so much to me.

I encourage each and every one of you to take the opportunity to attend the Professional Development Program. Fortunately, the program has moved from Huntsville to Austin, Texas. This year it is being held the week of June 20th-24th. Hope to see you there!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

PDP Professional Development Program

June 20-24, 2005

Hyatt Regency
Austin, TX

Sponsored by the
Texas Center for the Judiciary
www.yourhonor.com/sched.html

2005 NACM Annual Conference

July 10-14, 2005

Hyatt Regency San Francisco
5 Embarcadero Center
San Francisco, CA 94111

425-788-1234 / 800-233-1234

Sponsored by the
National Association
for Court Management
www.nacmnet.org/conferences.html

KIDS' COURT IS STAYING DOWNTOWN, BUT GOING UPTOWN

By
Amy Dorsett

In Associate Judge Peter Sakai's courtroom — where fluorescent lights glare down from the low ceiling onto a mishmash of wooden benches and metal folding chairs — justice is meted out in cramped, dingy quarters. The main business of his court — deciding the fate of abused and neglected children — adds to the depressing environment. Space is so tight that lawyers, witnesses and parents must hover in front of the judge during hearings because there's no place for them to sit and testify.

Bedlam rules in the hallways outside the courtrooms of Sakai and Richard Garcia, the judges who handle the children's court dockets. The area is jammed with tearful and, at times, angry parents reeling from news that their children are being removed from their homes. With no room for privacy, they have to confer with their attorneys and deal with their emotions in the open. Because of the lack of decorum and space, the children rarely are permitted inside to voice their own concerns and desires, even though state law mandates they be involved.

Over the past decade, the 1,000 square feet — the size of a modest house — had become an impediment. In January 2005, that will change when the courts move up to the third floor of the Bexar County Courthouse and blossom into 12,000 square feet, outfitted with cutting-edge technology and a welcoming ambience. "It's kind of like going from a VW Bug to a tour bus," Sakai said. "We, the judges, are going to be able to make better decisions. We've provided the physical space and physical layout that enhances communication and the opportunity for the judge to get all the information he needs." The new area, previously a records warehouse, is being touted as a national model for other children's courts.

The opening comes during intense scrutiny of abuse cases following a spate of child deaths. The heat has been turned up on Child Protective Services, because at least nine children in Bexar County have died from apparent abuse while on the agency's watch since 2002. Last month, a small army of veteran caseworkers came in to help clear a backlog of cases.

And while the timing of the new courtrooms appears serendipitous, it has been in the works nearly three years. "In light of all that's been happening, this looks like a response," said Judge John Specia, who has been the administrative judge in charge of the children's court since its inception in 1995. "This wasn't a response — this was good planning, because we knew where the caseload was going."

The court, officially called the Child Abuse and Neglect Courts, is only the second of its kind in the United States. The closest thing to it is in Los Angeles, which has a separate building for its children's courts. "It's phenomenal. This is going to be the standard for family and children's courts throughout the country," said Martin Gruen, deputy director of the Courtroom 21 Project at the William and Mary School of Law in Virginia. "It's far ahead of anything else out there." The improvements stretch well beyond the new court's aesthetics, said Gruen, who helped with its design. "It was not only depressing, but totally ineffective for what they're trying to do," he said of the old space. "What got me was when I saw parents who were fighting over a child sitting in a hallway next to each other."

Perhaps the most tangible benefit of the new court is that it was designed with its small clients in mind. "The biggest change will be the child can come to court. It's going to take the chaos out of it," Specia said. "The children will be allowed to participate in their own case. Their voice will not be silent." Until now, the court waived children's participation in cases. With many children having been removed from the custody of their parents, there wasn't a safe way for them to be in the same room. "The intention is to help empower children to help make decisions that will impact the rest of their lives," said Betty Bueche, who worked for the architectural firm 3D/I during the planning process and now is Bexar County's manager of infrastructure services.

The new space is warm and welcoming, with attention to detail. The two courtrooms, instead of the conventional two tables, have three: for the state, the parents and the child's representatives. There's also space for a jury; before, trials had to be moved to another courtroom if a jury was needed. The witness chair has a hydraulic lift so the height can be adjusted for children. With help from a grant from the SBC Foundation, the courtrooms are outfitted with the latest technology. Witnesses can testify via video conferencing, so children don't have to be in the same room as their parents and the county can potentially save money by transporting fewer prisoners to court. There are rooms where attorneys can meet in private with their clients and spaces for supervised visitations for children and parents. Child Protective Services caseworkers have room to work, so they can be efficient while waiting for cases to come up.

The brightest room is designed specifically for children. Complete with a juice bar, large-screen television and study areas, the space is colorful and whimsical with modern, spiderlike light fixtures. Across the hall, there is a grimmer side to the courts. In many child custody cases, one or both parents are prisoners. In the old space, they sat shackled in the court clerk's office while waiting to testify. The new area has holding cells and an onsite drug-testing lab.

Specia said treating the parents better — even when they're inmates — might, when appropriate, help encourage parents to terminate their custody rights. "We weren't treating them with dignity and respect; we weren't treating the children with dignity and respect," he said. "Even if they're a dangerous criminal in an orange jumpsuit, you treat them with dignity and respect, and it will help them make the right decision." Sakai, known as the "children's judge," takes his judicial role seriously and personally. Last summer, after a toddler he'd allowed to return to her home was killed and her mother charged with the death, he took a week's sabbatical to reflect on the case and the plight of abused children. Not long after he returned, county officials announced they were adding a second, full-time judge to split the docket. Associate Judge Richard Garcia took the role in August.

