

Full Court Press

Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts
Open To All, Trusted By All, Justice For All

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NEW FAMILY COURT FACILITY OPENS

By Dianne King, Director, Family Court

You may have noticed some major changes on the JM level of the Moultrie Courthouse. New family courtrooms opened on July 26 and a Central Intake Center (CIC) opened in early August. These beautiful and functional facilities are part of the new Family Court space located on the JM and first floor levels of the Moultrie Courthouse. This construction consolidates the public functions of the Family Court, providing “one-stop-shopping” to District residents served by the Family Court.

The renovated space provides an identity for the Family Court, with a separate Family Court entrance from the John Marshall plaza (between the Courthouse and the Metropolitan Police Department), family waiting areas, and child-friendly colors and furniture so that families will be comfortable while participating in court proceedings. The Mayor’s Services Liaison Office will be re-located right off the lobby to provide a convenient place for Family Court users to access related city services.

The new Family Court Central Intake Center provides a single, central point of filing for all Family Court cases. The CIC facilitates compliance with the Family Court Act of 2001, which requires that all cases involving the same family or household be assigned to one judicial team, the “one family/one judge” approach.

The Central Intake Center provides comprehensive, timely and efficient case-processing services in one centralized location, including filing new cases, filing documents for existing cases, and collection of filing fees in divorces, adoptions, custody actions, visitation, legal separation, stand-by guardianship, annulment, paternity and child support, juvenile delinquency, abuse, neglect and mental health and retardation matters. The CIC is the

primary location for dissemination of information to the public and the various agencies involved in cases before the Family Court. The CIC provides access to case information available to the public through the Court’s new Integrated Justice Information System (IJIS).

The staff of the CIC has been assembled from several branches across the Family Court and specially trained to respond to customer inquiries concerning all types of Family Court cases. They are knowledgeable about relevant code provisions, administrative rules and policies pertaining to the Family Court, and assist customers, including pro se parties, with all types of Family Court matters. The CIC is open from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The general information telephone number is 202-879-1212. The grand opening of the new Family Court on the JM level will be held on September, 15.



One of the Family Court hearing rooms.

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LA AMISTAD—A JOURNEY TO REMEMBER

By Jayne I. Withers, Judicial Administrative Assistant to Judge Michael Rankin

La Amistad—A journey to remember and an event to cherish for a lifetime. On May 7th, over 100 students from both Jefferson Junior High School and Ballou Senior High School embarked on a remarkable journey back in time aboard the replica slave ship, *La Amistad*. This adventure was a joint effort by the Intellectual Property Law Section of the D.C. Bar and D.C. Courts. The students from these two schools were selected because the Courts were anxious to thank them for their participation in the Courts' Black History Month program in February. The sponsor of this event, Amistad America, welcomed the students and prepared them for a fantastic, challenging and educational journey back in time. "I imagined myself lying down...slaves on top of me and chained to other slaves...it was a great experience for me," said Debbie Osborne of Ballou.

Under beautiful blue skies, calm as a rippling water current pressed lightly against the ship's bow, the students were given a brief overview of the Africans' ordeal, viewed a short film re-enactment of the event, and then toured the ship.

Amistad is a name many remember from Steven Spielberg's movie, but few know the true story. In 1839, a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean turned terrifying for 53 Africans. Forty-nine men and four children were illegally kidnapped from West Africa and sold into the trans-Atlantic slave trade aboard the Portuguese slave vessel *Tecora*. The captives, taken to Havana, Cuba and fraudulently classified as native Cuban-born slaves, were illegally purchased by Spaniards and transferred to the coastal cargo schooner *La Amistad*.

Three days into the journey, a 25-year-old Mendi rice



before the U.S. Supreme Court, marking this event as the first human rights case in the history of this country. Finally, in 1841, the 35 surviving Africans were returned to Africa as free men and women.

The education coordinators of Amistad America managed to relay sometimes graphic images that translated the enormity of the African's suffering — the comprehension of which was clearly visible on the faces of many students. As the students sat attentively on the edge of their seats, the coordinators transported the students back in time, describing vivid images of the captives shackled together, one against the other, under the strain of intense heat and the stench of the unventilated cargo hold. The unique experience of two of the four children on the Amistad captivated the students and initiated a lively question and answer session. Margui (Mar-gu), a girl around 11, sold by her father to the Spaniards to pay an outstanding debt and Cullie (Kali), a boy around 8, despite his tender years and the language barrier that existed, learned to read, write, and speak English during the nine months of his ordeal.

While touring the ship during a hands-on demonstration, the students were encouraged to fully participate in all aspects of the adventure. They lined up side by side on deck, listening for the ship's crew member to shout "heave," and in unison shouting, "ho" as they pulled the line hoisting the foresail of the Freedom Schooner Amistad.

