



# Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

February 2015

## Leadership in Action: Update from the DC Courts Executive Team

More than 150 court leaders and managers gathered in December to discuss what it means to live our values and be a leader at the DC Courts. This gathering was part of a broader effort we initiated a few years ago looking to build a Great Place to Work.

The focus has evolved over time, highlighting among other things wellness initiatives and our values. But the constant foundation motivating all these efforts has always been the desire to strengthen employee engagement. We firmly believe that the more we can improve the way we work together, the better we will be able to fulfill our mission of serving the public.

We believe the gathering in December was a breakthrough. For the first time ever, managers at all levels –not just Division Directors and senior managers—came together to create a vision of what we want our culture to look like. Phrases and words such as “working together” and “empowerment” were repeatedly

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### ACCOUNTABILITY

We take responsibility for our conduct and are answerable for our performance.

### EXCELLENCE

We provide the highest quality of service in everything we do.

### FAIRNESS

We are impartial in our actions, decisions and treatment of others.

### INTEGRITY

We demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behavior.

### RESPECT

We treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and understanding.

### TRANSPARENCY

We are open in our processes and communicate our actions and decisions clearly.

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From left to right: Frank Morales, Andrew Kottke, Mike Cifu and Matt Barger



Ms. Valerie Tillett thanks the officers

## Ceremony Honors Four Deputy US Marshals as Officers of the Month

On January 30, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund presented Officer of the Month awards to four Deputy US Marshals for the DC Superior Court for their heroic actions on June 6, 2014. Their actions saved the life of Ms. Valerie Tillett of the DC Superior Court when she was struck by a dump truck on her lunch break. The ceremony was held in the DC Court of Appeals Ceremonial Courtroom and honored Deputies Michael Cifu, Matthew Barger, Andrew Kottke and Frank Morales. Ms. Tillett referred to them as her 'angels' and said she could never repay them for their quick thinking, kindness, compassion, and bravery.

### SAVE THE DATE

#### Courtwide Conference Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

“Blending a Multigenerational Workforce”, Seth Mattison + Outdoor BBQ, John-Marshall Plaza (All Employees)

1:00pm – 4:00pm: Leadership Conference Follow-Up, Juror’s Lounge (All Executives, Managers, & Supervisors)

#### Joint Judicial Management Conference

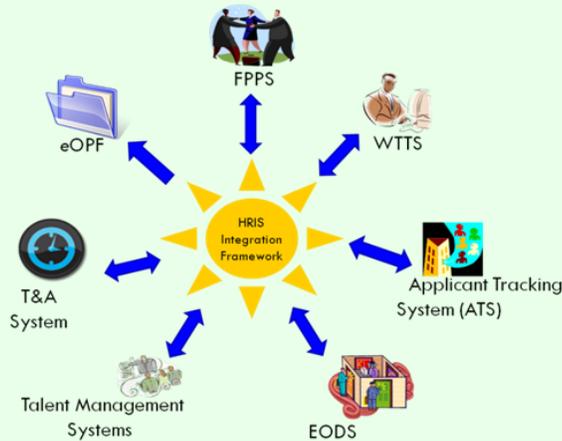
April 30<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>  
(Judges & Senior Managers)

“Understanding Aggression and Violence”, Newseum

The **Full Court Press** is published by the District of Columbia Courts

Inquiries should be submitted to Room 6680

For article submissions, please contact José Idler



Greetings Court Employees,

Beginning May 3, 2015, the DC Courts will use a new time and attendance system called WebTA. The WebTA system is fully automated and allows employees to electronically enter their leave requests, time, and manage their leave balances. All court employees will use WebTA to enter time and attendance for each pay period.

**To help employees learn how to use WebTA, mandatory training will be provided.** All training must be completed by close of business **Friday, March 13, 2015** (*Note: Employees who received WebTA system training in January are **not** required to attend this training*).

### **Training Registration & Details**

- A wide-range of dates and times are available.
- Each class session will last two hours.
- Classes will be held in Gallery Place on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor.
- To register for WebTA training, go to the HRIS intranet page, and follow the links.

After the training initiative ends, there will be a court-wide practice exercise. During this exercise, employees will be required to enter time and attendance into the WebTA system as well as maintain and complete the current time and attendance process with ETAMS. This will give the HRIS team an opportunity to make sure everything works as it should. More information on the practice exercise will be provided within the next few weeks.

