



## Civil Division's Small Claims Branch Donates to the Community

For three weeks in February, the Civil Division's Small Claims Branch in the DC Superior Court came together and collected toiletry items to donate to Horton's Kids, a non-profit organization that provides a number of outreach services to children in Ward 8. The outreach activities include: educational programming, enrichment through field trips, basic needs services, healthy snacks at each program session, and community empowerment through a Community Resource Center.



Kids regularly accepts toiletry donations, and recently asked all tutors to collect donations for the kids.

Kiah Dixon of the Small Claims Branch has tutored with Horton's

Kids for two years, and knew that she could count on her colleagues to donate some items in support of the children. She attained the required approvals, and worked to put together a toiletry drive for Horton's Kids in her office.

As the days went by, the donation box placed on Ms. Dixon's desk constantly overflowed with toothbrushes, shampoo, soap, lotion, and other items. Ms. Dixon set a Branch goal of collecting 42 items, or 2 items per person. She is happy to report that the Branch far surpassed that original goal and donated 142 items and \$173.00 to Horton's Kids!

Ms. Dixon was overwhelmed by all of the support that she received from her Division Director, Zabrina Dempson; Branch Chief, Lori Gunn; and each one of her co-workers within the Small Claims Branch. The drive was an enormous success because of all of them. Well done to the Small Claims Branch and their commitment to serving the community!



Kiah Dixon

The children's families do not live within safe walking distance to the Metro, a pharmacy, or even a grocery store. In many cases, the annual income for many of the families is less than \$10,000. Consequently, the children often do not have everyday essentials, like toiletries. Because of this, Horton's

## April is Security Awareness Month

April 1<sup>st</sup> marks the beginning of Security Awareness Month. In honor of this month, the courts will host several events to promote security awareness among court employees, partners and members of the public. This year's events will be organized under the theme of "Your Security: At Home, at Work, in the Street."

This year's fair will take place **April 24<sup>th</sup> from 10am-2pm in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor atrium of the Moultrie Court-house**. All are welcome to attend and gain valuable physical and cyber-security tips from experts with the Metropolitan Police Department, the Transit Police, the Park Police, the DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Serve DC, Court IT Security, the Federal Trade Commission, the US Marshals Service, and other agencies. Attendees will also have opportunities to learn more about the work of criminal justice agencies, such as the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), the Pretrial Services Agency (PSA) and the US Attorney's Office, and how these agencies contribute to the mission of public safety.

Join us for our annual fair to increase your own security awareness and help promote a safe environment for those around you.

For any questions, contact: Joseph Bacchi @ [joseph.bacchi@dcsc.gov](mailto:joseph.bacchi@dcsc.gov).



*The DC Courts were proud to recently host a delegation from Nepal. Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric Washington (fifth from left) welcomed the delegation to the DC Courts.*

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Congratulations to **David Chang**, from the Center for Education and Training, who recently completed the Excellence in Government Fellows (EIG) program. EIG is a program created by the Partnership for Public Service, designed to promote and develop strong leadership in the federal workforce. According to the [Excellence in Government Fellows](#) website, the “program prepares leaders to be more than managers. They are innovators whose creativity in problem-solving stands up to the complexity of our 21st century challenges.”

Congratulations to **Mark Jackson**, Supervisory Probation Officer in the Court’s Social Services Division, who has been selected to receive one of the 2015 Cafritz awards. The awards, granted by the George Washington University Center for Excellence in Public Leadership, are designed to recognize five District of Columbia government workers each year for outstanding public service.

The Cafritz awards are a highly regarded recognition bestowed upon individuals whose hard work, dedication and commitment to public service have made a difference. According to the [Cafritz awards website](#), the awards are presented to “five individuals who play a critical, yet in many cases unseen, role in providing outstanding service to the residents of Washington, DC.” Furthermore, the awards recognize individuals “whose contributions have been exceptional and whose commitment and professionalism demonstrate the best in public service.”