Continued on page 12.



Chief Judge King and Bertie Raye III (son of Lula Raye of the Executive Office) of Amistad America welcomes the students.

farmer named Cinque (Seen'-Kay) lead a revolt. After 62 days at sea, *La Amistad* and her African 'cargo' were seized and held on charges of murder and piracy. Former President John Quincy Adams successfully argued for the release of the captives

The Full Court Press is published by the District of Columbia Courts to provide information about the D.C. Courts.

Leah Gurowitz, Editor

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TOWN HALL MEETINGS CONTINUE COURT-COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

By David Bell, Strategic Program Analyst

Four town hall meetings were held in May and June to provide District residents an opportunity to share their views about the D.C. Courts. The town hall meetings were funded by a grant from the State Justice Institute to gain public input on important issues facing the Courts and the community. The town hall series implements Strategy 5.3.1 in the Courts' Strategic Plan, to solicit input from court participants and the public regarding the Courts' operations and performance.

In an effort to reach residents in all parts of the city, town hall meetings were scheduled at community locations in different wards. On May 4, a town hall meeting was held at Bell Multicultural School, in Ward 1. Approximately 50 residents, many from the local Latino community, attended the meeting. The Courts arranged for interpreters to assist non-English speakers at the meeting with real-time translation services. Another town hall meeting, for residents of Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4, was held on May 6 at the University of the District of Columbia. This meeting drew about 60 participants. In June, town hall meetings were held at Backus Middle School in Ward 5 and in the Jurors' Lounge of the Moultrie Courthouse (within Ward 6). Approximately 100 people came to the Backus School meeting while about 15 people attended the meeting at the Courthouse.

Using technology similar to that used on the television show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, a facilitator asked the town hall participants to answer a series of questions about their perceptions of the Courts. Audience members gave their answers by punching numbers corresponding to answer choices on a wireless keypad. The responses of the group were then instantly displayed on a large screen and the facilitator led participants in a discussion of the results. The wireless keypad technology, called OptionFinder, is a unique



Bell Multicultural School in Northwest ...

way of obtaining audience participation in a large group setting.

The town hall sessions featured the OptionFinder survey to get community input, a speakers' panel from the Courts to provide an overview about certain court operations, and a question and answer period for residents to talk directly with judges. Panel participants included Judge Vanessa Ruiz of the Court of Appeals, Superior Court Senior Judge

Henry Greene, Associate Judges Cheryl Long, Kaye Christian, Lee Satterfield, José López, Joan Zeldon, Noël A. Kramer, Hiram Puig-Lugo, Robert Morin, William Jackson, and Magistrate Judges Andrea Harnett and Richard Ringell. Ms. Laura Banks-Reed, Director of the Crime Victims Compensation Program, also participated on the speakers' panel at several meetings. Residents enjoyed asking questions of the panels and also the one-on-one conversations that occurred after the formal sessions were concluded.

A Strategic Planning Leadership Council subcommittee planned the town hall meetings, assisted by many court employees. While there is not space to mention everyone by name, special thanks are due to Cheryl Bailey, Executive Office; Harika Bickicioglu, Research and Development Division; James Plunkett and Francis Burton, Office of Court Interpreting Services; Dan Cipullo, Criminal Division; Honorable Henry Greene; Leah Gurowitz, Executive Office; Nancy Matos, Human Resources Division; Honorable Aida Melendez; Alvin Milton, Central Recording Office; Jorgé Nava, Social Services Division; Joanne Pozzo, Research and Development Division; and Laura Reed, Crime Victims Compensation Program.

Community town hall meetings help the Courts better fulfill our mission by listening to those we serve and informing residents about the Courts. Several residents who attended the meetings said they helped to "de-mystify" the judicial process and demonstrate that judges and court employees are committed to the Courts' mission of ensuring justice in the community.



and Backus Middle School in Northeast.

BILINGUAL EMPLOYEES SHAPING THE COURTHOUSE COMMUNITY

By Leslie M. Boyd, Executive Office Intern

The Human Resources Division continues hiring bilingual candidates in fulfillment of one of the Courts' strategic goals—to ensure equal access for all. In this issue, we profile some of these staff members who work throughout the courthouse.

Eddy Colindres

Having served in the Probate Division for a year, Eddy Colindres moved to the Domestic Violence Unit Clerk's Office. His primary responsibility involves handling petitions from Spanish-speaking clients who are filing for protection against a spouse or significant other. Eddy was born in the United States and spent part of his childhood in Guatemala; he is the oldest of six children. Eddy returned to the United States 13 years ago and earned a bachelor's degree in International Economics from American University. When asked about the qualities that make him an asset to the organization, he says that he is approachable and relates well with people. His future plans include law school though he is unsure what areas of the law to practice because the field is so vast and interdependent. However, he says that one of his passions is civil rights. Furthermore, he would like to continue working with organizations that demonstrate a commitment to serving the Latino community and their needs; he is happy to be a part of the Courts. Meanwhile, Eddy's favorite pastimes are soccer and dancing.



