



Friends OF THE COURT

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Supreme Court Celebrates 175th Anniversary

The Arkansas Supreme Court celebrated its 175th anniversary with the opening of the 2011 - 2012 term. Following the oral argument on September 8th in the Old Supreme Court courtroom in the State Capitol, an informal reception was held in the Justice Building for staff and guests.

The Supreme Court was created by the Arkansas Constitution and at first consisted of three justices. The Arkansas Legislature increased the Court to five in 1889 and an additional two justices were added by a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 1925.

The Court met in the Old Statehouse until 1912 when it moved to the Capitol Building. In 1958, the Court relocated to its current home in the Justice Building which is located on the Capitol grounds.

First Court Management Program Graduates

The Administrative Office of the Courts held its first Court Management Program (CMP) graduation in August. Twenty-six trial court assistants from around the state completed the three-year program which consists of six 2.5 day sessions taught by certified faculty from Arkansas and other parts of the country. The sessions over the course of the program involved training in case flow management, purposes and responsibilities of courts, court technology, human resources and managing court finances. At the graduation ceremony, they received from Chief Justice Jim Hannah a nationally recognized certification as a Certified Court Manager.

Arkansas is one of seven states assisting in updating and enhancing the CMP. Twenty-four more participants are scheduled to graduate in 2012 and twenty-three will conclude the program in 2013.

Those graduating in the 2011 class were: Chea Ball/19th Cir.-Bentonville, Deseria Blair/23rd Cir.-Lonoke, Michelle Boehler/18th W. Cir.-Mena, Lanna Clark/9th E. Cir.-Arkadelphia, Karen Cobb/6th Cir.-Little Rock, Sherri Colbert/6th Cir.-Little Rock, Sherri Daniels/18th E. Cir.-



Arkansas Supreme Court members celebrate the Court's 175th anniversary. (Left to right) Justice Karen Baker, Justice Jim Gunter, Justice Don Corbin, Chief Justice Jim Hannah, Justice Robert Brown, Justice Paul Danielson and Justice Courtney Henry.

(See CMP on page 2)

Hot Springs, Claudette Davis/14th Cir.-Mountain Home, Kim Dodson/12th Cir.-Fort Smith, Eunice Dunkin/14th Cir.-Harrison, Vicki Evans/13th Cir.-El Dorado, Christie Greer/6th Cir.-Little Rock, Laura Hagen/2nd Cir.-Paragould, Nadine Holland/19th E. Cir.-Berryville, Bridgette Howard/18th E. Cir.-Hot Springs, Cindy Hunt/18th E. Cir.-Hot Springs, Helen King/10th Cir.-McGehee, Pollyanna Leimberg/14th Cir.-Harrison, Susan McGehee/20th Cir.-Conway, Pam Murphy/10th Cir.-Hamburg, Belinda Penn/2nd Cir.-Paragould, Janis Porterfield/8th N. Cir.-Hope, Betty Schrader/19th W. Cir.-Bentonville, Darlene Walters/7th Cir.-Sheridan, Carla Wooley/11th



Circuit Judge James Cox (12th Cir.) accompanies his trial court assistant, Kim Dodson, as she receives her certificate from Chief Justice Hannah. Accompanying Chief Justice Hannah are Justice Jim Gunter (left) and Justice Paul Danielson.

W. Cir.-Pine Bluff, Dawn Thompson and Ben Barham/AOC.

The graduation ceremony was recorded and can be viewed on the Arkansas Judiciary website by linking into the “Oral Argument-

Other Events” tab at http://170.94.10.59/oral_arguments/other_events.cfm and finding “Court Management Graduation.”

Court Security and Emergency Preparedness

Since 2008, the Administrative Office of the Courts has been administering a court security grant program for the purpose of providing financial assistance to city and county governments in the implementation of local security and emergency preparedness plans for circuit and district courts. To date one million dollars in grant funds for the purpose of improving court security have been distributed, according to Pete Hollingsworth, Director of Court Security and Emergency Preparedness in the AOC.

For the current year, \$402,326.63 was requested by eligible applicants. The Supreme Court Committee on Court Security and Emergency

Preparedness reviewed all of the applications and approved

23 of the requests for a total of \$250,000, the maximum that



Deputy Robert Case, Court Security Officer for Greene County Circuit Court, displays the court’s closed circuit tv.

could be awarded. The grants, with each not to exceed \$15,000, were disbursed to the counties on May 18, 2011. Numerous items, including communication upgrades, video arraignment, fingerprint biometric access system, metal detectors, alarm systems, portable radios, and closed circuit tv systems, were obtained by the counties with the 2011 funding grants.

Hollingsworth stated that the AOC is hosting a one-day seminar in October that is being presented by Calibre Press, LLC, a 30-year law enforcement training agency. The title of the seminar is “Courthouse Tactic-Mindset for Survival.” It is anticipated that 100 Court Security Officers (CSO) will be attending.



Electronic Filing Phase 1 Go-live Set for March 19, 2012

Attorneys and others across the state are anxiously awaiting the completion of the first phase of the Electronic Filing pilot project. The project is being managed by Beatrice Nelson, PMP, Senior Project Manager for the CIS Division of the Arkansas Supreme Court Administrative Office of the Courts. Nelson is also active in the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Project Management Institute, of which she has been a member since 2000, serving as the organization's president since 2010.

