



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

August 2013

Strategic Plan rolled out at the Court of Appeals, Jeopardy style

By Brandie Hancock, Staff Assistant, Committee on Admissions/Unauthorized Practice of Law

The Court of Appeals did its rollout of the DC Courts 2013-2017 Strategic Plan with a Jeopardy-style quiz game on Thursday July 11 in the Ceremonial Courtroom. The content of the questions were based on submissions from each division of the Court of Appeals and formatted “Jeopardy” style. All questions were then placed into categories named for the courts’ values: Accountability, Excellence, Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Transparency.

The audience was divided into two teams, A and B, with staff from multiple divisions on each side. Julio Castillo, Clerk of the Court of Appeals, gave opening remarks, focusing on the courts’ vision and mission and acknowledging the efforts of the committee members. Terry Lambert, Director of the Public Office and the game’s host, then kicked off the festivities with Team B winning the coin toss.



An engaged audience

“Jeopardy- Court Values” was off and running and Team A started strong, commanding an early lead. Their strategy was to tackle the questions with the highest point value first and it initially paid off well for them. However, Team B would not let them hold on to that lead for long, coming back strong about halfway through the game. The competition was fierce with both teams challenging the judges at times to ensure fairness on each side. Thankfully, the final selection was a fun, audio question which served to ease the friendly tension amongst the teams! In the end, Team B won the game 3800-2200.

Closing remarks were given by Associate Judge Phyllis Thompson, Co-Chair of the DC Courts’ Strategic Planning Leadership Committee (SPLC), who expressed her pleasure with the game’s content and proclaimed it an overall success!

Judge Thompson praised the committee for finding an effective way to educate each other on what each division does so that everyone works well together. She also highlighted how the program embodied what the SPLC had in mind when they developed the Courts’ Strategic Plan and again acknowledged each member of the committee. In the end, “Jeopardy-Court Values” was a huge success! Court of Appeals staff members left the program with a deeper knowledge of each division and how each of them plays a part in the overall, day-to-day function of the court.



The coin toss

The members of the Court of Appeals Strategic Plan Rollout Committee are Derek Mitchell, Terry Lambert, Tracy Nutall, Jed Miller, Reggie Turner, Jean Jordan, Rosanna Mason, Alvin Johnson, Patrice Irick, Lowell Cade and Brandie Hancock.

Update from the DC Courts Executive Team: Thanking and recognizing our employees

As you know, we’ll soon be celebrating our 32nd Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony. The event will take place on Thursday, September 26, 2:30pm at the Moultrie Courthouse. The event is a tradition that gives us all an opportunity to recognize and thank employees for their outstanding achievements.

As we look forward to the ceremony this year, we also wish to
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look for ways to expand on opportunities to say thank you. Budgetary constraints put a strain on our operations and our staff; and at the same time, they make it imperative to create a Great Place to Work. We believe that our Great Place to Work culture will enhance our productivity and make us more engaged and effective in carrying out our mission.



DC Courts Executive Team (from left to right): Court of Appeals Clerk Julio Castillo, Executive Officer Anne Wicks, Deputy Executive Officer Cheryl Bailey and Superior Court Clerk Duane Delaney.

One of the ways in which we will continue to create a Great Place to Work is by saying thank you and recognizing a job well done. We are continually impressed by the talent and dedication we find at the courts. Excellence and commitment to our mission should not go unnoticed. We wish to encourage everyone to continually say thank you and recognize colleagues who demonstrate excellence in their jobs.

As we prepare to initiate FY14, which begins October 1st, we are looking forward to a very productive year at the courts. The 2013-2017 Strategic Plan will continue to be implemented and our values of Accountability, Excellence, Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Transparency will be an ongoing theme throughout the year. We thank all court employees for their dedicated service and look forward to seeing you at the 2013 Employee and Recognition Awards Ceremony.