Ilario Contreras

As Deputy Clerk in the Criminal Division's Special Proceedings Branch, Ilario Contreras's main responsibility involves filing motions and entering and updating



data for fugitive cases, out-of-state witness and writs. He is also responsible for getting court jackets and other needed information to the courtrooms and U.S. Marshals. Born and raised for a time in El Salvador, Ilario came to the United States at the age of 10, and the family settled in Washington, D.C. He is the second youngest of seven children. In 2002, he earned a bachelor's degree in Pastoral Counseling from Valley Forge Christian College in Pennsylvania. His future goals include earning an advanced degree and becoming a Probation Officer or doing work within Social Services. "I want to stay in the legal discipline and ultimately advance into a supervisory role," Ilario explained. When asked what his most memorable experience has been, he said making his family proud by being the first in the family to graduate from high school and college. Ilario's favorite pastimes include dancing, shopping, listening to Christian music, and outdoor activities.

Daniuska Cruz

Daniuska Cruz is known within the Criminal Division's Case Management Division as a hard-working and very helpful Deputy Clerk. She is computer-literate, personable, and relates well with both clients and peers. "I want to gain legal experience so that I can improve my chances of getting into law school." She would like to attend Georgetown or Howard University after completing her paralegal studies at Prince George's Community College. If and when she becomes an attorney, Daniuska would like to specialize in immigration or criminal law. Daniuska was born in the Dominican Republic and came to the United States in 1993. She is the oldest of seven children. While attending High



Point High School in Prince George's County, Maryland, Daniuska was active in such extracurricular activities as the Spanish Club and the National Honor Society while maintaining a 3.5 GPA. She spends her leisure time with her "pride and joy," Samuel, who is three years old, as well as going shopping, reading books including those by Iyanla Vanzant, dancing, and listening to music.

Wilfredo, Gaitan

One of the brightest faces in the Landlord and Tenant Branch is Wilfredo Gaitan. He is the Bilingual Deputy Clerk charged with assisting all Spanish-speaking clients, entering landlord/tenant cases and case dismissals into a database, and providing assistance to the courtroom clerks by contacting attorneys, filing stamped documents and praecipes, and doing morning roll calls. Wilfredo was born in Nicaragua and raised in Miami, FL, the "gateway to the Americas." He is a graduate of Florida International University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a minor in Latin American Studies. Before coming to the Courts, he was a studio manager for a photography company that specialized in taking yearbook pictures for high school students. Later he worked with AmeriCorps as a teacher instructing inner-city students in Spanish, photography, and American government. "Working with kids is a joyful experience." Away from the office, Wilfredo enjoys soft rock and classical music, traveling, and sightseeing with his wife. He is trilingual, speaking Spanish, English and a little Hungarian (which he learned from his wife in exchange for his teaching her Spanish).



Judge Blackburne-Rigsby Receives Business and Professional Women's League Award

On Saturday, April 17th, Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby of the D.C. Superior Court was awarded the Sojourner Truth Award at the 71st Annual Founders' Day Awards Luncheon held by the Business and Professional Women's League of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs. The Sojourner Truth award is the highest honor bestowed by the group. Mrs. Euna Smith, who gave a brief and thoughtful speech which highlighted the Judge's many accomplishments, presented Judge Blackburne-Rigsby with her award. The judge graciously accepted the award and spoke to the crowd of nearly 300 on the importance on service,



Judge Blackburne-Rigsby

faith and community.

The Business and Professional Women's League was the outgrowth of the efforts of Mrs. Beatrice Francis to galvanize business and professional women to pool their resources so that they might enjoy the benefits of organized thinking and a united front. Mrs. Francis, then chair of the industrial department of the YWCA, with the cooperation of Miss Irene Ruff, developed a program and solicited the cooperation of a group of business and professional women in the community. Their success in early projects was encouraging and on November 5, 1933, thirteen women founded the B&P Women's League.

THE 'ROCKET DOCKETS' DO THE COURT PROUD

By Magistrate Judge John McCabe

The Superior Court had another impressive showing May 5 at the Capital Challenge 3-Mile Race in Anacostia Park. A total of 19 participated, including Chief Judge King, Associate Judges José López, John Mott, Russell Canan, Erik Christian, Natalia Combs-Green, and Hiram Puig-Lugo; Magistrate Judges Juliet McKenna, Diane Brenneman and John McCabe; and Law Clerks/Interns/Courtroom Clerks Kathrina Peterson, Arnold Hanuman, Caroline Bar, Malcolm Drewery, LaTrice Flucas, Deborah Ohiomoba, Loren Ponds, Rebecca Shankman, and Rebecca Brisch.



