



# Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

October 2014

## New DC Superior Court Magistrate Judge

On Monday, October 6, 2014 Adrienne Noti was sworn in as a magistrate judge for District of Columbia Superior Court by Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield. Magistrate Judge Noti has a background in family law, having served in a number of roles throughout her career.

Magistrate Judge Noti received a Bachelor of Arts degree in women's studies and political science from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and earned her law degree from Georgetown University Law Center. Following law school she clerked for the Honorable Carol Bagley Amon, US District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

She has practiced family law for ten years, having served as Managing Attorney for Family Law for the DC Bar Pro Bono Program, where she coordinated the Advocacy and Justice



*Magistrate Judge Noti sworn in by Superior Court Chief Judge Lee Satterfield*

Clinic. In addition, Magistrate Judge Noti served as Director of the Women and the Law Clinic at American University's Washington College of Law, where she supervised the representation of clients in family law cases in DC Superior Court, including child support, domestic violence, custody and visitation, and abuse and neglect cases.

In her most immediately previous role, she served as Special Advisor to the Director of the Office of Child Support Enforcement within the US Department of Health and Human Services, where she developed and implemented federal child-support policy and lead child-support initiatives.

## Employee Awards Ceremony

Each year the DC Courts recognize employees who excel in contributing to the life of the courts. This year, the 33rd Annual Employee Awards Ceremony provided an opportunity to thank all court employees for their dedication and commitment. The ceremony was also the occasion to honor employees through special recognition awards for public service, management achievement, and being an "unsung hero." The event was held on Thursday, September 18 at the Moultrie Courthouse. *Congratulations to the 2013 awards recipients!*

*Learn about the 2013 awards recipients on pages 4, 5 and 6.*

***Open To All Trusted By All Justice For All***

## DC Court of Appeals Senior Judge Frank E. Schwelb Dies at 82



District of Columbia Court of Appeals Senior Judge Frank E. Schwelb died at Georgetown University Hospital on August 13.

He was 82 years old. He was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and lived as a refugee in Britain for eight years before

moving to the United States at the age of 15. He was a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School and served in the U.S. Army.

“Frank was a great colleague, a brilliant lawyer, and an esteemed jurist. He turned the tragedy of his wartime escape from his homeland into a lifetime commitment to civil rights and justice for all. He will be truly missed by his D.C. Courts

family,” said Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric T. Washington.

Judge Schwelb was appointed to the D.C. Superior Court by President Jimmy Carter in 1979 and to the D.C. Court of Appeals by President Ronald Reagan in 1988. He took senior status in 2006. After graduating from law school, Judge Schwelb joined the New York firm of Mudge, Stern, Baldwin & Todd. From 1962 to 1979, he served in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. In 1969 he was appointed to be the first chief of the division’s Housing Section. He also served as special counsel to the Health, Education and Welfare Secretary’s Review Panel on New Drug Regulation from 1976 to 1977.

Judge Schwelb authored several law review articles and numerous judicial opinions. He lectured on equal housing opportunity at law schools, bar organizations, and real estate industry groups, as well as taught various continuing legal education courses, and participated in moot court and other training for law students. A memorial ceremony was celebrated for Judge Schwelb at the Court of Appeals on September 9, 2014.

### Values Leadership Summit: Discussing Values in Action to Change Our Culture

DC Courts senior leaders recently gathered in a two-day session to discuss the desired culture of the courts and create a shared picture of the court values in action. Presented in the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, the Courts adopted a set of organizational values to shape the courts’ culture. The six values are: Accountability, Excellence, Fairness, Integrity, Respect and Transparency.

“Living our values will go a long way towards making our courts a Great Place to Work,” said Executive Officer Anne Wicks in her opening remarks to the training session. “The areas of focus are twofold: determining the desired court culture, defining and discussing the role of leadership for modeling behavior, and creating a new organizational culture.” She additionally discussed the significance of being a leader and not just a manager. “For this effort to be successful, we must act not as managers, workers who solve problems, but as leaders, people who shape cultures.”

Members of the Values Leadership Council, a group of employees tasked with providing employee perspectives and feedback on new initiatives, shared a presentation to provide insights on how many employees view the current daily culture and what kind of culture they would like to see in the future. The presentation triggered a lively discussion in which viewpoints were exchanged. The general view that emerged in the discussion was that all stakeholders wish to see positive and productive changes take place in our court culture.

The graphic features a stylized logo at the top with three human figures in blue, yellow, and grey. Below the logo are six colored boxes, each containing a value and its definition:

- 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.

# Open Season

## November 10<sup>th</sup> to December 8<sup>th</sup>



The annual Open Season gives employees an opportunity to review their benefit options and make changes for the following year. It also allows employees who are not currently enrolled in a health plan to participate in the programs.

