

Full Court Press

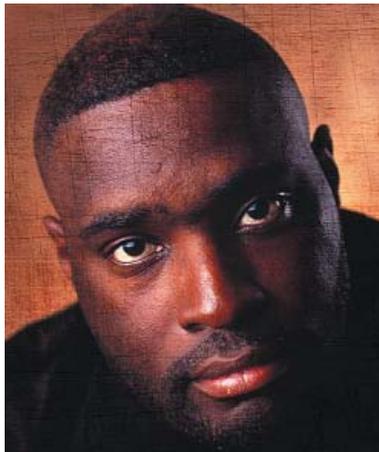
Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts
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SCREENWRITER ANTWONE FISHER SPEAKS AT THE 17th ANNUAL ADOPTION DAY IN COURT

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

On Saturday, November 22, 2003, the D.C. Courts and D.C.'s Child and Family Service Agency (CFSA) cosponsored the 17th Annual Adoption Day Ceremony. Adoption Day is a nationally recognized day in which adoptions are publicly finalized to encourage people to consider the joy of adoption. The celebration is a special day for the families created by adoption and helps promote knowledge, throughout the community, of the continuous need for loving parents to adopt children. The keynote speaker was Antwone Fisher, who wrote a movie screenplay based on his experience overcoming a childhood in an abusive foster home. His movie, *Antwone Fisher*,



Antwone Fisher

was released in early 2003 to rave reviews. Mr. Fisher, now a screenwriter and happily married father of two young girls, spoke of the need for adoption and the pain of being with foster parents who treated their foster sons so differently from their biological children. Magistrate Judge Pam Gray, who herself was a foster child, though with a much different childhood experience, introduced Mr. Fisher in a very moving fashion. Guests appreciated the honesty and passion that both of these speakers shared with the audience.

Continued on page 10.

PROBATE DIVISION ACHIEVES CUSTOMER SERVICE MILESTONES

By Constance G. Starks, Register of Wills

On February 19 and 25, 2004, the Probate Division staff participated in customer service training facilitated by Crystal Williams of International Training Associates, which specializes in organizational development and diversity training. During the training, the Honorable José López, Presiding Judge of the Division, facilitated an open discussion on how to improve services.



Carmen Mack, Calendar Coordinator in the Probate Division coordinated the Customer Service Survey Project.

The training program is a key action step in the 2004-2006 Management Action Plan (MAP) that the Division developed to help the Court implement the Strategic Plan. In alignment with the court-wide goal to promote high standards of conduct and personal behavior among participants, a Division objective is to enhance employees' knowledge of, and compliance with, court-wide standards of conduct and customer service by requiring their participation in training by April 2004. The expected outcome is to enhance employee courteousness and responsiveness. Performance will be measured by supervisory assessment and customer assessment solicited through surveys administered by the Division with the assistance of the Research and

Continued on page 8.

Included in this issue:

- 2 **Judge Byrd and Magistrate Judge McCarthy Sworn in**
- 3 **Judge Iscoe & Magistrate Judge Brenneman Sworn In**
- 4 **The Bilingual Employee Program**
- 4 **New Employee Joins Criminal Division**
- 5 **Unsung Heroes**
- 6 **Internship Program**
- 7 **Court Management Program Graduates**
- 7 **IJIS SnapShot**
- 8 **Judge Dixon - Ahead of the Future**
- 9 **Black History Month**
- 9 **Mystery Photo**
- 11 **Judge Webber's Memoirs**
- 12 **Hispanic Heritage Month**
- 12 **Court Greeters Program**
- 13-15 **RAVE REVIEWS**
- 16 **Construction Update**
- 16 **Upcoming Court Events**

JUDGE JERRY BYRD'S INVESTITURE HELD IN NOVEMBER

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Magistrate Judge Jerry Stewart Byrd was sworn in as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia on Friday November 21, 2003. Chief Judge Rufus G. King, III presided over the investiture. Friends and family attended the ceremony to honor Judge Byrd's long tenure at the Superior Court. Colleagues of Judge Byrd also saluted his commitment to public service. Presiding Magistrate Judge J. Dennis Doyle said of Judge Byrd's contributions, "I am confident he will continue to be an asset to the Courts." Magistrate Judge Goodbread was particularly proud of Judge Byrd's promotion to Associate Judge: "In praise of a man of refinement, talent and culture, I'd like to share how proud I am to know him." Paula Byrd, Administrative Assistant to the Clerk of the Court, and Jerry Jr., the Judge's son, held the Bible as Deputy Presiding Magistrate Judge Aida Melendez administered the

oath of office.