Judge Mott receiving his award from race officials.

Judge John Mott won the award for fastest male judge (and he finished 7th overall in a pack of over 600 runners!), Judge Natalia Combs-Greene won the award for fastest female judge (for the 3rd straight year!), Chief Judge King (who previously won the award for fastest judge 9 times!) won the award for fastest team captain in his age group (we won't disclose what that "group" is). Finally, the "Rocket Dockets" team of Chief Judge King, John Mott, John McCabe, José López, and Kathrina Peterson won the award for fastest judicial team.

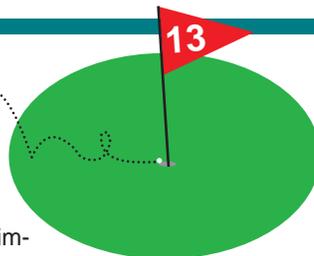
Thank you to all who participated, and we hope to see an even bigger turnout next year!



And the winner is ...

Can I Get A Witness . . . Please?

When you play golf with Judge Burgess, be sure to carry a pen with you: you may be required to sign the scorecard to confirm a hole-in-one! Judge Burgess made his awesome shot on May 30, 2004. He was playing by himself and when he reached the 13th hole, which was a Par 3, he shot his first-ever hole-in-one. Fortunately, there were four witnesses on the next hole who could verify his story and sign his score-card. Keep swinging, your Honor!



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PROFILE OF EVELYN STEPHENS, BENEFITS OFFICER

By Leslie M. Boyd, Executive Office Intern

A ray of sunshine sits at the helm of the Human Resources Division Benefits Office with the warmest of smiles and cheeriest of demeanors. Evelyn Stephens is the Benefits Officer for the Courts, and she loves her job. Together with two staff members, Evelyn implements, manages and guides the administration of all benefits programs for the Courts'



Evelyn shows her sunny smile.

employees. Her workload is extensive. She describes her responsibility as "nurturing the employees before they start and until they leave the organization." Her office ensures that employees are aware of and understand the types of benefits that are available, monitoring benefits programs like the flexible spending accounts and pension plans, counseling and communicating with family members about their loved one's benefits in the event of an employee's death, and managing employees' retirement plans. Her office also supervises contract administration for the Health Unit.

Evelyn's career in benefits administration began 21 years ago at US Air. She spent 11 years working in the human resources department beginning as a benefits assistant and leaving the company as a benefits administrator. "US Air was the launch pad for my passion in human resources and benefits administration" she says. For the next 8 years, she was the benefits specialist for the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission where she spearheaded the implementation of the human resources information system, HRIS, when it was a new concept to human resources departments. Armed with experience, Evelyn's transition into the D.C. Courts' Benefits Office on December 13, 1999 was a smooth one. "I have always been involved at the cutting-edge level of human resources' structural changes. For instance, when I came to the Courts, I spearheaded the implementation of benefits programs, like the flexible spending accounts program, that had been 'tabled' for some time. I guess



Evelyn a few years back -- striking then and now.

you could say that I have been in the right place at the right time" she says enthusiastically.

Having faced discrimination and setbacks, Evelyn's fortitude and determination were unshakable. When she was a teenager living in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, she remembered having to go to the back of a restaurant to eat or pick up food and having to sit in the balcony to watch a movie. In 1966, Evelyn graduated from Frederick

Douglas High School in Upper Marlboro at a time when schools were just being integrated in Maryland. She attended Hampton University and unfortunately had to leave for financial reasons. However, she persevered and worked for 10 years in the U.S. Postal Service and the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department. Then, in 1997, she earned her bachelor's degree in Healthcare Administration from Columbia Union College.

Evelyn positively beams about several accomplishments. The first is her two children: a daughter who is a sergeant in the military and a son who is an IT professional. The second accomplishment is receiving the Special Achievement Award for Exceptional Performance from the D.C. Courts. She says, "I was really surprised to learn that I won the award because I am content with being behind-the-scenes, but it was so nice to know that someone cared enough about me and recognized my contributions to the organization."

When its time to unwind, Evelyn enjoys shopping, renovating her home, and interior design. The best part of her day is spending time with her family, which includes a stepdaughter and stepson and four grandchildren, ages 9, 8, 5, and 4 months. She also enjoys playing the piano and clarinet, reading mysteries and science-fiction, and listening to all kinds of music. "When I was younger, my husband and I would hand dance and roller skate, but now, you can forget it!" she chuckles. Her professional and personal mantra is "to do unto others as you would have them do unto you," in other words, follow the Golden Rule.