### OPEN SEASON OPPORTUNITIES:

During the annual Open Season, employees can take the actions listed below for the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, and the Ameritas Dental and Vision Program.

- Enroll in a **flexible spending account** – a health care and/or dependent care account, under the FSAFEDS Program. Unlike with other programs, employees **MUST** reenroll in FSAFEDS each year to participate. **Enrollments DO NOT carry over from year to year.**

#### **Please note that for flexible spending accounts:**

- The maximum annual election for a Health Care Flexible Spending Account is \$2,500 for the 2015 Benefit Period.
  - The maximum annual election for a Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account is \$5,000 for the 2015 Benefit Period.
  - The minimum election for the flexible spending accounts has changed from \$250 to \$100 for the 2015 Benefit Period.
  - Unspent 2015 funds up to \$500 can be rolled over into 2016 for the Health Care and Limited Expense accounts
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- Enroll in, change, or cancel an existing enrollment in a **dental plan** under the FEDVIP and the Ameritas Program.
  - Enroll in, change, or cancel an existing enrollment in a **vision plan** under the FEDVIP and the Ameritas Program.
  - Enroll in, change, or cancel an existing enrollment in a **health plan** under the FEHB

***The DC Courts' Open Season Fair is scheduled for Friday, November 14, 2014, in the Moultrie Courthouse Atrium from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm.***

# Congratula

## 2013 Employee Award



### UNSUNG HERO AWARD - ANGELA MOJICA-MADRID

Angela Mojica-Madrid is a Family Mediation Case Manager in the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division. Angela is always available to consult with mediators and parties alike, both before and after mediation. She approaches her work with professionalism and strives for achievement in everything she does. Angela goes that extra mile to complete a task.

This past year, Angela became the Family Mediation Program's only case manager, making her responsible for every case in the Program. She embraced the change and adjusted well to the increase in her workload. Despite the additional work, Angela provided excellent case flow management by ensuring that 95% of all docket/disposition entries were updated in Court-View accurately and timely according to Program standards.

Her diligence to turn agreements around in a timely manner not only assisted parties, but also helped the Program increase its settlement rates. Angela shares ideas on process improvement and develops new strategies to address challenges in the Program. Aside from her mediation expertise, Angela voluntarily taught Tai Chi, once a week, on her lunch hour for three years. She embodies the Courts' core values of accountability, integrity and excellence on a continuous basis, and is deserving of the Unsung Hero Award.

### UNSUNG HERO AWARD - VIC SIMON

Vic Simon is a courtroom clerk in the Criminal Division's Mental Health Community Court. Vic demonstrates excellence in the work he performs for the court as well as the work he performs outside of his regular job. Vic designed a program brochure and poster depicting encouraging words that Mental Health Community Court graduates left behind to motivate and support other defendants.

Mr. Simon works "behind the scenes" and does not like a lot of public recognition. On his own time he produced, directed, and edited the "Happy Video" which was shown at our Public Service Recognition Rally. He dedicated many hours to producing a high quality product. I think we can all agree that the Public Service Recognition Rally would not have been the same without the "Happy Video". Video production is something that Vic truly loves, and working on this project gave him the opportunity to showcase the D.C. Courts in a positive light. And, last but not least, today's Employee Awards Program cover was designed by Mr. Simon. He truly is an example of "Excellence" and is most deserving of the Unsung Hero Award.



# ntions to the ls Ceremony Awardees

## MANAGEMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – LORI GUNN

Ms. Lori Gunn, Small Claims Branch Chief in the Civil Division, leads her staff in providing exceptional service to all small claims customers each and every day. After receiving a customer concern about making unnecessary personal appearances in court, she implemented a practice to alleviate this concern: attaching a conspicuous reminder to complaints asking litigants to call two days prior to the hearing to ensure the case is listed. This process prevents unnecessary expense and wasted time.

Ms. Gunn served as project lead for the new Chat Line for the Civil Division which allows the public to get an immediate response to questions via the internet. She located the best product, scheduled demonstrations and training, and created flyers and a press release announcing its implementation.

She was project lead for the division's "Taste of the Courts" event. She serves as the division flex-place liaison and also assisted with the division's public service week event and strategic plan roll-out. Ms. Gunn exemplifies the Courts' core values of accountability, excellence and transparency and is an outstanding manager who deserves the Management Achievement Award.



## INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD – ANDREW MOORE



Andrew Moore has been a courtroom clerk in the Civil Division for over 28 years. He walks the talk when it comes to the Court's core values of accountability, integrity, excellence, and respect. Not a day goes by that Andrew doesn't put his heart into serving the public. He greets everyone politely and literally bends over backwards to ensure that attorneys and parties alike are comfortable and that they have everything they need for their case. He even takes the time to assist with setting up equipment.