To find out more about HRIS or the change that is coming to the Courts, visit the HRIS intranet page: <http://intranet/content/35616>.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns feel free to email the team at [HRIS@dcsc.gov](mailto:HRIS@dcsc.gov).

## Update from the DC Courts Executive Team

*Continued from front cover*

used to describe the elements we would like to see in our court culture.

### Principles of Leadership

At the meeting, we rolled out what we believe are some key leadership principles for the Courts. The principles are the result of extensive discussions and reflect our values, as well as the centrality of our mission.

The five principles of leadership at the DC Courts are:

- *Create an environment that is a Great Place to Work*
- *Promote excellence in service and the administration of justice*
- *Develop employees to contribute their full potential*
- *Collaborate across the organization and encourage innovation*
- *Establish a vision and goals for the future*

In the next few months, we will continue to emphasize and define these principles.

### The year ahead...

As we roll out these principles, we also want to put more emphasis on action moving forward. The Courts are composed of different divisions and units, all of which have different functions. Being mindful of individual functions and cultures, we also believe that we need more consistency across the Courts.

We will be implementing a series of plans as part of our values initiative, aiming to further ingrain our values in our or-



ganizational culture. The focus will be on divisions in order to create more immediate change. The overall goal is to identify specific issues and initiatives within the divisions and at the same time create more consistency across the organization.

Change is a process, and it is often slow and plodding. We will experience progress and we will backslide. But, ultimately, we will change. We will continue building on the bricks that have already been laid to create a Great Place to Work. As we progress through the year, we hope to be closer over time to achieving our goals.

### *DC Courts Executive Team*

*Anne B. Wicks, Executive Officer*

*Cheryl Bailey, Acting Clerk of Superior Court*

*Julio Castillo, Clerk of the Court of Appeals*

# DC Courts Community Service and Learning Program: Students Visit the Jurors' Office



The Community Service and Learning Program, a 2011 Management Training Program team project, was first implemented in the summer of 2013 to provide a venue for high school students to learn about various functions of the judicial system. On November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, students and faculty from Options Public Charter School were invited to the court to learn about jury service.



Options PCS, located in Northeast Washington, was founded in 1996 with the mission to provide a high quality, unique educational experience to its students, especially those at-risk. The students, led by Maenylië Reed of the Jurors' Office, were given a brief overview of our petit and grand jury system. They then had the opportunity to sit in on a criminal jury selection conducted by Judge John McCabe, see a portion of a felony trial before Judge J. Ramsey Johnson, and hear a sentencing issued by Judge Lynn Leibovitz.

The students also had the opportunity to visit Drug Court. There they saw individuals who were making steady progress in their recovery, as well as those who needed somewhat of a push in the right direction. They got to witness first-hand Judge Gregory Jackson's inventive use of small incentives, such as a small trinket or inspirational quote, to reward and motivate individuals to stay on the path to recovery.



Afterward, Judge Jackson took time out from his busy schedule to speak to the students about the choices they make in life and the consequences of those choices. Options Law and Justice teacher Christy Moore later thanked



both Ms. Reed and the Jurors' Office, saying the students took away a great deal of useful, relevant information from their visit and are eager to return to learn more about the courts.

*The Community Service and Learning Program was developed in 2011 as a Management Training Program team project.*

# Marriage Bureau Celebrates Valentine's Day with 14 Weddings on the 14th



The Superior Court's Marriage Bureau was a very busy place on Saturday, February 14, Valentine's Day morning. Several Superior Court staff members, including Family Court Operations Director Avi Sickel and Marriage Bureau Director Deena Whittington, officiated some of the 14 weddings between 9am and 12:30. The couples were thrilled that they could have a Valentine's Day wedding (and from now on an anniversary), including one groom who had a February 14 birthday! The couples ranged in age from early twenties to AARP membership qualifiers, and included those from India, Barbados, and the UK. Congratulations to the happy couples and thanks to staff members who volunteered to come to work on a Saturday.