COURTS IMPLEMENT NEW PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

By Rhonda Sanes, Program Analyst, Human Resources Division

On July 1, 2004 the District of Columbia Courts instituted a new Performance Management Program, which affects all non-judicial employees. The purpose of this new program is to fulfill the Courts' goal of employing a highly skilled and well-trained workforce. To align this initiative with the Courts' Strategic Plan we have linked our employees' performance to their divisions' Management Action Plans.

Major changes in the new system include the following:

- The evaluation period for all staff is the same, as opposed to beginning on

each employee's anniversary date;

- The rating system provides for more options in performance assessment, permitting managers to make more meaningful distinctions between employee performance levels. The new system provides greater opportunities to recognize employees for exceptional performance.

- In addition to ratings on job elements and standards, employees will be rated on competencies, or job-related traits;

In preparation for this new program, the Human Resources Division provided

training to 86% of the Courts' supervisory staff and 94% of employees.

Continued training will be provided to the supervisory staff on communication and how to give meaningful feedback.

The D.C. Courts are dedicated to providing superior service to all customers. If you have any questions or comments about the new program, please contact Ms. Rhonda Sanes, Human Resources Specialist at 202-879-4237.

COURTROOM 21 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRIVACY AND PUBLIC ACCESS TO COURT RECORDS

Judge Herbert Dixon, Judge Brook Hedge, Chief Judge Rufus King and IT Director Kenneth Foor (in picture at right) attended the 3rd Courtroom 21 Conference on Privacy and Public Access to Court Records. The attendees pictured are in the famed Courtroom 21 located at William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg, Virginia. Courtroom 21 is the world center for courtroom and related technology demonstration, research, experimentation, and education and training, and is known as the world's most technologically advanced trial and appellate courtroom. Chief Judge King and Judge Dixon were also attendees at both the 1st and 2nd privacy conferences at Courtroom 21 in 2002 and 2003. At this 3rd conference, Judge Dixon was a member of the faculty and was involved in organizing a panel discussion that included presentations on the topic of Commercial Use of Court Records.

The conference was organized to address substantial privacy and public access issues because of the adoption by many courts of electronic filing and electronic record keeping, and the corresponding desire to give both lawyers and the public Internet access to court records.

The event brought together about 90 participants who represented a broad range of perspectives on the issues,



including representatives from about 20 state court systems, the federal courts, the media, the academy, and the commercial sector.

The conference featured two full days of presentations and discussions on topics including:

- An update on the law on public access to court records;
- Recent developments in court public access and

privacy policies;

- Implementation of the "Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts;"
- Federal court policy on electronic access to criminal case files;
- Court records in the broader context of debate over access to public records;
- The role of technology in access policy development and implementation;
- Issues in the commercial use of court records.

The timeliness of this conference is underscored by the fact that a Privacy and Public Access Committee has been formed under the auspices of the Courts' Joint Committee on Judicial Administration to make recommendations concerning these issues. Judges Michael Farrell and Harold Cushenberry are co-chairs of this committee.

NEW EMPLOYEES

By Leslie M. Boyd, Executive Office Intern

CIVIL DIVISION ADDS TO ITS TEAM

Charmaine Bunch-Williams and Erica Hartsfield

Charmaine and Erica bring smiles and professionalism to their new positions as Deputy Clerk I for the Civil Actions Branch of the Civil Division. The women diligently and efficiently process general pleadings and complaints by entering data into a database. Charmaine is a native Washingtonian bringing several years of administrative experience to the Courts. She has worked in the areas of Human Resources and Legal Recruiting. "My experiences have shaped me into an articulate, level-headed professional." When away from the office, Charmaine enjoys reading, listening to music (one of her favorite artists is Gerald Levert), and interior design. She says that the best experience of her life was becoming a mother; she has a teenage son and a young daughter.



Charmaine Bunch-Williams



Erica Hartsfield

Erica began her career with the Courts a year ago as a Court Aide in the Family Court. She is so easy-going and friendly; you can't miss her positive attitude. "I would like to be successful and maybe remain in the legal field." She wants to return to school and major in Criminal Justice. After work, she loves to unwind with gospel and/or rhythm and blues music. Erica

is family-oriented, likes to read, hang out with her best friend, and play with her two-year-old nephew. She believes, "It's never too late to accomplish your goals and dreams . . . life is too short."

Kristina Ingram and Amanda Sevon

Both Kristina and Amanda are the "right-hands" to the judges. As Courtroom Clerks, they are responsible for calling cases, selecting jurors, leading them into the jury box and answering their questions, monitoring the "For The Record" software as it records court proceedings, and serving as the court liaison between lawyers and judges. One of the highlights of Kristina's day is when she receives commendations and compliments. "They just make you feel good, and it's important to be recognized." Kristina is a graduate of the University of Maryland at College Park majoring in Criminology and Criminal Justice. She loves forensics, traveling, and dancing. Her athletic passion lies in soccer.