Sakai praises county officials for moving forward with the new court. "It's a model court in the whole country," he said. "I'm real proud of what the county has done to step up and provide for the children." In the past two years, Sakai said, his caseload has increased nearly 80 percent and continues to rise. "We're full, we're at capacity," he said. "That's a real sad reality." The increase in cases, Sakai thinks, can be traced to more aggressive reporting of suspected abuse and neglect and an upswing in

such crimes. "The numbers don't lie," he said. "A lot of families are coming into our court system — there's more accountability now." Sakai sees and hears cases of brutal crimes against children. He and Garcia handle all Child Protective Services cases, from initial removal hearings to the termination of parental rights. Many are ghastly. On a recent afternoon, a caseworker asked about a baby girl who hit her head on the commode where she was born. That case, like scores more, didn't make the news, because the child survived.

The new court cost \$3.1 million. Of that, the county paid \$767,000 and the Hidalgo Foundation is raising the remainder

from donations by the SBC Foundation for technology, the Tobin Endowment for the Arts and the community. The new space, observers insist, goes far beyond a fresh coat of paint and well-designed spaces. "The new courtrooms empower the children to participate in their future, it's going to empower the caseworkers — there's too many mice in the maze," Specia said. "The quality of our decision making will improve when you take away the chaos."

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TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE FUNDS CREATION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICES

By
Judge Sharon Keller

On December 8, the Task Force on Indigent Defense (Task Force) awarded over \$13 million in grants to counties to support improvements in the delivery of indigent defense services. The Task Force awarded almost \$2 million in discretionary grants on a competitive basis to assist counties develop new and innovative programs. These grants were funded primarily by a new \$65 annual legal services fee paid by attorneys. One-half of the fees collected are designated for "demonstration or pilot projects that develop and promote best practices for the efficient delivery of quality representation to indigent defendants in criminal cases at trial, on appeal, and in post-conviction proceedings." The other half of the fee supports civil legal services to the poor. The funds are instrumental in allowing counties to try groundbreaking models for the delivery of indigent defense services. Indigent defendants being served by these new programs will benefit greatly from the generous support provided by the attorneys of the state.

The Task Force has given top priority to funding for the creation of public defender offices and the provision of mental health defender services. We were pleased to be able to fund four new programs totaling over \$1 million that met these priorities, including two brand new public defender offices. These offices are the first large scale offices formed in Texas since the late 1980's and will raise to nine the total number of counties with public defender offices. The grants awarded are for the first year of funding and may be continued for another three years if they are successful and funds remain available. The Task Force will fund 80 percent of the cost in the first year with a 20 percent reduction each year thereafter until year five when the program will be entirely county-funded.

Bexar County was awarded over \$370,000 to create a new appellate public defender office staffed by attorneys who specialize in the handling of appeals. The centralization of these types of cases will allow the county to effectively manage the number of open cases any one attorney may have at any given time. It will also bring more predictability to the budgeting process and should result in long-term cost efficiencies.

Hidalgo County also was awarded nearly \$400,000 to assist the county in creating a public defender office to represent defendants charged with misdemeanors, or those charged with both misdemeanors and felonies. The new office will work in conjunction with the existing assigned counsel system. The program also will target representation for defendants who remain in custody and had previously refused to request counsel. Studies have shown that 90 percent of such defendants ultimately request and are appointed counsel at their first court appearance, which is often a week later. The public defender office will provide legal assistance to those in custody so that they understand the court process and the need for assistance from counsel. The program should result in more timely representation of defendants and reduced costs to the county by decreasing jail time served and expediting case dispositions.



The other two multi-year programs that were funded deal with specialized mental health defender services. Dallas County was awarded \$152,136 to create a mental health division within the Dallas County Public Defender's Office. The funds will allow the office to hire one attorney and two caseworkers who will specialize in representing defendants with mental illness or mental retardation. In addition to this specialized caseload, the new division will act as a resource to the other attorneys in the office when mental health issues arise. This program is similar in scope to a new mental health unit created last year in the El Paso County Public Defender's Office. We also awarded Limestone County \$174,100 to contract with two attorneys and two caseworkers to provide representation to defendants with mental illness or retardation. The program will include training of jail staff to facilitate accurate identification of defendants with mental health issues.

The groundwork for the creation of these new programs was laid last year when the Task Force worked with a nationally recognized expert to examine the practices of two public defender offices and provide guidance to counties considering creating such offices. The Spangenberg Group was commissioned to do the work in response to requests from counties for information on public defender offices. After completing evaluations of the public defender systems in Dallas and Wichita counties, the group published the *Blueprint for Creating a Public Defender Office in Texas*. The *Blueprint* provides counties with the tools needed to determine whether a public defender office makes sense in their community, as well as with the steps necessary to form one.

Public defender offices have proven to be effective systems for providing indigent defense services. In 2004, the Task Force funded a study conducted by Texas A&M's Public Policy Research Institute with assistance from Dr. Tony Fabelo to examine how Fair Defense Act (FDA) requirements have impacted indigent defense service delivery and how county implementation strategies may affect effectiveness in meeting FDA requirements. A key finding of the study is that public defender offices are well suited to contain and manage costs. This conclusion is in accord with a report issued by the comptroller in 1999 called *Reduce Costs Involved in Representing Indigent Defendants — El Paso County*. That report concluded that the public defender office was the most efficient method of providing services.

The Task Force awarded the remaining \$11 million in grants under a population-based formula to support the increased county expenditures for indigent defense since passage of the FDA in 2001. Expenditures have increased over 50 percent from \$92 million prior to the FDA to \$139 million last year. These funds provide critical assistance to counties to help ensure top quality indigent defense services across the state.

Sharon Keller is Chair of the Task Force on Indigent Defense and Presiding Judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals. Reprinted with permission from Legal Front.

