



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

April 2018

DC Bar Celebrates Opening of New Headquarters, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby Gives Remarks

The District of Columbia Bar recently opened its new 100,000-square-foot headquarters in the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood.

DC Court of Appeals Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby gave opening remarks, recalling the long-term relationship between the Court of Appeals and the DC Bar. "This is an exciting day to celebrate with such a dedicated



Mayor Bowser (left) and Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby (right).

and service-oriented bar," she said.

Remarks were followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony, which included leaders of all branches of DC government: DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, DC Court of Appeals Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby, DC Bar President Patrick McGlone, President-Elect

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Chief Judge Morin Gives Opening Remarks at Dispute Resolution Conference



The DC Superior Court's Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division hosted an event at the DC Court of Appeals' Historic Courthouse with the American Bar Association's (ABA's) Dispute Resolution Section during its annual conference from April 4th – April 7th. The conference is attended by mediators, arbitrators, administrators of mediation and other alternative dispute resolution programs, and educators in the field. After Multi-Door hosted tours of its facilities for the attendees of the symposium, DC Superior Court Chief Judge Morin offered welcoming remarks, highlighting the hard work 140 court mediators had been doing on nearly 6,000 cases as well as the

98% satisfaction rate with the program. According to Chief Judge Morin: "Mediators are underreported heroes, they don't get the applause they deserve but as judges, mediation is very important to us as it acts as another pillar of access to justice."

Changes to Internal Dialing Extensions



The DC Courts are upgrading and modernizing the phone system. The goal is to execute the change in a non-disruptive manner to users and ensure continuity of operations.

All phone numbers starting with 879 will begin with 1- when dialing internally [**Please note that the majority of users in the Moultrie Courthouse will not see changes to their extensions**].

Numbers beginning with 508 will begin with 8-. Other phone numbers will change according to this formula:

Phone number prefix	New 5-digit dialing
202.879.xxxx	1-xxxx
202.508.xxxx	8-xxxx
202.233.xxxx	3-xxxx
202.654.xxxx	4-xxxx
202.626.xxxx or 202.636.xxxx	6-xxxx

Changes will be implemented over time, beginning in late-April and continuing through June and July. Generally, changes will happen on a building-by-building basis. The schedule will be maintained on the intranet. Please visit the "[Changes to Internal Dialing Extensions](#)" page on the intranet for more details.

If you have questions, please contact IT Service Desk at **1-1928**.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Month

The **Asian American and Pacific Islander** (AAPI) Committee is excited to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month in May! The AAPI Committee looks forward to welcoming the court community to our two special diversity and inclusion events.

First, we will host a panel discussion on **AAPIs in Public Service** on **May 1st** (12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.) in Building C, Room 2100.

On **May 11th**, we invite you to experience a cultural and educational **AAPI Night Market**. The event is from 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm in the Juror's Lounge (Moultrie Courthouse, 3rd Floor).

Judge Jonathan Pittman Sworn In



Superior Court Chief Judge Morin (left) swears in Jonathan Pittman as Associate Judge.

Jonathan Pittman was sworn in as an Associate Judge in the District of Columbia Superior Court by Chief Judge Robert Morin on Wednesday morning, April 4.

Jonathan Hale Pittman served most recently as the Assistant Deputy Attorney General for the Civil Litigation Division of the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. The Civil Litigation Division defends the District of Columbia, its agencies and employees in torts actions, civil rights actions and employment actions brought in the Superior Court for the District of Columbia and the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. From September

2012 until April 2016, Mr. Pittman was a Section Chief in the Civil Litigation Division. Prior to that, he was an associate and then partner with Crowell & Moring LLP. Mr. Pittman received a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Vassar College in 1985 and received a JD from Vanderbilt University School of Law. Following graduation from law school, Mr. Pittman served as a law clerk to the Honorable John A. Terry of the DC Court of Appeals.

Congratulations and welcome to Judge Pittman.

2018 Youth Law Fair

The 2018 Youth Law Fair took place Saturday, March 17th, at the Moultrie Courthouse. Over 150 students from around the Metro DC area gathered to discuss and debate issues surrounding this year's theme "Riot Versus Rally: When Words Ignite." This year's theme focused on First Amendment Rights, hate speech, and justifiable and excusable causes.