Kristina Ingram

Amanda is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro majoring in Political Science. She says her work at the Courts is grooming her for her future goal of becoming a judge. Amanda says that she is laid-back, friendly and organized. She has an adventurous spirit and is willing to try anything once. "One of my favorite places to travel to is Maine because it's so peaceful and serene." Her athletic passion is running. One goal she would like to accomplish is running in the Marine Corps Marathon.



Amanda Sevon

HUMAN RESOURCE NEWS FOR COURT EMPLOYEES

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Open Season September 1, 2004 - September 30, 2004	Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season October 15, 2004 - December 31, 2004
Federal Employees' Health Benefit (FEHB)/Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) Open Season November 8, 2004 - December 13, 2004	Commuter Option Program - deadline August 30, 2004 for new and current participants

The HR Division will have at least one informational meeting for each Open Enrollment or Open Season. If you have any questions about your benefits, please contact the Human Resources Division at 879-2825 or 879-4220, and a benefits specialist will assist you.

CRIMINAL DIVISION INTRODUCES NEW EMPLOYEES

Anndreeze Hudson

Anndreeze is the Arraignment Court Coordinator in the Criminal Division. She supervises the Intake Office, which processes new cases for the Arraignment Court and supervises the C-10 court clerks and aides. Anndreeze earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Duke University and a law degree from Tulane University School of Law. She practiced law for 9 years before coming to the Courts. She spent six years as a prosecutor for the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office and 3 years as an insurance defense attorney for AllState Insurance Company. Anndreeze has a passion for classical piano and plays during leisure time. When she needs to unwind from her hectic workload, her music of choice is classical and jazz. She is currently training for a half-marathon race this upcoming Labor Day weekend.



Jermaun Moore

If someone wants to have his or her criminal records sealed, the person to see is Jermaun. She is a Deputy Clerk responsible for expungements. When asked to describe herself, she replied, "I am a hard-worker, a team player, and enjoy working with people." Jermaun attended Howard University, majoring in Administration of Justice with a minor in Sociology. She plans to further her education by obtaining an advanced degree in clinical social work. "Eventually, I would like to use my degree to help mentally-challenged individuals from all walks of life." Her most memorable experience at



Howard occurred during her tenure on the esteemed marching band. "I played the trombone and traveled along the eastern seaboard, Chicago and St. Louis. However, my most memorable time was at the 2000 NCAA basketball tournament in Iowa where we performed during the first round games." In her free time, Jermaun enjoys reading African American literature. She also enjoys traveling and listening to "old-school" rhythm and blues, funk, and hip-hop.

Brian Wilson

Serving as a Deputy Clerk in the Warrant Office, Brian Wilson processes search and extraterritorial bench warrants (warrants for the U.S. Marshals to arrest suspects outside the D.C. area). He assigns numbers to each warrant and logs them into a database. Mr. Wilson is a 2001 graduate of Towson University with a bachelor's degree in Public Relations and Mass Communications. His future endeavors include earning a Master of Business Administration degree concentrating on management within the public sector. "While I am here in the Courts, I want to maximize my professional capabilities and work toward becoming a supervisor or manager." Brian is easy-going, good at multi-tasking, and has a very professional demeanor. Born in the District and currently living in Waldorf, MD, he is married with a three-year-old son. When he is not working, Brian enjoys reading historical works, like those of Henry Louis Gates and Cornel West, and listening to all types of music.



PROBATE DIVISION WELCOMES NEW ASSISTANT DEPUTY REGISTERS OF WILLS

Tenisha Jiggetts and Elaine Kennell

Tenisha and Elaine are the Probate Division's newest Assistant Deputy Registers of Wills. They are responsible for advising attorneys and judges; reviewing pleadings to ensure compliance with statutes, rules and court procedures; reviewing cases in which hearings have been scheduled requesting the removal of fiduciaries or guardians; and providing information to the public about probate matters. Both are attorneys who specialized in family law and are alumna of The George Washington University School of Law.

Tenisha practiced law for 5 years, handling child abuse and neglect and domestic violence cases. As a former litigator for the D.C. Office of the Attorney General (formerly the Office of Corporation Counsel), she petitioned cases for Adult Protective Services seeking guardians, conservators and protective orders when appropriate. When away from the office, Tenisha is busy shuttling her kids to basketball practice and serving as Team Mom, executing fund-raising initiatives and other activities for the teams. Born and raised in Mount Vernon, New York, Tenisha came to Washington to attend Howard University where she earned her bachelor's degree in English Literature. "I have enjoyed practicing law and helping people."