When his judge has a trial on Monday, Andrew notifies the Court Reporting and Recording Division on Friday that they will need a reporter. If he doesn't get to it on Friday, he leaves a message over the weekend or calls on his way to work on Monday.

Andrew is always polite and respectful, consistently works to enhance courtroom procedures and the public's experience, and exhibits the Courts' values each and every day. As a result of his unwavering and incomparable willingness to provide outstanding public service for the District of Columbia Courts, it is most befitting that Mr. Moore is this year's recipient of the Public Service Award.

## EMPLOYEE AWARDS CEREMONY

### GROUP PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD – FAMILY ADR RESEARCH TEAM MULTI-DOOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION DIVISION



*From left to right: Matthew Centeio-Bargasse, Roberta Mitchell, Jeannie Adams, Jennifer Herman, Darrell Hale, Kitty Huggins (not pictured).*

When family cases involve intimate partner violence, mediation may be a useful alternative to court proceedings, because adversarial litigation can exacerbate conflict and increase the risk of violence. To determine whether mediation can be used safely in cases with a history of violence, the Multi-Door team, comprised of Jeannie Adams, Darrell Hale, Roberta Mitchell, Matthew Centeio-Bargasse, Kitty Huggins (not pictured), and Jennifer Herman, partnered with researchers from the Universities of Indiana and Arizona to conduct two comprehensive studies. The initial study compared the effectiveness of two different screening tools at detecting intimate partner violence -- and its impact on staff recommendations and mediators' beliefs about a case. The second study is looking at whether mediation increases a victim's safety and improves outcomes for clients. The studies have direct implications on the practice of family mediation for the public. This Award goes to the Multi-Door team for their commitment to providing a range of high quality mediation services to families in the District of Columbia. They exemplify the value of "Excellence" and deserve the Public Service Award.

### Intimate Partner Violence/Abuse Study Launched at Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division

*By Jennifer Herman*

A research team composed of Multi-Door staff and researchers from Indiana University (IU) and the University of Arizona (Arizona) launched the study *Intimate Partner Violence and Custody Decisions: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Outcomes from Family Court, Shuttle Mediation, and Videoconferencing Mediation* (Study) on September 22, 2014. The three year study examines the effectiveness and safety of two types of specialized mediation—specifically, shuttle and videoconferencing mediation—in family cases with high levels of intimate partner violence/abuse (IPV/A). In order to test several hypotheses formulated by the research team, each mediation type will be compared to the traditional, adversarial court process regarding both outcomes (e.g., settlement or court decree) and process.

No empirical study to date has examined whether mediation of any kind is safe and effective for family disputes involving high levels of IPV/A. As the first of its kind, this Study will impact not only local families but also families around the country. Because of its uniqueness and potential national impact, the National Institute of Justice awarded a \$763,686 grant to the researchers at IU and Arizona to conduct this Study at Multi-Door. The grant money funds two part-time Program Coordinators (employed by IU) to implement the Study at Multi-Door,

participant compensation, researcher visits to Multi-Door, and various other study-related expenses.

The Study goes beyond the day-to-day cases served by Multi-Door's Family Mediation Program. Typically, Multi-Door declines mediation services in family cases with high IPV/A due to safety and other concerns, meaning that the cases are sent back to court for resolution. Now, these parties have another option—voluntarily participating in the Study. The Program Coordinators advise potential participants about the benefits and risks associated with Study participation. If both parties voluntarily agree to participate, their case will enter into the Study. Two hundred and twenty-five family cases will be tracked by the end of data collection; 75 will be assigned to shuttle mediation, 75 to videoconferencing mediation, and 75 will return to court, with the last group serving as the control group. The Program Coordinators will survey the participants before, immediately after, and one year after participation. Researchers also will collect data from court records and the mediators involved in the Study.

In preparation for the Study, Multi-Door established additional safety protocols for shuttle and videoconferencing mediation to help protect the parties and mediators, including that the parties will not be in the same room together during media-

*Continues on page 8*

## 2014 MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

*Congratulations to the 2014 Management Training Program participants and the team project winner.*



*Winning team from left to right: Gaskin Sankoh, Patrice Irick, Laura Banks-Reed (mentor), Marissa Kuhn and Courtney Hall (not pictured).*

The winning project proposes an expansion of the Courts' Emergency Alert System that advises employees of court closings due to inclement weather or building problems. This expanded use would serve the public by providing reminders of upcoming hearings, jury service, visitation center appointments, and other activities. With the purchase of some add-on software that would allow for a data transfer from existing databases, like the Jury Management System or CourtView, to the Alert System large court operations such as the Jurors' Office could utilize the system. Benefits of the proposal include the ability to send reminders in a variety of foreign languages and formats (via text, e-mail, or automated phone calls), a reduction in no-show rates, lower administrative costs associated with rescheduling hearings and appointments, fewer warrants issued for failure to appear in court, and improved customer service. Since the majority of the DC Courts' budget is personnel costs, an average savings of just 1% of employee labor hours resulting from a Courtesy Reminder Notification program would yield an annual savings to the court of \$1.35 million dollars.