DC Superior Court Chief Judge Robert E. Morin gave opening remarks about the importance of events like Youth Law fair because of the education they provide for young people. DC Bar president, Patrick McGlone greeted students with excitement, speaking on the importance of understanding the bill of rights and the constitution in order to properly apply it to your life.



Attorneys from around the District coached students through mock trial exercises as they played the roles of defense and prosecuting attorneys, jurors, and witnesses. After their mock trial concluded, students gathered for a 'speak out' where they shared their opinions on the case that was argued. One student spoke of the importance of mediating heated situations and agreeing to disagree on hot-button issues in order to keep the peace.

DC Courts Celebrate Black History Month

To kick off the Black History Month celebration at the District of Columbia Courts in February, court employees packed out the Board of Judges' Conference Room to view *Black America: The Erasure of Black Women From History*. The segment discussed hidden female figures within the civil rights movement and their unspoken impact on America's history. With lunches, popcorn and soft drinks in hand, attendees had the opportunity to discuss topics surrounding the limited exposure of black women in history and the importance of keeping their legacy alive for the future.



Black History Month continued with “Black Women in Government.” Superior Court Judges Anita Josey-Herring, Tara Fentress and Renee Raymond came together to discuss pertinent topics that impact women of color, in government and in America. Each judge brought a different perspective

to the panel, providing deeper insight into the complexities of this unique and powerful group.

The second Black History Month event, held in the Court of Appeals, honored the life and legacy of Nannie Helen Burroughs. Born on May 2, 1879 to freed slaves, Burroughs grew-up to become a religious and civil rights activist and pioneering educator.

Fueled by her deep religious conviction as a member of the 19th Street Baptist Church in Washington, DC, she became a powerful force for women in the National Baptist Convention. With a startling address entitled, “How the Sisters are Hindered from Helping” at the 1900 convention in Richmond, Virginia, Burroughs began the fight to gain greater recognition for women in church decision-making. For the rest of her adult life, Nannie Helen Burroughs stood on the frontlines across America demanding equal justice for all.

Nannie Helen Burroughs passed away on May 20, 1961; she was 82-years old. Her Home Going Service was held on May 25 at the 19th Street Baptist Church. It was a three hour service, attended by 800 people including 95 ministers, of whom nine spoke from the pulpit. She was laid to rest in Suitland, MD at Lincoln Memorial Cemetery. To learn more about Nannie Helen, see: <http://nburroughsinfo.org/>

The final Black History event, “Conversations at Grandma’s House” was complete with soul food, line dancing, board games and 'hidden figure' post-cards. Both Court of Appeals Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby and Superior Court Chief Judge Robert Morin gave brief remarks about the impact and importance of celebrating both historical figures and everyday heroes. Court employees engaged with one another over discussion questions that were provided by the Black History Month committee.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Black History Month events this year.



Judges in “Black Women in Government” panel (from left to right): Anita Josey-Herring, Tara Fentress and Renee Raymond.

Veterans Navigator Office



The Veterans Navigator Office in the DC Superior Court seeks to link court-involved veterans to agencies and programs that provide a wide variety of services.

A court-involved veteran refers to a veteran having a criminal, civil, probate, domestic violence, small claims, landlord/tenant, or family matters case within the Superior Court.

Services include but are not limited to: civil legal assistance, housing, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, crisis intervention, social adjustment counseling, employment, job training, vocational rehabilitation, healthcare, military discharge (DD-214) upgrade assistance; and VA claims, benefits, and appeals assistance.

Location: First floor of the Moultrie Courthouse - Room 120B (adjacent to courtroom 120).

Hours of operation: Monday- Friday, 8:30 am-5:00 pm.

Phone number: 202-879-1259.

American University Newsletter Highlights Chief Deputy Clerk's Accomplishments



Herbert Rouson, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Court of Appeals, was recently featured in the online newsletter Impact Stories, which highlights accomplishments of the American University Washington College of Law faculty, students, and alumni. Mr. Rouson obtained his Juris Doctor from American University in 2002.