CORE COMPETENCIES CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

“Education, Training, and Development”

As our members have learned, TACA has decided to highlight one of the NACM Ten Core Competencies in each of our issues of the Journal. We have used the results of our survey during the 2004 Educational Conference and are highlighting the core competencies in order of importance to our members. Participants ranked the Core Competencies in order of relevance to their jobs and the following are the results: Caseload Management, Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts, Leadership, Education Training & Development, Vision and Strategic Planning, Court Community Communication, Information Technology, Essential Components, Resources Budget & Finance, and lastly, Human Resources. The first three have been highlighted; therefore, we will share Education, Training and Development with our membership. Enjoy!

Introduction: What This Core Competency Is and Why It Is Important

Education, Training, and Development can help courts improve court and justice system performance and achieve their preferred future. To understand what this entails, a paradox must be kept whole. That is, the judiciary must maintain the rule of law through enduring principles and predictable processes while also responding to powerful forces shaping both society and the judiciary.

The end is excellent court and justice system performance. One means to this is the education, training, and development of judges and court staff, especially those in and aspiring to leadership positions, and many others both inside and outside the court. Thus, the term judicial branch education as opposed to judicial education.

Because judicial branch education helps courts maintain balance between the forces of change and enduring principles and predictable processes, it cannot be remedial and limited to training. Rather it is strategic and involves education, training, and development.

Court leaders who oversee, fund, plan, and deliver judicial branch education identified the forces that will shape society and challenge the judiciary through the year 2020 during the 1999 National Symposium on the Future of Judicial Branch Education. The symposium results were published by the Michigan State University based Judicial Education Reference, Information, Technical Transfer (JERITT) project. With some modifications, the forces identified in the JERITT publication and their implications are:

- Demographics and population shifts: By 2050, or perhaps even sooner, there will be no dominant racial or ethnic group in America. The impact of global interdependency and needed multi-cultural competency extends far past interpretation and translation to the very heart of Anglo-American jurisprudence. Education, especially for experienced professionals, should challenge learners to take account of the demographics and population shifts challenging the judiciary.
 - Science: DNA, cloning, surrogate parenting, and genetic engineering — to name a few, present novel legal, moral, ethical, and operational challenges.
 - Technology: The American economy has evolved from an industrial to an information base. Court customers expect on-time and accurate communication and information. Private sector consumer service models and technology-based “do it yourself” solutions have relevance for the judiciary and judicial branch education. Court employees increasingly work in electronic mediums as information managers rather than in paper intensive environments as filing clerks. With education and technology, they can add value through informed and timely decisions and communication.
 - Resource Limitations: At the very best, public budgets will be stagnant. Competition for talented staff will increase. Talented staff must be identified and developed through career-long and enlightened judicial branch education and human resource practices.
 - Decreased Public Satisfaction and Increased Public Expectations: Both national and state surveys indicate that the public thinks less of the judiciary than in the past, yet expects more from it. There are significant questions about the justice received by the poor and people of color. A national conference for state teams selected and led by the 50 state chief justices identified, and NACM confirmed, that the number one current and future issue on the national public trust and confidence agenda is unequal treatment in the justice system. Courts at all levels must address this issue in their judicial branch education programs.
 - Self-Represented: More and more people will come to the courts without lawyers. The line between service and giving legal advice is increasingly tested across all case types. Appropriate responses require education, training, and development of judges, staff, and others on whom the courts rely to do justice.
 - Different and Expanded Services: Courts do not and clearly will not “just” resolve cases. Effective justice and efficient case processing means problem solving. Routine business practice requires more than basic skills and on-the-job training. Education is critical to needed collaboration with other governmental entities and judicial and staff competence.
 - Resistance to change: Even as the above forces of change are acknowledged, courts and their leaders often work to retain the courts’ traditional decision rules, structure, and processes. They do so when judicial independence or impartiality is or appears to be threatened. Judicial branch education must comprehend both enduring principles such as rule of law, due process, equal protection, and independent and impartial judicial decisions and the need for change.
- To meet these challenges, education, training, and development must be:
1. Continuous and creative – responding both to traditional legal processes and powerful and changing demands;

2. Inclusive – ensuring that education, training, and development (judicial branch education) happens in all trial courts and across the judiciary and justice system and is delivered to a target audience that is broader than judges and court staff;
3. Accessible and tailored – requiring that personal and professional growth and skill development opportunities are equally available and readily available and affordable, in time and money; and that they consider the background, experiences and needs of individual judges, staff, and others on whom the courts depend;
4. Well-managed – ensuring that judicial branch education for judges, staff, and others is aligned with the court, its mission, vision, structure, and workflows and that it is well-managed and built around sound adult education methods and advanced technology.
5. Evaluated – making sure that judicial branch education programs evolve in response to the social context, needs for equitable access to development opportunities, and assessments of their success in meeting personal needs and organizational priorities.

Court leaders must actively lead judicial branch education in their courts. Education, Training, and Development are not pleasurable diversions from daily routines, training for the sake of training, or a luxury. Effective court leaders ensure that Education, Training, and Development are recognized as essential and build a culture to support it. This means excellence in programming; demonstrable results, both inside and outside the courts; and reliable and consistent funding.

The target audience is diverse in education, experience, professional orientation, age, gender, and race. Courts have employees who remain with the court their whole career. They also have employees who come and go quickly. When education and training and human resources are aligned, the court is better able to identify, develop, and retain its best employees. When talented staff leave the court, competent replacements take their place or are recruited from the outside. This ensures that the most promising people find job satisfaction and acceptable career paths in specific trial courts and state court systems or in the judicial administration profession generally. While judicial branch education supports succession planning, cross-jurisdictional movement of talented staff benefits all courts through organizational learning across state, county, and court levels, both state and federal. Whenever possible, judges and staff should be educated and trained together. This demonstrates that the judicial and justice system are interdependent; the issues are systemic.

Beginning in the late 1960s, NACM, the Institute for Court Management, and others created a new profession--court management. This early and continuing work prompted acceptance of a new profession throughout the world. Inclusion of judges, court managers, and staff into this profession and its ethos of service and justice is a profound objective of judicial branch education.