DC Courts Executive Team

*Anne B. Wicks, Executive Officer
Cheryl Bailey, Deputy Executive Officer
Julio Castillo, Clerk of the Court of Appeals
Duane Delaney, Clerk of the Superior Court*

Acts of kindness that make us a Great Place to Work

A random act of kindness can make a world of difference. **Lovette Carraway, Grace Jimenez, Joyce Jenkins and Bridgette Dunn** from the Criminal Division acted as good Samaritans for three little girls whose mother was about to be placed in handcuffs outside the entrance to the Criminal Division. The children's mother and another woman were in Court, each requesting a temporary protective order against the other. The women began a heated *discussion* after leaving the courtroom.

In the midst of the discussion, it was apparent that the children (ages 5, 8 and 12) were traumatized by the whole situation – the middle child was sobbing. Joyce Jenkins sat with the mother, and convinced her to calm down, as she held one little girl on her lap and another under her arm and gave them water.

As the mother was being arrested, the arresting officer allowed the Criminal Division staff members to watch the two little ones, while Lovette Carraway accompanied the oldest sibling and waited with her for an aunt to come pick them up. Bridgette Dunn and Grace Jimenez came forward with



From left to right: Grace Jimenez, Joyce Jenkins, Bridgette Dunn, Lovette Carraway.

treats and a Mr. Potato Head for the little ones to play with. Although the outcome couldn't have been changed—the mother was still arrested—the Criminal Division staff exposed the three girls to a different side of the court with an act of kindness during this difficult time.



SAVE THE DATE! 32nd Annual Employee Recognition & Awards Ceremony

Thursday, September 26, 2013

2:30pm

Coming your way soon!

Federal Human Resources (FHR) Navigator: Benefits and Retirement at your Convenience

Imagine that you want an estimate of your retirement annuity in 5, 10, 15 years, or you want to know more about the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS). Where you once had to make an appointment with a Human Resources Specialist to find out about your benefits or retirement options, it will soon be as easy as a click on your computer.

The DC Courts will soon deploy the FHR Navigator system for all court employees, bringing HR to your fingertips! The FHR Navigator web tool is a retirement calculator that allows you to develop and update your retirement calculations. It produces a preliminary estimate of your Federal retirement annuity based on the information you provide and actual data that is downloaded from our payroll provider. Once you retire, the Office of Personnel Management will calculate your precise federal retirement annuity.



What features does the FHR Navigator offer?

FHR Navigator Retirement Calculator

The FHR Navigator allows all employees to prepare their own retirement scenarios. You will be able to view a summary of your scenarios, and also add your savings, investments, and other retirement assets to assess what you must do to meet your retirement goal. Even with minimal information, FHR can give you an estimate of your retirement income.

Forms

You will be able to access many fillable retirement and benefits forms.

Case Tracking

You will be able to communicate with HR by initiating a case and tracking your case through the process, thus allowing HR staff to capture and flag cases with a status, date, and additional comments.

eSeminar

eSeminar includes over 18 hours of narrated tutorials covering many retirement and benefits topics. Your questions can now be answered with the "Click" of a button. HR at your fingertips!

A screenshot of the FHR Navigator web application interface. The top left shows the 'FHR NAVIGATOR' logo and the 'EconSys' logo. The top right has a 'Resize text' option and links for 'Account Settings' and 'LOGOUT'. Below the header, the user's role is 'Employee - EconSys - Division 1a' and there are links for 'Personal Information' and 'Emergency Contact'. The main content area is titled 'Employee Benefits Center (EBC)'. It includes a sidebar with navigation links like 'Home/FBC', 'My Cases (10)', 'My Personal Benefits Statement', 'Change or Enroll', 'Request Retirement Estimate', 'Apply to Retire', 'My Forms', 'Retirement Planner', 'Learn about My Benefits', 'eSeminar', and 'Help'. The main area lists 'Current Benefits Enrollment' with categories: Health Benefits (FEHB), Life Insurance (FEGLI), Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), Dental/Vision (FEDVIP), Flexible Savings Account (FSAFEDS), and Long Term Care (FLTCIP). A 'Retirement Benefits' section shows projected earliest retirement dates and annuity estimates. An 'Economic Systems Inc' section provides website, email, and phone information. At the bottom right, there is a graphic of hands holding a small version of the FHR logo with the tagline 'HR @ Your Fingertips'.