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## Judge Gregory Jackson and Drug Court Graduate Interviewed by DC Public Safety Radio



Judge Jackson, in his third year presiding over the Superior Court's Drug Intervention Program ('Drug Court') and 'Gene,' a drug court graduate from several years back, did a half-hour interview with DC Public Safety Radio (a Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency program) that is now available online and as a podcast at: <http://media.csosa.gov/podcast/audio/>.

For more information about the Superior Court's Drug Court program, see the website:

[http://www.dccourts.gov/internet/superior/org\\_criminal/drgcourt.jsf](http://www.dccourts.gov/internet/superior/org_criminal/drgcourt.jsf)

The DC Courts are celebrating **Black History Month** in the month of February. See below a couple of BHM Daily Facts that have appeared on the intranet throughout the month.

*Stay tuned for more stories on BHM events in the next Full Court Press.*

## **BHM Daily Fact - Historic Black Organizations**

### **Phi Beta Sigma and Zeta Phi Beta - the only constitutionally bound brother and sister Black-Greek lettered organizations**

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. was founded at Howard University in Washington, DC, January 9, 1914 by three young African-American male students. The Founders, A. Langston Taylor, Leonard F. Morse, and Charles I. Brown, wanted to organize a Greek letter fraternity that would truly exemplify the ideals of brotherhood, scholarship, and service.

The Founders deeply wished to create an organization that viewed itself as "a part of" the general community rather than "apart from" the general community. They believed that each potential member should be judged by his own merits, rather than his family background or affluence. They desired for their fraternity to exist as part of an even greater brotherhood which would be devoted to the "inclusive we" rather than the "exclusive we."



Zeta Phi Sorority, Inc. was founded January 16, 1920, at Howard University, Washington, DC. During that period the Klu Klux Klan was very active and the Harlem Renaissance was acknowledged as the first important movement of Black artists and writers in the US. This same year the Volstead Act became effective heralding the start of Prohibition and Tennessee delivered the crucial 36th ratification for the final adoption of the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote. The worst and longest economic recession to hit the U.S. would define the end of the decade - The Great Depression.

It was within this environment that five coeds envisioned a sorority which would directly affect positive change, chart a course of action for the 1920s and beyond, raise consciousness of their people, encourage the highest standards of scholastic achievement, and foster a greater sense of unity among its members.

(Sources: <http://www.phibetasigma1914.org/our-history/>; <http://www.zphib1920.org/our-history/>)

## **BHM Daily Fact - Celebrating Black History Internationally**



### **Canadian Negro Women's Association**

In Canada, Black History Month was first celebrated in Toronto by railroad porters within the Black community in 1950; the porters had learned of it on their travels in the United States. The Canadian Negro Women's Association also hosted a few celebrations. It was not until the Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) was founded in 1978, and petitioned the City of Toronto in 1979 to have February proclaimed Black History Month that the celebration started to trickle into the entire community and across the country. In December 1995, the Parliament of Canada officially recognized February as Black History Month, following a motion introduced by the first Black Canadian woman elected to Parliament, the Honorable Jean Augustine, MP of Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

(Source: <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=906f5e4394103410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>)

# Kabe Reviews

## Francine Harmon-Diallo and the Jurors' Office



*Thanks again to Ms. Harmon-Diallo (pictured left) and the Jurors' Office for assisting me with my jury duty conflict. I appeared yesterday for petit jury duty. The staff was super, totally in control, informative and pretty funny when the occasion called for it. I appreciate the effort by all.*

*This morning I had to visit the juror clerk's office to obtain help on an upcoming jury duty appointment. I was helped by Ms. Harmon-Diallo. I wanted to send a note letting her supervisor know how thankful I am for the courteous and thorough assistance she provided me. There's often a stigma associated with jury duty matters and Ms. Harmon-Diallo was able to assist me quickly, without hassle, and the utmost professionalism. I really appreciated her help and thought I should send along a good word.*



**Left to right rear:** Takisha Bland, Teaira Van Dyke, Doris Dew, Antoinette Sweeney, Fran Harmon-Diallo & Janquale Lawrence.

**Left to right front:** Tawanda Williams-Warren, Donna Little, Angela Mills (not pictured: Maenylie Reed)

## Derek Jones – Probate Division

*My letter is in regards to the wonderful service and care shown my Mr. Derek Jones. The compassion and knowledge rendered by Mr. Jones was God-sent. I just thank the courts for employing employees with competence, kindness and patience.*