To contribute to the development of individuals, courts, and the court management profession, judicial branch education must: 1) span the career of individuals, and not be limited to orientation or training to perform specific tasks; 2) provide for significant interaction among program participants; 3) include experienced professionals as faculty and in the planning and evaluation pro-

cess to ensure real and perceived problems are addressed in every program; and 4) address a wide variety of topics, both practical and theoretical. Through programs that meet these criteria, courts are better able to become and remain learning cultures. Education, Training, and Development sustains enduring principles, maintains and protects daily routines, and stimulates needed change. Those in leadership positions set the vision and take responsibility for the maintenance of the organization and its growth and transformation. The bottom line is excellent trial court and justice system performance.

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES SUMMARY **What Court Leaders Need to Know And Be Able To Do**

The Education, Training and Development Core Competency encompasses five curriculum guideline areas:

- Context and Vision
- Resource Development
- Adult Education Fundamentals
- Program Management
- Evaluation

Context and Vision

Judicial branch education helps courts both maintain distinctive values such as due process and equal protection and respond to social forces including: demographics and population shifts, science, technology, resource limitations, decreased public satisfaction and increased public expectations, the self-represented, different and expanded services, and resistance to change. When context, vision, purpose, and organizational performance focus on judicial branch education and define developmental needs, educational resources are better targeted, allocated, and managed.

Effective leaders understand that courts cannot achieve their organizational goals without the help of others inside and outside the court. Courts are embedded in an interdependent justice system, which requires strong judicial leadership. Judicial branch education should encourage and build through interagency cooperation and collaboration. Court inspired collaboration and the strategic inclusion of others in judicial branch education enhances court and justice system performance while broadening judicial branch education resources.

Resource Development

Education, Training, and Development often is perceived as a luxury and, consequently, is assigned a low priority by insiders and funding authorities. Effective court leaders advocate, justify, and work to acquire needed educational resources. As they build awareness among insiders and funding authorities of the need for and benefits of judicial branch education, they persuade others that education is an investment that pays dividends year after year. Persuasive advocacy links education needs to court performance, justice, and public service.

Too often courts advocate for judicial branch education resources only from traditional funding authorities. There are other options. Untapped resources include the budgets, staff, and pro-

grams of other governmental branches, universities, the private sector, foundations, entrepreneurial ventures and partnerships, and not-for-profit organizations. Competent court leaders seek out these resources and apply them to judicial branch education. Successful courts find funds and time for Education, Training, and Development because it supports excellent court performance.

Adult Education Fundamentals

For court leaders to oversee judicial branch education, they must understand adult education including: needs assessment, learning objectives, varied curriculum and program delivery including distance learning, faculty selection and preparation, mentoring, and evaluation. Understanding adult education assists court leaders as they manage judicial branch education departments and staff, design and deliver programs, and select and develop faculty.

Program Management

Education, Training, and Development must be well-managed and aligned with the court, its mission, vision, structures, and, very importantly, its internal workflows. Since court management is a team sport, court leader oversight of judicial branch educators must encourage and reward work with and through others, both inside and outside the judiciary.

Quality education is not likely when the management of the court is not cohesive. When the court is well-managed, judicial branch education is less likely to be a mere add-on or a largely irrelevant diversion from daily routines.

Human resource practice and policy and Education, Training, and Development must be integrated. Managers and staff responsible for Education, Training, and Development and those responsible for recruitment, selection, orientation, job descriptions, job evaluation, classification, performance appraisal, the administration of pay and benefits, and succession planning must be on the same page, especially with respect to promising staff. Both education and human resource policy and practice support and sustain a learning and development culture that is constant and creative, inclusive, accessible and tailored, well-managed, and evaluated.

The need for alignment of judicial branch education with the court's management and operations extends past human resource staff to departmental leaders — both judges and administrators — and staff who work on the line, at the counter, on the phone, and in the courtroom. When the court is well managed, judicial branch education can facilitate leadership and other employee transitions by increasing the problem solving capabilities and competence of judges and others in and aspiring to leadership positions. As a result, court performance can be maintained in the face of staffing and leadership changes. In high-performing courts, the contributions of talented staff increase through career-long judicial branch education coupled with skillful management and challenging assignments. When necessary, talented staff are replaced by competent outsiders.

Evaluation

Evaluation validates and values effort and expenditures in relation to desired organizational outcomes. Did the court's performance improve? Learner satisfaction ratings alone are not enough and can even be misleading. While there is no best

way or single reason to evaluate judicial branch education, court leaders encourage selection of appropriate measures of success and review and use evaluation data. Evaluation helps leaders and educators as they establish priorities, allocate existing and future resources, and seek to maintain, if not increase, funding.

Effective evaluation helps ensure clear communication of expectations, refines need assessments, ties learning objectives to desired outcomes, facilitates the acquisition of needed resources, and guides the equitable allocation of judicial branch education opportunities and resources. Evaluation improves education methods, faculty performance, and program delivery. Through evaluation, analysis, and discussion of outcomes, court leaders participate in monitoring and improving judicial branch education.

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES: REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILL, AND ABILITY

Context and Vision

Education, Training, and Development must prompt the judiciary's enduring principles and take account of the forces shaping society and challenging the court. When judicial branch education is aligned with the court's purposes, responsibilities, and strategic vision, resources are better targeted, allocated, and managed. Because courts are imbedded in an interdependent justice system, judicial branch education must include others on whom the courts depend to deliver justice.