A core team consisting of attorneys, judges, circuit court staff, and AOC staff was formed early in the project to provide input to the project team in developing statewide best practices for the electronic filing system. The core team analyzed the system features, with a focus on Arkansas court procedures, and developed a set of business requirements for the electronic filing application. During the analysis phase, an amendment to Arkansas Supreme Court Administrative Order 21 was submitted and approved in June to allow the option to electronically file case-initiating documents. The amendment also requires training for those who apply to be registered users of the state electronic filing system, and to allow Continuing Legal Education credit for the completion of the training. Subsequently, a change to the August 2011 target phase 1 go-live date was made to incorporate the addition of these new items into the project.

Phase 1 of the project is aimed at deploying the main components of the electronic filing system, which includes the ability to submit initial and subsequent case filings for civil, domestic, and probate cases in the application. This phase also involves integrating four

systems: the Information Network of Arkansas (INA) filing fee payment processing engine, the Dynamic Information Solutions Company (DISC) document management system, the ACS Contexte case management system, and the Tybera electronic filing system. The target go-live for the phase 1 of the project is scheduled for March 19, 2012.

The Pulaski County Circuit Court is participating in the project as a pilot court. During phase 1, staff in the Pulaski County Circuit Court will be trained on how to handle the electronically filed case submissions. Registered users will also be trained on how to perform initial and subsequent case filings in the system.

The second phase of the project will enable the electronic filing of Juvenile cases in the Pulaski County Circuit Court. The final phase of the project will enable the electronic filing of Criminal cases in the Pulaski County Circuit Court. Work for the second phase will begin near the end of the first phase and is targeted to be completed during the second quarter of 2012, with the final phase completing during the third quarter of 2012.

CASA Presents Awards

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) presented awards recently to individuals and groups for their contribution to the program this past year. **Circuit Judge Earnest E. Brown, Jr.**-11th W. Circuit- received the Judge of the Year. The Program of the Year award went to **CASA of the 20th Circuit**, and **Carla Reyes** of Camden received the Attorney Ad Litem of the Year award.

Defense Counsel Presents Award

The Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel (AADC) honored **Circuit Judge Chris E Williams**-7th Judicial Circuit- with the 2011 Judge of the Year award. The Seventh Judicial District comprises Hot Spring and Grant Counties.

The AADC created the award to recognize a current sitting judge in any federal or state court in the State of Arkansas who has demonstrated a commitment to the impartial administration of justice. "We are truly fortunate in Arkansas to have such a fine and intelligent judiciary. Judge Williams is a prime example of our hard-working judges who devote themselves to the cause of justice. The AADC is very pleased to acknowledge Judge Williams for his great work on the bench," commented Kyle R. Wilson, AADC president.

In Memory

JUDGE GEORGE CRACRAFT

Retired Court of Appeals Judge George Cracraft passed away in August. Before coming to the Court of Appeals, Judge Cracraft had served as City Attorney for West Helena and Deputy Prosecuting Attorney of Phillips County. He served on the Court of Appeals from 1981 - 1992, serving two of those years as Chief Judge. Heartfelt sympathies are sent to Judge Cracraft's family.



New faces in the Judiciary

AOC

Software Engineer — **Quasar**

Jarosz.

Software Engineer — **Joseph**

Utecht.

Contract Technical Analyst —

Larry Rathjen.

Functional Specialist — **Jacob**

Foshee.

Functional Specialist — **Mehedi**

Rajib.

Domestic Violence Program

Coordinator —

Lensa Odima-Warden.

Project Analyst — **Lashanda**

Jenkins.

Website Coordinator — **Rhea**

Clougherty

Official Court Reporter

16th Cir. (Kemp) — **Leigh**

Coffman replaces Kistena Repech.

District Court Clerks

Ashley County/Hamburg Dept. —

Norma Hales replaces Deborah

Barnesas.

Mississippi County/Gosnell

Dept. — **Alvque Henderson**

replaces Nola King.

Saline County/Alexander Dept. —

Brenda Hendrix replaces Pam

Madison.

Woodruff County/Augusta and

Cotton Plant Depts. — **Essie**

Nichols replaces Rebecca Boyles.

City Court Clerks

Gilmore — **Noryce Medley**

replaces Cathy Moore.

Marvell — **Tonya Sweatt** replaces

Rabian Briggs.

Patterson — **Essie Nichols** replaces

Rebecca Boyles.

CALENDAR

October

Fall Judicial College/Judicial 19-21

Council Mtg.

(Eureka Springs)

Court Reporters' 21-22

Annual Conference

(Eureka Springs)

November

District Court Clerks 18

Certification (1st & 3rd Districts)

(Springdale)

February

District & City Court Clerks 17

Certification (2nd & 4th Districts)

(Little Rock)

District Court Officers 23-24

(Hot Springs)

March

Trial Court Assistants Conf. 1-2

(Hot Springs)



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Address Correction Requested

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are welcome.

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Karolyn Bond, Editor.