DC Superior Court Magistrate Judge **Pamela Gray**, who presides over Family Treatment Court, was pleased to be invited to conduct the oath of office for President Obama’s new Director of National Drug Control Policy, Michael Botticelli, Friday, March 6 at N Street Village in Northwest Washington, DC. Director Botticelli selected the unusual location for a White House swearing-in ceremony to demonstrate his commitment to programs that help people recover from substance use disorders, overcome homelessness and reclaim their lives.

*Magistrate Judge Pamela Gray (left) administering the oath of office.*

# DC COURTS BLACK HISTORY MONTH KICKOFF SOCIAL EVENT

*By Joan Burrell*

February is always an exciting time at DC Courts as Black History Month (BHM) is celebrated. This year's theme was "Life, Culture, and Education."

On Friday, February 6, the concourse of the Historic Court of Appeals was transformed into an art gallery for the BHM Kickoff Social. Soft jazz played as court employees discussed the artifacts and portraits while mingling and enjoying refreshments. An international art collection including paintings and artifacts from Haiti and Africa was displayed. Original artwork was contributed by BHM committee members and court employees as well as the Courts' art trust collection. The organization of the pieces illustrated the inspirations of African art from Ghana, South Africa, the Caribbean, and North America.

Following in BHM tradition at the court, the program began with a rendition of the Negro National Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing," led by Anthony Jackson and Denizé Shy, as the audience sang along. The program followed with a beautiful praise dance from Ms. Amanee Blake.

Concluding the Social, the BHM Committee Chair, Anita Jarman, spoke about the month's celebratory events. "We want to engage our court family and the public with interactive and educational activities that go further than what is traditionally taught," she said. This event surely aroused the attendee's interests and it jumpstarted what proved to be an exciting, unforgettable Black History Month for the Courts.

**Thank you to all who attended this year's Black History Month programs!**

*Photos courtesy of Anthony Jackson*



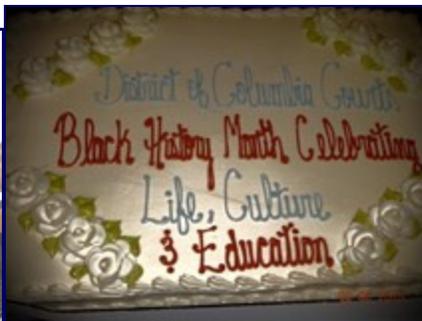
# Guest Professor Manuel-Scott Delivers Keynote Presentation at DC Courts Black History Month Event

The DC Courts' Black History Month celebration focused on life, culture, and education. Throughout the month, programs and activities reflected such themes, including a lecture given by Dr. Wendi Manuel-Scott, Director of African and African American Studies at George Mason University. Dr. Scott delivered a captivating presentation entitled *If We Must Die: Enslaved Africans and the Atlantic Slave Trade*.

Opening with Claude McKay's poem *If We Must Die*, written during the Harlem Renaissance, Dr. Scott correlated the poem to the millions of African men, women, and children who were captured off the coasts of Africa to be sold into slavery. The presentation explained rarely-discussed facts about the inhumane conditions of slave ships transporting Africans. Dr. Scott also showed pictures of instruments that were used to torture the slaves, especially those rebellious, while quoting records of accounts on the ship explaining the "violence exercised in the service of human commodification..."

Dr. Scott has a decorated résumé in history as she is currently a Professor of History and Art History at George Mason University. Born in Chicago and raised in the South and Midwest, Dr. Scott graduated from the College of Charleston and received her Ph.D. in history from Howard

University. Beyond the classroom, Dr. Scott facilitated the research to curate exhibitions *Separate and Unequal in Buckingham County: An Exhibition on Segregation and Desegregation in Virginia* and *One Hundred Years of African American Life and Leadership in Falls Church, Virginia*. Dr. Scott also started the Paul Robeson Saturday Leadership Academy at George Mason University, a Saturday STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program for 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade students that are underrepresented in the STEM fields.