- Ability to tie judicial branch education to the court's social context, its purposes and responsibilities, and the court's strategic vision;
- Skill in ensuring that judicial branch education helps courts respond to its social context and to forces shaping the courts including: demographics and population shifts, science, technology, resource limitations, decreased public satisfaction and increased public expectations, the self-represented, different and expanded services, and resistance to change;
- Knowledge of the NACM Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts Curriculum Guidelines and their application to Education, Training, and Development;
- Knowledge of the Trial Court Performance Standards and their implications for judicial branch education;
- Knowledge of and commitment to our multicultural society, differing cultures and standards, and community understanding and expectations of the courts;
- Ability to promote diversity and to incorporate diversity in judicial branch education;
- Ability to inspire and sustain courts as learning organizations, including support for cross-jurisdictional movement of talented staff;
- Ability to extend judicial branch education to the other branches of government and their functioning departments with the goal of improved court and justice system performance and needed collaboration;

- Ability to engender court policies and practices that support court performance excellence through judicial branch education.

Resource Development

Education, Training, and Development is essential for any organization. Courts are not an exception. Effective court leaders know how to advocate, justify, and acquire needed resources. They understand that resources come from traditional budgetary processes and other sources. As court leaders persuasively advocate for judicial branch education, they link quality judicial branch education to court performance and justice.

- Skill in articulating how Education, Training, and Development contribute to court and justice system performance;
- Skill in building and sustaining support for judicial branch education;
- Skill in establishing judicial branch education programmatic and funding priorities;
- Ability to present valid budget justifications for Education, Training, and Development;
- Ability to obtain grant and other funding and education resources;
- Knowledge of internal and external education resources, including national and state judicial branch education providers and their respective strengths;
- Knowledge of effective ways to develop judges and staff as teachers and mentors;
- Skill in creating and developing the courts internal resources to deliver quality judicial branch education;
- Ability to get federal, state, and local providers to focus on judicial branch education, the needs of the court, its departments, judges, and court staff;
- Ability to collaborate with educators from other branches of government and adult education providers generally, in developing entrepreneurial partnerships and building judicial branch education resources;
- Ability to communicate judicial branch outcomes and their benefits to funding sources and other branches of government.

Adult Education Fundamentals

Court leaders who understand adult learning, a wide variety of educational methods, as well as differing learning styles and preferences can more effectively oversee Education, Training, and Development. They ensure the best match between learners, teaching methods, and faculty selection and preparation. Effective court leaders know and foster sound adult education practices.

- Knowledge of adult learning theories;

- Knowledge of alternative education delivery mechanisms, including distance learning (e.g., computer self-instructional packages, video conferencing, satellite broadcasts, among other methods), multimedia, and supporting materials and processes;
- Ability to improve access to judicial branch education through train-the-trainer models, particularly through distance learning;
- Knowledge of sound curriculum and program development processes and models, including establishing outcomes, conducting needs assessments, stating clear learning objectives, and organizing program delivery around them;
- Ability to oversee assessment of court user needs and to ensure that user needs are addressed in Education, Training, and Development programs;
- Ability to foster programs that comprehend the differing but related objectives of Education, Training, and Development;
- Knowledge of NACM Core Competencies and ability to oversee their incorporation in learning needs assessments and judicial branch education;
- Ability to implement faculty development, including a wide variety of teaching methods, teaching aids, and train-the-trainer models;
- Knowledge of what motivates court employees, managers, and leaders and how personal development contributes to motivation;
- Skill in encouraging presentations that take into account the knowledge, experience, ages, stages of the learning process, and the talents of both the faculty and the learners;
- Skill in using judicial branch education to support succession by identifying the learning needs of judges and staff in leadership positions and those in associated and supportive roles;
- Ability to identify and use faculty with diverse experience and knowledge and from diverse cultures.

Program Management

Education, Training, and Development is not an end unto itself. Rather, it supports court accountability for its core responsibilities and desired future. Judicial branch education must be aligned with the court, its mission, vision, structure, and, very importantly, its internal workflows. Linkage to human resources policy and practice is critical. Quality judicial branch education is more likely when the court and its judicial branch education programs are well managed.

- Skill in aligning judicial branch education with the court, its mission, vision, structure, and workflows;

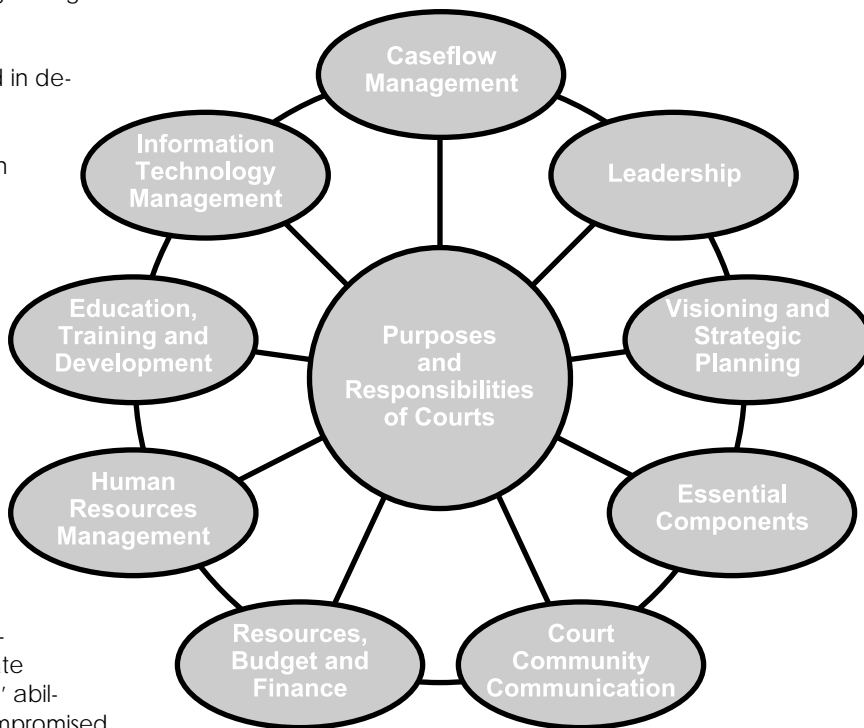
- Ability to communicate expected behavior and court performance improvements resulting from Education, Training, and Development;
- Ability to oversee development and implementation of human resource policies, processes, and best practices that support and reward growth and development of court organizations, judges, judicial employees, and their justice system partners;
- Ability to identify and integrate education and training needs within human resource processes including recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, promotion, and other reward systems;
- Skill in establishing judicial branch education priorities, allocating resources, making decisions about program content, methods, and faculty;
- Skill in using education and training as a means of intervention, both personal and professional, and to bring about system-wide cooperation and problem solving;
- Skill in managing judicial branch education staff and faculty;
- Ability to recognize and reward excellent performance and to validate employee development;
- Ability to both direct staff and listen to them, and to ask effective clarifying questions as well as to tell them what is expected of them;
- Skill in mentoring and in encouraging mentoring throughout the judiciary;
- Skill in management of short-term projects and in developing this talent throughout the court;
- Ability to organize the court and its education function in order to adequately address succession planning;
- Skill in focusing judicial branch education on leadership and other employee transitions and the need to develop, motivate, retain, and recruit talented court employees.