Is FHR Secure?

The FHR application strictly adheres to privacy rules via a multi-level user security structure. Users are only able to view their own accounts. Only specific, designated users (primarily HR Specialists) are able to review and perform actions on other accounts. No matter what a user's role, the system records the user's ID and every person who accesses your FHR account, including every time you access your own record.

Email updates will be sent as the Human Resources Division moves closer to the FHR rollout. Once available, you will receive notification of how to log onto the system and instructions for accessing your FHR account.

WOW ambassador gets court reporters moving

By Khadijah Quick, Administrative Assistant, Court Reporting and Recording Division



Margary Rogers

Wanting to promote health and wellness amongst her peers in the Court Reporting and Recording Division (CRRD), Margary Rogers, Official Court Reporter, volunteered to become a WOW ambassador. The majority of a court reporter's work day is spent in the courtroom covering many of the cases heard by our judges, and by the sheer nature of their job, court reporters are often unavailable to attend "Lunch and

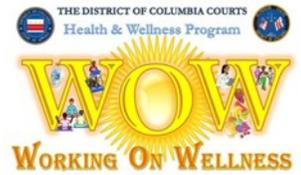
Learns" and other WOW sponsored events. Ms. Rogers has taken her role as WOW ambassador and run with it, bringing event after event, month after month—with the input of other CRRD employees—directly into her division's office space.

Beginning in April, she kicked things off with a Water Challenge – based on their body weight, participants pledged to drink a certain amount of water each day. May was Move That Body, and CRRD employees were encouraged to walk, run, stretch and attend yoga and zumba classes and more. In addition, Donnell Davis, WOW ambassador and personal trainer, paid a visit to discuss health and nutrition. June was Junk Food Shutdown—which as the name



Kristin Gilliam shares a juicing demonstration

indicates, was about cutting down on junk food. July was Juicing – CRRD staff brought in fruit, vegetables and juicers, and Kristin Gilliam, Official Court Reporter, who is an avid juicer, demonstrated how juicing is done, sharing some of her favorite recipes.



CRRD employees attend the juicing demonstration

Most recently, August was Massage Month, in which David Windsor, Licensed Masseur Therapist (LMT), performed on-site massages for CRRD employees who registered beforehand. And, looking ahead, September will be Soup Month—an event in which employees will swap soups and soup recipes.

Ms Rogers is a great example of what a WOW ambassador can creatively do for our divisions and she certainly has court reporters moving!



Summer Youth Employment Program Award for the DC Courts

The DC Courts recently received the 2013 Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) Host of the Year award. SYEP offers internships to DC youth with the goal of introducing them to employers who will positively impact their futures. The award was accepted by Ave Broadie, of the Human Resources Division, on behalf of the DC Courts.

Family Treatment Court celebrates a graduation... and its 10-year anniversary

June 7, 2013 was a special day in any number of ways. It was a very special day for a group of women who were completing Phase I and Phase II of the Family Treatment Court (FTC) program, receiving drug treatment at a residential facility while living with their children, and receiving counseling and parenting classes as well. It was a special day for a number of



previous years' graduates, who came back to celebrate a major milestone: the 10th anniversary of Family Treatment Court. And it was a special time for all those at the courts and our partner agencies who celebrated that ten years, the dozens of women who have completed the program and stayed sober, and mostly the children who have their mothers back with them, clean and sober.



Judge Bush welcomes the guests and graduates

Judge Zoe Bush, presiding judge of Family Court, welcomed the guests and the graduates to the festivities, praising the women for all that they had accomplished and overcome. Beverly Gibbs, a Superior Court social worker with the FTC program, recognized the numerous partner agencies – DC's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), OAG, Catholic Charities, the Family Trial Lawyers' Association, Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect, Court-Appointed Special Advocates. Courtroom Clerk Renard Rhinehart – who had become a grandfather within the previous 24 hours – spoke of family and how being a family is a process, and then performed a musical selection for the graduates. Judge Anita Josey-Herring, who developed the

program in 2001, spoke of how impressed she was and remains with all the women who graduated from the program and how they inspire her.