The story describes his role in the Court of Appeals as “developing and implementing enterprise-level process improvements that increase customer service metrics as they relate to providing access to justice, while maintaining a high-level of employee engagement.” He is also “in charge of cultivating collaborative relationships with decision-makers, executive leaders, and court partners.”

In a quote providing advice for law students, he says: “Stay open. Having ‘a plan’ or ‘end game’ certainly has its place;” but then he adds: “Sometimes the best plans are the ones that find those who are open to receive them.”

To see the full story, go to: <https://www.wcl.american.edu/impact/stories/meet-herbert-rouson-jr-02-chief-deputy-clerk-of-d-c-s-highest-court/>

Conversations @ the Core



The Center for Education and Training is offering “Conversations at the Core,” a two-day class taught by ChangeFusion, as a part of Living Our Values Initiative to all DC Courts non-supervisory employees.

Conversations are the core of culture change, and we all play a role in culture creation through our individual conversation. In this interactive session, you will learn tools and techniques to build better relationships at all levels by having more high-value conversations focused on sharing diverse perspectives, coming to a shared understanding, determining next steps, gauging progress, and improving outcomes and productivity.

The training will be offered multiple times. See the schedule below and check the intranet for registration.

Conversations @ the Core– Upcoming Dates

June 13 and 14, 2018

September 25 and 26, 2018

October 15 and 17, 2018

November 15 and 16, 2018



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.

New IT Strategic Plan

Focusing on providing resilient and responsive technology, the [IT Strategic Plan](#) defines key goals to enhance information security, access, innovation and customer satisfaction. The IT plan is part of the broader [DC Courts 2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#), which defines how the Courts will operate in the next five years.

The IT plan is built on the following guiding principles:

- Customer/User Experience Focus – Design and deliver IT services that put the needs of customers and users first
- Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability of Information – Enhanced security, quality, availability, and delivery of information
- Innovation – Foster innovation and adoption of new technologies
- Efficiency – Increase efficiency, transparency and accountability of IT
- Value – Provide business value to all users and stakeholders

The seven strategic goals in the plan are to create, support and provide:

1. An Engaged IT Workforce
2. A Best in Class Technology Platform
3. Enhanced Information Security
4. Innovative Business Process & Case Management
5. Access to Information
6. Decision-Making Support
7. Customer Satisfaction

To review the 2018-2022 DC Courts Strategic Plan, see: <https://www.dccourts.gov/about/organizational-performance>

.Learn more about the goals and strategies in the IT Plan: <https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/divisionspdfs/IT-Strategic-Plan-2018-2022.pdf>

DC Bar Opening—continued from front cover



Esther Lim and DC Councilmember Phil Mendelson.

The new location is complete with a broadcast studio and conference center, available for Bar members, clients and members of the public. Prior to the construction of the new building, the DC Bar had been renting office space for the past 46 years. The \$70 million project is the largest in the Bar's history, saving roughly \$25 million over 30 years in occupancy costs.

Upcoming Values Pulse Check



The Values Pulse Check Survey holds us all accountable to our vision. With your feedback, it measures our progress toward fully integrating the values into our day-to-day work environment at the Court level, Division level, and Branch level.

But, we can only know how we're doing with your participation.

How

- Quick on-line assessment – complete it in 5 minutes
- Distributed via email
- Each Division and/or Branch that has 5 or more respondents will be able to view Division/Branch specific results as compared to the overall court
- Responses are anonymous
- Reports will be developed by ChangeFusion

WHEN

- **Open May 7, 2018**
- **Close May 22, 2018**

“Our values encapsulate core principles that guide the expected behavior and conduct for all those who work for the DC Courts. It is the personal responsibility of each of us to carry out our duties, and to interact with colleagues, all court participants, and members of the public, in accordance with the Courts’ values at all times. Collectively, the values articulate a court culture that exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism, service, and performance.”

Strategic Plan of of District of Columbia Courts, 2018 - 2022

Our values describe our destiny. they communicate the kind of organization we want to be - a court that is open to all, trusted by all, and provides justice for all.