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Evaluation

Effective court leaders define and communicate expectations to produce desired behaviors, habits, and outcomes. Through evaluation, both formal and informal, court leaders can assess and improve judicial branch education as a means to improved court and individual performance. Competent evaluation helps courts develop and allocate resources. Without meaningful evaluation, the courts' ability to deliver quality judicial branch education is compromised.

- Knowledge of alternative evaluation processes and measures and how to apply them to judicial branch education;



Judge Molly Francis, Court of Appeals, Fifth District of Texas

Law school was not even a thought when Justice Francis enrolled for her undergraduate degree at Baylor University. Lawyers did not run in her family, so she had never considered law school as an option. However, during her junior and senior years she was influenced by her fellow Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority sisters. Many of her sorority sisters were older and their experiences peaked her interest in law school.

After graduating from Baylor Law School, Justice Francis began her legal career for Justice James Warren of the First Court of Appeals in Houston. This experience helped her decide to devote her career to criminal law. After completing her term, she moved to Dallas and joined the Dallas County District Attorney's Office. As a practicing courthouse lawyer, she had the opportunity to see almost every judge in action. Although she had never desired to become a judge, this changed when she appeared before a judge that was not operating his court efficiently or effectively. She felt that "she could do better" and wanted to be someone "who did something about the problem instead of just griping" about it. Initially, her decision to become a judge was not necessarily a career move as much as a move to replace this particular judge. Judge Francis took action and won the election. She served as a judge in the criminal courts for eleven years.

In September of 2001, Governor Perry appointed Justice Francis to the Court of Appeals. There are actually two things she loves about her position of four years. First, she enjoys the ability to sit and think about an issue rather than having to rule immediately. Secondly, she loves the people she works with. These include Chief Justice Linda Thomas and her attorney, Suanne Smith. All of the people she is surrounded by make it a joy to come to work. However, she does miss the hustle and bustle of the courtroom and the interaction with the attorneys in court.

If she could change anything about our judicial system, it would have to be the public's perception. The perception is that attorneys sleep through their clients' trials and that

innocent people are wrongfully convicted of crimes on a daily basis. This is just not true. Justice Francis feels like, "The system, although not perfect, works well when you have honest, hard working attorneys, judges, law enforcement and court personnel." She states that the public would be amazed at the amount of time, energy and thought that goes into every case that is heard. Justice Francis wants the public to know how committed Texas judges are to seeing that all participants get not only a fair trial, but a fair appeal. She feels that the constituents are very fortunate to have the caliber of judges we do in Texas.



When the day is over, Justice Francis goes home to her two daughters Meredith, a senior at Coppell High School and Morgan, a sophomore. Between stressing over the normal motherly issues such as college acceptance letters and teenage driving, she still finds time to garden, sew and work out at the gym. Chasing her daughters and three dogs around town — Charlye (Dalmation), Annie (Lab) and Bill (Jack Russell Terrier) is probably a work-out of its own!

When asked if she would do anything over in life, she responded with, "if you make too many changes, you might end up somewhere else and I wouldn't want that. I'd try and appreciate life at the moment rather than thinking there was something better just beyond the bend. I think we all do that to some degree and it's a mistake." We are very proud to have Justice Francis as the Chair of our Judicial Advisory Board. Next time she is speaking on behalf of our organization, please take the time to tell her how much you appreciate her.

SCHOLARSHIPS, AN OVERVIEW

By
John Warren

For those of you who attended the Education Conference last year, you may recall the attendance was less than it has been in the past. The low attendance was primarily due to the budget cuts many of our courts have seen. Many coordinators and administrators were not able to meet the 16 hours of continued legal education that is required by the State.

There were several scholarship applications received well past the application deadline, or applicants applied for scholarships that could not be used for the Education Conference. Sadly, had some planned in advance, other avenues would have been available. Coordinators in some counties have held fund-raisers to send one or more of their own to the conference.

If you would refer to the January 2004 issue of the Journal, you will find an article that explains where each scholarship may be applied.

TACA awards scholarships to its qualified members and members should take advantage of these scholarships.

Below I have listed all of the scholarships offered by TACA and the application form, or visit our web-site, at www.mytaca.org. Please take the time to review this information so that you know which scholarship fits your need.

1. **FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIPS**

Total of Scholarships Available Annually - Three (3)

Amount of Scholarship - Amount not to exceed \$500.00 (May be used to attend the TACA Annual Education Conference).