Elaine Kennell

Elaine agrees. She was a solo practitioner for many years, specializing in child and elder abuse and neglect cases. Born in Denver, CO, Elaine and her brother moved with their parents to Camp Springs MD, and she graduated from the University of Maryland at College Park with a bachelor's degree in English Literature. She has a master's degree from Georgetown University in Theoretical Linguistics. When she is not thinking about legal matters, Elaine takes to the soccer field where she has played for more than 6 years. And after playing hard, she enjoys reading mysteries, gardening, and doing a little home improvement/interior designing.



Tenisha Jiggetts

CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM MOVES TO NEW ACCOMMODATIONS

By Laura Banks Reed, Program Director, Crime Victims Compensation Program

Since 1997, the Crime Victims Compensation Program has been housed on the second floor of Building A. In keeping with the courtwide Master Plan for Facilities, we recently moved to a newly renovated space on the first floor of Building A, room 104 (formerly the Center for Education and Training).

We are extremely pleased with our new office space. It is light-filled, modern, streamlined and provides substantially more room. The ingenious configuration of this new space has provided room to have four interns to help us with our work, which has been a tremendous boon.

Our clients benefit from this new office space as well. Each employee has an individual work station where interviews can be conducted with some measure of privacy, in an atmosphere that respects the serious nature of their business and the need to maintain their dignity.

We love our work, and our jobs are made easier in this beautiful space that provides us with ample room to perform the tasks necessary to serve the public. We recently had a visit from two detectives from Scotland Yard, and we were proud to host them for the afternoon in our new home. Please feel free to stop by and visit us. If anyone you know has been victimized by crime and could be assisted by the Crime Victims Compensation Program, please have them stop by or call the Program office at 879-4216.

Wellness Day for Victims of Domestic Violence

By Monica Slade, Victim Advocate, Crime Victims Compensation Program



In recognition of Crime Victims Rights Week, April 19-24th, the Crime Victims Compensation Program sponsored a Wellness Day Event for victims of domestic violence at a nearby hotel. The purpose of the event was to encourage domestic violence victims to begin the process of self-healing, to feel good about themselves, and to take full advantage of support services available to them and their families.

The Crime Victims Compensation Program has recently partnered with several non-profit organizations to provide services to victims of domestic violence at a local hotel used to provide temporary emergency shelter. The non-profit agencies involved are the House of Ruth, the Domestic Violence Coalition, Ramona's Way, and WEAVE (Women Empowered Against Violence). Several other agencies and individuals contributed to the activities offered on Wellness Day for lectures,

dance and yoga instruction, refreshments and informational materials. A play therapy session was also offered for the children of the hotel residents.

Discussion groups concerning healthy relationships, stress management and health awareness were conducted. A yoga class and a healing dance circle were offered as well. The program was very well-received. Participants engaged in certain activities for the first time, such as yoga and dance. At the end of the day, all were exhausted, but exhilarated!

Special thanks to Donna Rowe of the House of Ruth, Tazima Davis for the yoga instruction, Zahra Christine for the healing dance instruction, the Whitman Walker Clinic for a lecture on health awareness, Mark Bergel from a Wider Circle for his workshop on stress management/visualization, and Donna Geraci of Creative Ways Play for conducting the play therapy group on-site so that the mothers could take care of themselves for a change.





Rabe Reviews



April 20, 2004

Chief Judge Rufus King, III

Dear your Honor,

This is a quick note to tell you how impressed I was today in the way your administrative personnel handled all of our needs. I would like to give special thanks to: **MS. TINA SANDVIK, GARY FARRIS, TAKISHA BLAND, DONNA LITTE, PATTY McDONALD, DORIS DEW, TAWANDA WILLIAMS-WARRON, SUS BAILEY-JONES.** They were so courteous + understanding.

I also want to thank Judge Thomas Motley for his great consideration for our needs. Finally the ATM machine to receive the payment for transportation + or jury service is great.

Thanks for the fax, copier and computer lease. A very good service.

I also found the staff who read out the panel names in the main room to be polite, well-spoken and efficient. After many years of jury duty, it is obvious to me that the jury service team you have put in place has improved significantly. Congratulations! and thanks.

Joseph M. Coyle

Ref: Outstanding Customer Service - Ms. Juanita Coghill, et al.

Dear [Dianne] King:

Today, your staff provided me with outstanding customer service on my child support case. Your staff was cheerful, extremely helpful, and provided perfect advice. Especially helpful was Ms. Juanita Coghill.

I asked for an audit to be done on my case and she quickly produced the motion form. Ms. Coghill inquired further and recognized the case as from a foreign state. She then realized all I needed were certified copies to send to the foreign state. Ms. Coghill then noticed that my case was closed, but had payments being held. She had me sign up for assistance at the motions window.

