



Friends of the Court

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Foreign Language Interpreters Receive Certification

The Administrative Office of the Courts is charged by law and Supreme Court per curiam order with responsibility for the certification and matters related to foreign language interpreters for non-English speaking parties or witnesses in the state and local courts of Arkansas. Upon completion of tests given by the AOC and consisting of simultaneous, consecutive and sight interpreting, three court foreign language interpreters qualified to receive certificates declaring them to be Arkansas State Certified Interpreters.



(Left to Right) Raul Marquez, Foreign Language Interpreter Program Coordinator, Rafael Marquez Mara Simmons, Chief Justice Arnold, and Sebastian Lantos.

On June 6, 2002, Chief Justice W.H. "Dub" Arnold presented the certificates to Rafael Marquez of Fayetteville, Mara Simmons of Little Rock, and Sebastian Lantos of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Foreign Language Interpreter Orientation Training Programs have been conducted by the AOC in the past and another one is scheduled for September 6th and 7th in Little Rock. For further information, contact Raul Marquez, Program Coordinator, (501) 682-9400.

RENOVATION COMPLETED ON ORIGINAL JUSTICE BUILDING

The Arkansas Court of Appeals, the Criminal Justice Coordinator's Office, the Reporter of Decisions' Office and the Administrative Office of the Courts have moved back into the renovated original Justice Building. Since January of 2001, these groups have been temporarily located in downtown Little Rock while work was being completed on the 1958 structure.

New to the AOC is an area designated as the Computer Lab. It houses nine computer stations and an instructor station and will be used for computer training by various court personnel. First on the agenda for the Lab is training for ACS, the court manage-

ment software chosen for a comprehensive integrated automated justice system for the Circuit and District Courts in all seventy-five counties.



New Computer Lab at the Administrative Office of the Courts

As an added feature in the halls of the renovated portion of the Justice Building, pictures of all of the county courthouses in the State will be hung permanently.

The renovated wing and the new wing of the Justice Building are connected by a glass breeze way, with a courtyard in between the two structures. The new West Wing of the Justice Building complex was dedicated in April of 2001. The West Wing houses the chambers and conference room of the seven member Arkansas Supreme Court, the offices of the Supreme Court Clerk, the Office of Professional Programs and the Office of Professional Conduct.

ACAP Update by Tim Holthoff

The last few months have been very busy for the Arkansas Court Automation Project. As announced in the last issue of the *Friends of the Court*, ACS, Inc. was selected as the vendor for the project. The AOC signed a contract for a statewide software license and services, and the Legislative Council approved the contract for pilot court implementation services. The project is proceeding cautiously in light of the difficulties of other technology projects; nevertheless, we are pleased about the judiciary's excitement regarding the prospect of making a top-of-the-line case management system available for our courts.

In May, Susan Torrans, previously with the Arkansas Crime Information Center, joined the project as the Pilot Project Coordinator. She will be working with the pilot courts to ensure that implementation goes well. Susan brings with her an impressive list of successful projects, and extensive experience with the law enforcement and medical communities. She is quickly learning the complexity of the Third Branch, and is dedicated to the success of the pilot project.

One of the most difficult tasks over the last few months was the selection of a limited number of pilot courts from a group of more than thirty courts that had expressed interest. The pilot project will be conducted in six courts: Conway District Court, Malvern District Court, Springdale District Court, Faulkner County Circuit Court, Hot Spring County Circuit Court, and Sebastian County Circuit Court. The courts were selected for diversity based on numerous factors such as the level of and familiarity with court technology, the availability of pilot project resources, and the case loads of the courts.

During the pilot project we will examine the impact of implementation on courts which have varying levels of each of the factors. After the system has been



implemented in the six pilot courts, we will be prepared to add several more district courts that had expressed interest in serving as pilot courts.

We have also been busy building our Project Core Team from both pilot and non-pilot courts. The Core Team will be responsible for making configuration decisions that will impact the statewide implementation. The Project Core Team members are as follows:

Team Leader

Tim Holthoff, ACAP Director

District Judge Rep./Judge David Stewart, Little Rock District Court

District Clerk Rep./Melba Russell, Malvern District Court

Circuit Judge Rep./Judge John Lineberger, retired

Circuit Clerk Rep./Sharon Rimmer, Faulkner County Circuit Court

Case Coordinator Rep./Christine Larru, Crawford County Circuit Court

Automation Committee Rep./Stephen Sipes, Pulaski County Circuit Court

County Clerk Rep./Britt Williford, Ouachita County

AOC Rep./Jack Marks, Director AOC Courts I.S. Division

Conway District Court Rep./Donna Clifton

Springdale District Court Rep. Jennifer Langley

Hot Spring County Circuit Rep./Sue Jones

Sebastian County Circuit Rep./Denora Coomer

The Core Team functional training will be conducted at AETN in Conway, and at the Fort Smith Public

Library. ACAP and the AOC are very grateful to the City of Fort Smith, the Public Library, and P.J. Williams for making their fine facility available for training at no charge, and to AETN for giving us a reduced rate for their training facility. The willingness of AETN and the Fort Smith Public Library to assist the project epitomizes the attitude that will be required of city, county, and state employees to make this project succeed. None of us alone have the resources to bring the technology of all the courts into the 21st century, but by working together and sharing the resources we have, success is possible.

The next year is going to be even more demanding on ACAP than the last. Beginning in September we will be conducting 12 weeks of functional training in two locations spread out over six months. We will simultaneously be conducting eight weeks of technical training for system administration. Following the technical training and functional training we will be spending several weeks configuring the new case management system before we begin task-based training for pilot court employees. We will deploy the pilot system using two regional servers, one hosted in Sebastian County, and the other hosted by the AOC. We will also have a statewide server that will begin collecting the data from the regional servers, and which will be available for court employees to locate cases in other jurisdictions. We expect the pilot project to be complete, with all six courts online approximately one year from now.