2. **THE HONORABLE PAUL FERGUSON SCHOLARSHIP**

Amount of Scholarship - \$750.00 (May be used to attend any educational conference sponsored by the Institute of Court Management, The National Association for Court Management, The National Judicial College, The National Center for State Courts & Justice Management Institute)

3. **THE HONORABLE JACK DILLARD SCHOLARSHIP**

Amount of Scholarship - \$750.00 (May be used to attend any educational conference sponsored by the Institute of Court Management, The National Association for Court Management, The National Judicial College, The National Center for State Courts & Justice Management Institute)

4. **THE HONORABLE LARRY GIST AWARD**

Amount of Award - \$1,000.00 (May be used to complete Phase III and IV of the Institute of Court Management program)

5. **CHIEF JUSTICE SCHOLARSHIP**

Amount of Scholarship \$2,000.00 (must be a member of TACA for 5 years, have completed PDP, a faculty member of PDP and completed Phase I of ICM Program). Funding Entity - The Texas Center for the Judiciary, Inc.

6. **THE JUSTICE CHARLES W. BARROW AWARD**

The award has no monetary value. However, it is considered one of the highest coveted awards given annually to a TACA member, in that it recognizes the "high standards of excellence" exhibited in all endeavors of the recipient.

The deadline for the applications is September 15, 2005, please submit your application as soon as possible. We look forward to reviewing your applications.

"Applicants must sign a Commitment Contract with TACA, for a two (2) year personal commitment to serve on the Education Committee and/or any other committee as set forth in the by-laws of the association."

THE JUSTICE CHARLES W. BARROW AWARD

NOMINATION FORM

This award was established in honor of the Honorable Charles W. Barrow, Senior Judge, Bexar County, who served as Justice on the Supreme Court of Texas 1977-1984. He also served as Chief Justice of the Fourth Court of Appeals, 1962- 1977; and as Judge of the 45th District Court, 1959-1962. Justice Barrow is one of TACA's biggest supporters since its inception and has lent support, advice and credibility to the association. The award recognizes one "for his/her extraordinary contributions in promoting court administration in Texas."

This award has no monetary value. However, it is considered one of the highest coveted awards given annually to a TACA member, in that it recognizes the "high standards of excellence" exhibited in all endeavors of the recipient.

Those wishing to nominate someone for this award should submit not only the nominee's name and current position but also, set out the contributions made in court administration and the reasons this individual merits recognition.

Please follow all eligibility and criteria, as outlined below.

Any TACA member, in good standing, who has contributed significantly in promoting Court Administration and met the following criteria:

- Nominee must have provided outstanding assistance to the overall Court Administration effort;
- Nominee must exhibit sustained dedication to Court Administration activities, generally;
- Nominee should have participated actively in promoting Court Administration.

A Narrative of the Nominee shall be attached with emphasis on eligibility, criteria and accomplishments. Narrative should be limited to two (2) pages.

MEMBER NOMINATED: _____

TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: _____

**Submit form to:
Mr. Bob Wessels
Court Manager, Criminal Courts at Law
1201 Franklin, 7th Floor
Houston, Texas 77002**

MEMBER MAKING NOMINATION: _____

COURT & TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

COURT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TACA MEMBER SINCE: _____

PDP YEAR COMPLETED: _____ IF NOT, YEAR EXPECTED: _____

OTHER PROGRAMS: _____

SCHOLARSHIP BEING SOUGHT: _____

Upon receiving a TACA scholarship, I understand a Commitment Contract will be executed between TACA and myself. Part of my commitment is to assist where needed in the professional development of court coordination and administration and/or assist the association at the Annual Education Conference. The funds provided by this scholarship are necessary for me to comply with Government Code 74.106(a), and/or to enhance my professional education by attending an approved educational program as set forth in the Scholarship Guidelines. My county will not pay these expenses or will only pay part of them. I understand that this scholarship is no longer valid if I leave court administration prior to utilizing this scholarship.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

JUDGE'S APPROVAL: _____

Submit this application to:
Valerie Olivas, Scholarship Liaison
Court Coordinator, Family Court at Law #1
500 E. San Antonio, Suite 1103
El Paso, Texas 79901

**Deadline for submitting Scholarship Application:
September 15, 2005**

GROWING PAINS

Upgrading the Court Management Software for Dallas County

by
John Warren

Over the past several months, I, along with Kathleen Norton and Catherine Nicholson both family court coordinators in Dallas County, have been laboriously working on the implementation of the new court management software for Dallas County. Initially, this was a project, a simple project, I might add, that was estimated to take approximately two months to complete. Court management software has been something judges, court coordinators, clerks, both district and county, have been dreaming about for years. Today we are finally realizing our dream.

I have been on the Dallas County Civil Automation Committee for several years now, and have witnessed, first hand, the labor intensive job that is required to find just what Dallas needs to get ourselves back in the running as leaders in this state. We first made an attempt some years ago to upgrade the county's court management program, and after months of testing, testing, and more testing, we called it quits, each of us retreating back to our corners to lick our wounds. Our efforts were met with utter failure. . . . Round two came sometime later. This time we changed our strategy, "Don't tell me, show me." We decided that we wanted to see with our own eyes how a software program worked. Our county commissioners agreed to fund a site visit for members of the committee to visit other cities where those vendors who met our RAO (request for offer) requirements had software, "up and running." At that point in time we had narrowed the list to three vendors.

After a week of visiting three locations, two in Florida and the other in Minnesota, the committee reported back to the commissioners what we heard, touched and witnessed. With some resistance, the commissioners agreed to our recommendation. That brings us to today. It has been several months now, and it seems to us who have been there from the very beginning that this project will never get off the ground. What's the problem? Our eyes have seen and ears have heard. The software that we wanted, as costly as it was, the commissioners gave us. Why won't this dog hunt? The answer is simple: data conversion, the one thing that we had not anticipated.