Ms. Coghill helped to clear up the payment issues with the help of others on your staff. The clerk at the motions window was also extremely helpful. She noticed I had a DFAS military entry in my file and also brought Ms. Shands out to assist. Additionally, Ms. Shands gave me her number and said to call her in a few weeks if future held checks were not forwarded.

Because of your efficient and friendly staff, I received a held check, my address was changed, received assurances future held checks would be sent to me, and was handed two certified copies of my payment history in less than 30 minutes. Your staff was outstanding!

Sent: Monday, April 26, 2004
To: Chief Judge Rufus G. King III
Subject: Thank you from a Juror-Your staff is excellent!

Dear Judge King,

A few weeks ago, I dreaded fulfilling my jury summons. After previous forgetful experiences in Atlanta, GA in both the City of Atlanta and DeKalb County court systems and a terrible several days spent at the DC DMV to get my license and car registered, I didn't have the best expectations for my day in your courthouse.

Well...what a pleasant surprise I had in store for me. My first pleasant surprise was Gary Farris. What a delightful personality. His enthusiasm and professionalism was contagious enough to motivate a large group of disgruntled and recalcitrant adults into following directions and treating the process we were there for with dignity.

In addition, Patty McDonald and Doris Dew were extremely sweet, helpful, and above all, patient in assisting me and other jurors with our laundry lists of questions and complaints. There were plenty of places for me to work while waiting, and restrooms were close by. This is a minor, but appreciated, detail as your staff is what clearly makes the difference.

Please make sure that you let them know what a great job they are doing and encourage them to keep up the good work. As a taxpayer, to beat a dead cliché, their salaries are ones I am glad to help pay.

They clearly have a zest for their jobs. They realize that not everyone is thrilled to be there, yet their smiles and attitudes were enough to make my day better and to make me not mind being there (even while I was visualizing work piling up on my desk in my absence).

You are to be commended for such a fine staff. They are to be commended for doing a fantastic job. I'd gladly serve jury duty again if I knew I could experience their courthouse hospitality.

21-JUNE-2004

Ms. Dianne King

This is concerning Ms. Weaver she is a ideal employee who in my estimation Is doing her job to provide service and does so extremely well. I was very nervous And repeatedly called her and she kept her cool and went out of her way to provide Needed correct information. Well done!

Cont. from page 2.

The reverberations of the chant “heave, ho” could be heard in the distance.

On the final segment of the tour, as the students descended into the compact cargo hold of the ship, an eerie silence fell over the room as each student tried to find a place to sit in the tight quarters. The cargo hold walls, decorated with replicas of the original drawings of the Africans during the historic trial, convey the essence of their individuality and unique heritage. The *Amistad* tour guide, Donald George, a native of Sierra Leone, West Africa, invited the students to visualize what it must have been like for the Africans to endure such an arduous journey across the sea on such a small ship and in such close quarters. This modern day replica of the original cargo ship *La Amistad*, 85 feet on deck and 71 feet below deck, is large in comparison to the actual *Amistad* cargo schooner that sailed the ocean in the mid 1800s. One could only imagine the extreme conditions that existed on that ship for the 53 Africans.

Before this tour, most of the students only had a vague notion about the *Amistad*. This event provoked a fresh understanding and a newfound desire to learn more about this important episode in history — clearly reflected in the minds of several students who participated in the adventure. “It was a good experience to see the movie in person . . .it was inspirational. . .I like learning about my history,” said Cherrie Carter of Ballou. “I learned about the *Amistad* from history class and the movie, but only when I went into the cargo hold of the ship did I see the true connection,” said Troy Taylor of Jefferson.



Students from Jefferson Junior High perform a stellar musical piece.



Amistad crew member shouts “Heave” and students respond “Ho” as they hoist the sail.

As the journey neared its end, the Jefferson students delighted everyone with a surprise rendition of one of their many awe-inspiring songs. Their voices, a thunderous force, delivered harmonious melodies heard across the marina— epitomizing unity and discipline. They challenged Ballou to sing also, a challenge gladly – and beautifully –accepted.

Choir directors from both Ballou and Jefferson shared their excitement and relayed the importance and the impact an event like this can have on the students. “Several Jefferson students became emotional as they listened to the story of the *Amistad* Africans’ experience and walked through the replica schooner. The hands-on experience was invaluable . . .many students cried and many more asked questions...this had a tremendous impact on the Jefferson students,” said Robin Williams, Choir Director for Jefferson. Gary Stanley, Choir Director for Ballou, considered this event an opportunity for students to learn about a crucial part of American history.

The *Amistad* Freedom Schooner, a living testament to what happened in the lives of 53 Africans over 150 years ago serves as an educational ambassador, teaching lessons of history, cooperation, and leadership to Americans of all ages and races. This story of freedom proved to be a memorable and an enlightening experience for the students—a journey to remember.