Michele Rosenberg brought greetings from CFSA Director Brenda Donald, congratulating the graduates and focusing on how great it was to see families stay together. Judge Rufus King, who was Chief Judge

when the Family Treatment Court idea was first proposed, spoke about how impressed he was with the graduates and their progress and all they'd overcome. Two representatives from DC's Addiction Prevention Recovery Administration (APRA), Alina McClerklin and Javon Oliver, spoke about the disease of addiction and the importance of treatment options. Judicial Administrative Assistant Denize Shy performed a musical selection that underscored an important theme of the day: Never Give Up.

West Huddleston, CEO of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, then came to the stand, after an introduction that mentioned his accomplishments and the numerous federal agencies for which he consults. But he said it was far more important to share with the graduates his story: the day in 1988 when he had a choice between taking a bus to prison and one to a treatment program... "and it took some thinking for me at that point." He spoke about having no



The graduates

friends, how his mother wouldn't even return his calls, and that his only friend was drugs. But treatment turned him

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Spotlight on Fathering Court — presentation at the 50th annual Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association



Ron Scott

Ron Scott, Program Manager of the DC Superior Court's Fathering Court Initiative, was a panelist at the 50th annual Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association (ERICSA) conference, held in Orlando, Florida May 19 -23. Mr. Scott discussed the creation of the Fathering Court Initiative, operational since 2008,

and how it has successfully obtained employment for its participants and reconnected them with their minor children.

ERICSA is designed to improve communication and cooperation amongst states and jurisdictions for the interstate enforcement of child support obligations. The conference helps facilitate innovative professional training methods to enhance the well-being of families throughout the United States.

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around and put him on a positive path, which he knew was well within reach of the women there.

Next came statements from a former CFSA social worker, Rahama Magoma, who had worked with FTC participants several years back and talked about how she thought she would teach them everything, but in fact she learned from them. Then several FTC alumna spoke: Ms. Evans told of still feeling guilty about those she had harmed during her years of abusing drugs, but how she was moving forward and appreciated that the FTC 'family' was always there to support her. Ms. Christian expressed how much she is grateful for every day sober and how much richer and more joyous her life is. She concluded by congratulating the graduates and offering her support to them. Ms. Balance spoke of the importance of keeping our children safe, that they were our future and they deserved to be safe, and loved by a sober parent. Then Ms. White, a current program participant, spoke; she recognized the team and thanked each and every one of them for their help.

Saraiah Beatty, the FTC Coordinator then called each of the graduates up to the podium to receive their certificate of com-

pletion, and shake hands (though there were far more hugs) with Magistrate Judge Gray, Judge Bush, Mr. Huddleston and former Chief Judge King. Judge Hiram Puig Lugo then gave brief closing remarks, pointing out that every great journey begins with a first step, and concluding with "May this program be the first step of a beautiful journey for each and every one of you." Indeed!

The DC Fathering Court provides a holistic approach to re-entry persons, providing: employment assistance, parenting classes, case management, continuing educational opportunities, financial counseling, mediation and a host of other services. The goals of the Fathering Court are to: (1) enable parents to successfully engage in the rearing of their minor children and (2) obtain full-time employment and financially contribute to their families.

The Fathering Court celebrated its 5th annual graduation ceremony on January 25, 2013 with ten graduates successfully completing the program.

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Lugo then gave brief closing remarks, pointing out that every great journey begins with a first step, and concluding with "May this program be the first step of a beautiful journey for each and every one of you." Indeed!

There have been approximately 200 successful participants in the Family Treatment Court program since it was launched in 2003. All participants stipulate to allegations of neglect, and then move with their children to a treatment facility to receive substance abuse education and treatment, relapse prevention, parenting classes, counseling, and guidance on childcare.