# Youth Law Fair, Well-Attended and Well-Received

On **Saturday, March 21**, high school students, attorneys, and judges participated in the annual Youth Law Fair. This year's theme, "Profiling: That's Not Me! What's the Problem?" was designed to help students focus on building positive relationships with law enforcement through mock trials and speak-out sessions that addressed the issues of racial profiling.

Several hundred students from the area gathered at the Moultrie Courthouse to see first-hand how trials work, and also to talk about relevant issues that are being discussed nationally.

Lawyers from the DC Bar, the US Attorney's Office and the defense bar, as well as members of MPD, joined

judges from the DC Courts and the US District Court, in helping the students stage mock trials to see how profiling issues play out in court at a trial.

Students found the trials and the discussions to be interesting and were amazed at how much they learned through the experi-



## DC Courts receive Adult Guardianship Initiative Grant

The District of Columbia Courts have been awarded a grant to establish a Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) initiative from the National Guardianship Network (NGN). The WINGS initiative is a court-community partnership to improve practices in adult guardianship and provide for less restrictive decision-making options. The community will benefit from the WINGS initiative by having an ongoing entity for continued collaboration between multiple partners to set goals concerning guardianship issues in the District of Columbia. The announcement of the award was highlighted in the State Justice Institute's (SJI) March [newsletter](#). The grant was the result of the collaborative efforts of the DC Courts Probate Division and the Strategic Management Division.



# Celebrate Public Service Recognition Week DC Courts Work

## Court Night at the Ballpark

Celebrate *Public Service Recognition Week* with a night at the ballpark, featuring the Washington Nationals against the Miami Marlins on **Monday, May 4, at 7:00pm**.

All government employees can get discounted tickets for the game. Follow this link, for more information: [http://pps.convio.net/site/Survey ACTION\\_REQUIRED=URI ACTION\\_USER\\_REQUESTS&SURVEY\\_ID=8065](http://pps.convio.net/site/Survey ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=8065)

For groups of more than 12 employees in your office, contact group sales at: 202-675-6287. The Nationals and the Partnership for Public Service will coordinate a special tribute to public servants in attendance that night. Groups of more than 50 will have their name in lights on the scoreboard.

*If you're in attending the event or have any questions, contact: [Monica Slade](mailto:Monica.Slade@dcsc.gov) @ Monica.slade@dcsc.gov.*

Also, the government coupon code (see website to obtain code) can be used to purchase discounted tickets to most of the Nationals home games during the 2015 regular season.

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## 5K Run/Walk

Government employees, their families and friends, and area running enthusiasts are invited to join the third annual Public Service 5K in celebration of Public Service Recognition Week on **Sunday, May 10, 9:00 a.m.** at **Anacostia Park**, Washington, DC.

For more details and registration, go to: <http://publicservicerecognitionweek.org/events/5k.shtml>

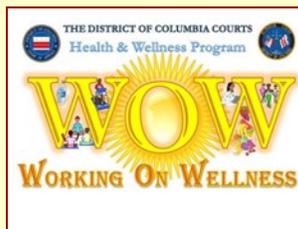
# Rave Reviews



## William Sanchez—Family Division

*I would like to compliment one of your employees, Mr. William Sanchez, for the excellent service he provided me. Regarding the issue I was dealing with, Mr. Sanchez took the time to listen to my problem. Mr. Sanchez made me feel very comfortable and assisted me diligently. I am very pleased to say that Mr. Sanchez went above and beyond my expectations. His professionalism and ability to get to the bottom of the situation quickly exceeded my hopes.*

*Such a commitment to Great Customer Service is to be commended. You can be sure that Mr. Sanchez is a great asset to your department and your organization.*



It seems that our lives are full of distractions that keep us from truly savoring the good times as they come. That's why becoming more mindful can be valuable. Making mindfulness part of your everyday life can help you focus better, remember more, alleviate stress, and strengthen your appreciation of the world around you.

*The WOW Committee is pleased to announce that meditation sessions will begin in **May, 2015**.*