The problem with moving the old data to the new software is that the old mainframe system presently being used is all "free form." In short, it doesn't use codes for entering data. If I wanted to make a docket entry that reads, "I like the plaintiff, but the defendant is an idiot", it would work if it was being entered in a comment field. This has proven to be a tough mountain to climb, but one that is necessary. Now we have migrated from being the civil automation committee to "conversion team." I can always use it on my resume. Why is the conversion team necessary? Dallas County out sources its IT services to a vendor who knows little about court operations. They can keep a system up and running, but as far as how we use it in relation to our daily job duties, they're without an understanding.

Now it gets complicated. IT Services are using words that have taken us a while to comprehend such as: IFL, hot files, cold files, iteration, mainframe extractions and extraction process. Does any of this sound familiar? I'll make it easy for you to understand. All of the data that sits on the mainframe must be given a code

exactly like the codes that we set up in the new software. There is a code for the word motion, trial, order, citation, service, notice, family, ad litem, divorce, etc. We've discovered that there were more than twenty spellings for the word divorce. Once codes are set up for the mainframe data, it is then loaded into the IFL, intermediate file layout. It is tested and pushed into the conversion data file for testing for accuracy. Once the errors have been identified, the process starts over again. A second, third or fourth iteration (repeated process) takes place until the conversion team is satisfied that all of the data is correct. Presently, we have checked the data on fifty (50) cases. It seems like a small number, but considering how far we've come to get to this point, we are all impressed thus far. Shortly, we will push 275 cases over and test that data. By the way, did I mention that this is a line item process, docket entry per docket entry? With 275 cases and God only knows how many docket entries per case, we will be looking at thousands of entries that must be verified before we move to the next step. If all the data is correct, we go for a larger number. We'll do this until we are comfortable that all of the data will be converted correctly. Then comes the big push, and we will go live on the new software. Of course there's the issue of "training the users."

So now we've gone from being the civil automation committee, to conversion team, and later we'll be "super users/trainers."... still more padding for my resume.

This has been a difficult and trying road, but as I test drive the new software (often hugging the monitor because of some new feature I've discovered) and think about how it all comes together in the end, I'm satisfied that it's worth the hard work. I would never have dreamt that my job as Court Administrator would develop into creating court management software for the Dallas County judges. Hopefully, my trials and tribulations will show my peers in rural counties that no job is too large. It takes hard work and perseverance to change a system that has "always been done that way."

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFILE

Carl Reynolds, Administrative Director – OCM

Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson has announced the selection of Carl V. Reynolds as the new administrative director of the Texas Office of Court Administration.

Reynolds, general counsel since 1997 for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, will begin April 25.

As general counsel at Criminal Justice, he oversees a legal office of as many as 40, providing litigation support and services to a department of 40,000 employees.

Reynolds was general counsel for the Texas Board of Criminal Justice from 1993 to 1997, executive director of the legislative Texas Punishment Standards Commission from 1991 through 1993 and worked as staff director of the Senate Redistricting Committee in 1991. He also served as general counsel to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee after a year in private practice.

He is a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and earned his bachelor's degree with high honors in public policy at the University of Cincinnati. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Professional Organizations

Many times during the year, we are called upon to access information that may not be easily available. This guide is so our members will have easy access to professional organizations, not only within Texas, but across the United States. Hopefully you will find it useful.

Texas Association for Court Administration

- www.mytaca.org
- Annual Conference October 10-14, 2005, Dallas, Texas
Scholarships available to annual conference and national programs

National Association for Court Management

- www.nacmnet.org
- Pursues professional development
Produced the Core Competency Curriculum Guidelines
Publishes guides including media guide

National Center for State Courts

- www.ncsc.dni.us
- Educational branch for the Institute of Court Management
- Offers educational opportunities & scholarships.
- 2 Programs Offered
- Court Executive Development Program
Phase 1 – 5 courses taken throughout the U.S.
Phase 2 – 3 week course offered in Williamsburg, VA
Phase 3 – Research Paper – independent study
Phase 4 – Presentation of Paper to their peers – Graduation ceremony at the Supreme Court of the United States
- Court Management Program
2 phased certification program
Phase 1 – 5 courses of study across the U.S.
Phase 2 – Week long seminar in leadership, management techniques & specific court issues

Texas Center for the Judiciary

- Primary provider of specialized judicial educational training for Judges
- www.yourhonor.com
- Tracks CLE hours for Judges

Justice Management Institute (JMI)

- www.jmijustice.org
- Offers a wide range of educational opportunities
- Provides research, workshops & continuing education seminars in justice system administration

National Judicial College

- www.judges.org
- Offers educational opportunities for Judges & Administrators
- Classes taken through the University of Nevada

Office of Court Administration (OCA)

- www.courts.state.tx/oca/
- The administrative branch of the Texas Supreme Court – provides administrative & technical support for courts statewide
- Produces all statewide statistics for all courts
- Website includes model forms & a guide for pro-se defendants
- Tracks all legislation for Judges & handles research projects for courts.

COME JOIN US FOR THE 2005 TACA ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE!



October 10 –14, 2005
to be held at the
Omni Dallas Hotel Park West
1590 Lyndon B
Johnson Freeway
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(972)-869-4300

Room Rates: \$80.00 Single;
(or prevailing State rate)
\$95.00 Double

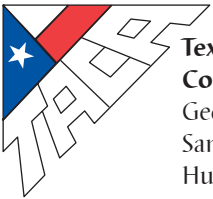
We will enjoy quality training during the day and take a trip to the
TEXAS STATE FAIR
in the evening!



Big Tex and the Tower building



The TXU Energy Extravaganza has become an eagerly anticipated nighttime event at the State Fair of Texas. Up and down the Esplanade's 700-ft. reflecting pool, visitors squeeze into every conceivable space to witness a virtual kaleidoscope of music, video, laser and lighting effects.



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