### MANAGEMENT TRAINING CLASS 2014

**Jeffery Banks**

Warehouse Manager  
Administrative Services Division

**Rita Blandino**

Special Assistant  
Crime Victims Compensation Program

**Taavonna Brooks**

Courtroom Clerk  
Civil Division

**Doris Chavez**

Courtroom Clerk  
Family Court Operations Division

**Kiah Dixon**

Deputy Clerk II  
Civil Division

**Melvetta Dockery**

Deputy Clerk II  
Probate Division

**Brigette Dunn**

Deputy Clerk III  
Criminal Division

**Candice Frink**

Deputy Clerk II  
Family Court Operations Division

**Adam Gould**

Deputy Clerk II  
Family Court Operations Division

**Courtney Hall**

Supervised Visitation Program Manager  
Executive Office

**Patrice Irick**

Legal Claims Examiner  
Court of Appeals

**Marissa Kuhn**

Budget Analyst  
Budget and Finance Division

**Erica Payne-Santiago**

Juvenile and Neglect Branch Chief  
Family Court Operations Division

**Svetlana Polonchuk**

Courtroom Clerk  
Criminal Division

**Tamira Roberson**

Calendar Coordinator  
Civil Division

**Gaskin Sankoh**

IT Specialist  
Information Technology Division

**Chudney Smith**

Deputy Clerk II  
Civil Division

# DC Superior Court celebrates National Recovery Month with a Drug Court Graduation and Cookout

The DC Superior Court celebrated National Recovery Month on Wednesday, September 17, 2014 with a Drug Court graduation and cookout at Fort Lincoln Park in Northeast DC. On hand were Chief Judge Lee Satterfield, Drug Court Judge Gregory Jackson, Judge Frederick Weisberg (former Drug Court judge), Pretrial Services Agency Director Cliff Keenan and a number of officials from PSA, Principal Assistant US Attorney Vince Cohen, Assistant MPD Chief Diane Grooms, Guest Speaker Tyrone Parker (Executive Director of the Alliance of Concerned Men), a number of drug court program alumni, and of course the graduates' friends and family.

After brief remarks from the VIPs, and inspirational remarks from Mr. Parker, encouraging the graduates to look forward and to believe that anything was possible, the names were called – first, the names of those progressing from one phase to another, then the names of those graduating that day. Most graduates had a few words for the audience, thanking the judges and the PSA workers who had helped them through the program, though some were so overwhelmed that all they could manage was ‘thanks so much!

Jeffrey Marshall got a laugh from the audience when he said

“Who would have thought I would have ever been glad to walk into a courtroom?” and then he talked about how happy he was to be at the graduation, and to be where he was in terms of his sobriety. He thanked all those who had helped him and said “I cannot believe that I shook Judge Jackson’s hand yesterday....not just once, but twice” – and then he turned around, gave the microphone back and shook the judge’s hand once again!



*From left to right: Principal Assistant US Attorney Vince Cohen, Drug Court Judge Gregory Jackson and Superior Court Chief Judge Lee Satterfield.*

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## *Multi-Door Study from page 6*

tion. The research team has hosted several conversations about the Study with local domestic violence advocates to inform them of the project and to seek feedback. Moreover, researchers consulted Loretta Fredericks and Gabrielle Davis, nationally recognized DV experts, about study procedures and training materials.

Preparations also included an initial study (Study 1) in 2013. Study 1 compared two screening tools—Multi-Door’s and MASIC (i.e., Mediator’s Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns)—both in their effectiveness at detecting violent/abusive behaviors and their impact on staff accepting or declining a case for mediation. Study 1 found that MASIC detected specific violent/abusive behaviors more often and also

slightly increased the number of cases declined mediation. Due to Study 1 results, MASIC will be used for IPV/A screening during the Study. Additional preparations involved securing grant funding, developing research methods and measures, and training ten experienced mediators in shuttle and videoconferencing mediation.

After study completion, findings will be disseminated through publication and conference presentations. Multi-Door thanks the DC Courts for their continuing support of this project and looks forward to the next three years of the Study.