Congratulating the graduates

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Judge Blackburne-Rigsby, DC Court of Appeals

DC Court of Appeals Associate Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby and her staff visited The Washington Middle School for Girls. The group of young women excitedly conversed about a variety of subjects, from courtroom decorum and the moral qualities of a good judge to sharing opinions about the recent Trayvon Martin/George Zimmerman case. The Washington Middle School for Girls is located at The ARC on Mississippi Ave. in SE, DC.



*Judge Blackburne-Rigsby at
The Washington Middle School for Girls*

Judge Karen Howze, DC Superior Court



Magistrate Judge Karen Howze is a 2013 recipient of The Mabel Haden Trailblazer Award. The Washington Bar Association Legal Fund presents this Award to individuals who exemplify the principles of Mabel Haden, a legal pioneer who expanded opportunities for minorities and women in the legal profession as a distinguished lawyer, teacher, real estate broker, and poet. Haden was also the first Black woman to receive an L.L.M. (Master of Laws) from Georgetown University. Judge Howze's achievement encompasses the significant contributions she has made as a judge, solo practitioner of law, journalist, newspaper editor, and one of the eight founders of *USA Today*. Congratulations Judge Howze!

*Judge Howze speaks
to students*

Judge Herbert Dixon, DC Superior Court

Associate Judge Herbert Dixon recently published an article entitled "Technology and the Courts: A Futurists View" for the American Bar Association. Judge Dixon is a technology enthusiast and expert and his recent article imminently explains adaptations of technology that would remarkably advance Court proceedings. As the technology columnist for *The Judges' Journal*, Judge Dixon's contributions to the ABA publication have explained various topics from cyber security and deception detection to tips and tricks on how to use an iPad and decoding text/tweet abbreviations.



Judge Dixon



The DC Courts will be participating in the 35th annual Adams Morgan Day Festival on **Sunday, September 8th** from **12pm-7pm**. The festival will be on **18th Street NW**, between Columbia Rd. and Florida Ave.

We will have representatives from various court divisions present at the festival to explain our services and increase our visibility in the community. This event is open to the public and we encourage everyone to come!

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Anita Jarman: anita.jarman@dcsc.gov.

Rave Reviews

Ms. Regina Yorkman
Probation Officer Supervisor (Family Court Social Services Division)

Ms. Yorkman,

I would like to thank you and your staff, in particular Mr. **Nathaniel Henry**, for your professional help during my son's probationary period. As you know, these are never pleasant experiences no matter the circumstances. However, your dedication and professionalism made it possible for us to get through this period in our lives. The level of guidance and assistance extended to me and was far beyond my expectations.

I was very impressed by the support provided by Mr. Nathaniel Henry and the interest he took in my son. During the time that my son was under his supervision, he mentored and counseled him. He was firm yet understanding towards my son. Mr. Henry's guidance was genuine and mutual trust and respect and being earnest. In a time when our young children are facing more and more challenges, the work that Mr. Henry does should be held up as an example for others to try to emulate. I believe that it is his commitment to excellence that motivates him to always go the extra mile with his clients.

In closing, I thank you and your division for the work that you do every day to get our youth back on the right path and keep them out of trouble. I look forward to keeping in touch.

Sincerely

The Parent



Nathaniel Henry



Shawn Wilkins

Dear **Shawn Wilkins** (Information and Telecommunications Branch),

We, at CET, would like to sincerely thank you for the outstanding act of customer service you performed this morning. It was such a wonderful thing for you to *walk* our instructor down from Moultrie to Gallery Place at 8:15 a.m. to make sure that he got to the correct location to teach his class. We realize that not only is this above and beyond your duty; you did it with a smile and withstood the tremendous temperature to do it. Your kindness should not go unnoticed. This is what first rate customer service is all about and we really appreciate it. You make the Administrative Services Division and the entire Court proud. Thank you so much again.

Sincerely,

Crystal L. Banks, Esq.
Deputy Director of Judicial Education
and the Center for Education and Training