After the pilot project is complete, we will begin expanding the system by adding courts to the existing regional servers, by adding additional regional servers, and by assisting courts that wish to host their own data. ACAP is developing a plan for statewide rollout and determining the hardware and database software costs for eventual statewide coverage. For

courts interested in moving to the new system after the pilot project, the hardware requirements are rather minimal, and the only other requirement, for those courts serviced by a regional server, will be Internet access or access to the state backbone network. Courts moving to the new system will be responsible for conversion of their own data, if they desire. However, AOC will be able to assist in the conversion process.

During post-pilot implementation, some courts will likely wish to host their own systems, and others may wish to become regional hosts. Although the State has paid the software license fees, and will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance fees, we will need additional funding to complete statewide implementation. ACAP has recently collaborated with the Arkansas State Police on a federal grant application, and will continue building partnerships and locating additional financial resources to assist the courts and complete implementation of the system.

Accolades are due the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Automation. The Committee completed its challenge of evaluating and selecting a new case management system in a limited time and within a very limited budget. The Committee worked very hard to develop the Request For Proposals, evaluate the responses, and view demonstrations of the highest ranked vendors. Without the dedication and determination of the Committee, the success of the project would not be possible.

The Committee is now moving to another phase of the project and is beginning work on important policy issues that will affect court automation in the State of Arkansas. The Committee is reviewing the Preliminary Strategic Technology Plan adopted last year by the Supreme Court. The Committee is beginning work on the technology issues of privacy and public access to data in our new court system,

(See ACAP last page.)

Exhibits on Display at the Justice Building

An exhibit sponsored by the Arkansas Supreme Court Historical Society is currently on display in the Justice Building. Sowing the Seeds



“Sowing the Seeds of Civil Rights” Display

of Civil Rights: African-American Attorneys in Arkansas, uses photographs and original court documents to examine the experiences of black lawyers in Arkansas from the Reconstruction period through the present. It was researched and developed by Supreme Court

Historian Robin Baldwin with the support of a grant from the Arkansas Bar Foundation. The desegregation of the University of Arkansas School of Law, the history of black bar associations, African-Americans participation in politics, and the Elaine riot of 1919 are some of the topics explored

by this presentation. Also featured in this exhibit are the portraits of two Supreme Court Justices on loan from the Secretary of State’s Office.

Additionally, on display in the Justice Building is a complementary exhibit on loan from the Delta Cultural Center, a division of the

Arkansas Department of Heritage. Ten posters from A Land Given: 19th Century African-Americans in the Arkansas Delta present the

histories of men who made significant contributions to the growth and development of Arkansas’ Delta communities. The civil rights work done by Arkansas’ African-American attorneys helped provide greater opportunities for black Arkansans to become successful

landowners, businessmen and educators, like those on display in this exhibit.

Additionally, the Administrative Office of the Courts has arranged for the installation of a major traveling exhibit at the Justice Building this Fall. Marching Toward Justice, The History of the



Portraits & history of Arkansas Delta African-American landowners, businessmen and educators on display at the Justice Building

14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, will be on loan from Wayne State University Law School and the Damon J. Keith Law Collection of African-American Legal History.



(ACAP continued)

and they are initiating investigations into the use of electronic signatures and electronic documents in the courts. Work on these issues will pave the way in determining what information in the new system will be available to whom, and will prepare the courts for electronic filing and transfer of documents to and from the courts.

The Arkansas Court Automation Project is moving slowly but steadily towards the goal of uniform statewide court automation. In 1990, when appointing the Committee on Automation, the Arkansas Supreme Court announced its desire to create “uniform and effective automation of the courts of this state [that] will increase the cost effectiveness and the efficiency of our courts, as well as improve the quality of justice available to our citizens.” A year from now, with the completion of the pilot project in sight, and the beginning of statewide deployment, our courts will have taken a giant leap towards realization of the Supreme Court’s vision.

New Faces in the Judiciary

Circuit Judges

15th - **David McCormick** replaces Bill Bullock.

Case Coordinators

4th - (Zimmerman) **Amy Pense** replaces Yolanda Copeland.

21st (Cottrell) **Christine Larru** replaces Mariesa Baker.

15th - **Sheri Mitzel** is the new case coordinator.

City Court Clerks

Shannon Hills - **Karen Brown** replaces Jean Bormann Herald.

Elaine - **Tina Griffith** replaces Jeanette Guest.

Norfolk - **Susan Motes** replaces Peggy German.

Police Court

Marion - **Angie Trotter** replaces Shirley Clem.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Foreign Language Training (Little Rock-Holiday Inn Select) **6-7**

District/City Court Clerks’ Cert. (Little Rock - Holiday Inn Select) **20**

CASA Conference (North Little Rock Hilton) **20-21**

District Judges’ Fall College (Heber Springs - Red Apple Inn) **26-28**

OCTOBER

Fall Judicial College/Judicial Council Meeting (Eureka Springs-Inn of the Ozarks) **16-19**

NOVEMBER

Juvenile Judges’ Conf. (Heber Springs - Red Apple Inn) **13-15**

District & City Court Clerks’ Certification (Hot Springs - Arlington) **15**



Friends of the Court

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Friends of the Court is a bi-monthly publication by the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts. Contributions, comments, and inquiries are welcome. Please submit to **Friends of the Court**, A.O.C., Justice Building, 625 Marshall, Little Rock, AR 72201. Tel. (501) 682-9400. Karolyn Bond, Editor.

**Address
Correction
Requested**