Judge Byrd was born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina. He is one of five children, all of whom attended the ceremony. In September 1954, Judge Byrd enlisted in the United States Army and served in Germany as a gunner in a field artillery battalion and later at Fort Carson, Colorado. During his service with the army, Judge Byrd played with the Fort Carson Colorado Army Band. After his honorable discharge in 1957, he entered Fisk University where he pursued an A.B. degree in physics. After completing his undergraduate studies, Judge Byrd enrolled in Howard University School of Law where he graduated *cum laude* in 1964.

Judge Byrd began his work in the legal field with the Regional Advice Branch of the National Labor



Associate Judge
Jerry S. Byrd

Relations Board. He later served as Deputy Director of the Neighborhood Legal Services Program. Before becoming a hearing commissioner with Superior Court in 1981, Judge Byrd served as the supervising attorney for the United Planning Organization's Model Cities Consumer Protection Program. He served as Hearing

Commissioner until September 1997 when he resigned to take a position as a U.S. Administrative Law Judge with the Office of Hearing and Appeals of the Social Security Administration in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He returned to the Superior Court in January 1998 as a Hearing Commissioner, later Magistrate Judge. In addition to his work in the legal community, Judge Byrd has earned a Black Belt in the practice of Tae Kwon Do.

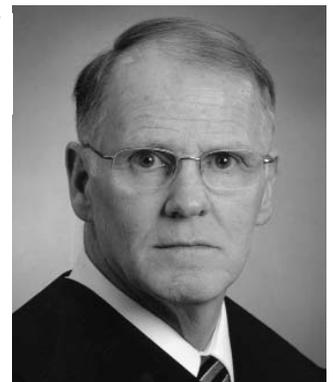
MICHAEL MCCARTHY INSTALLED AS MAGISTRATE JUDGE

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Magistrate Judge Michael J. McCarthy was installed on Friday, December 19, 2003 in the presence of colleagues, friends, and family. Acting Chief Judge Frederick H. Weisberg presided over the ceremony while Associate Judge Robert Morin administered the oath of office.

Magistrate Judge McCarthy was born and raised in East Bridgewater, Massachusetts. He received his B.S. degree in Business Administration from The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina in 1964. He spent the next four years as an Intelligence Officer in the United States Air Force where he served in Taiwan, Okinawa and Korea. Upon his return, he served as an Intelligence Officer at the National Security Agency. Magistrate Judge McCarthy was honorably discharged from the Air Force with the rank of Captain.

Magistrate Judge McCarthy obtained his juris doctor from The American University Washington College of Law in 1971 and then established the law firm of McCarthy & Sullivan. For 30 years, he has been a member of the District of Columbia and Maryland State Bar Associations. As an active member of the American Legion and Knights of Columbus, Magistrate Judge McCarthy has been recognized for his outstanding service over the years.



Magistrate Judge
Michael J. McCarthy

The Full Court Press is published by the District of Columbia Courts to provide information about the D.C. Courts. Inquiries should be submitted to Room 1500.

Leah Gurowitz, Editor

THE FIRST INVESTITURE OF 2004: JUDGE CRAIG ISCOE

By Louis Kelly, Senior Operations Manager to the Clerk of the Court

The investiture of Craig S. Iscoe as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court took place on Friday January 9, 2004. The ceremony was well-attended by Judge Iscoe's family, friends, colleagues and former co-workers. Judge Iscoe's parents, Ira and Louise Iscoe of Austin, Texas, sat proudly and listened to colleagues and friends offer humorous anecdotes and remarks about their friendship and professional relationship with Judge Iscoe. The Honorable Eric H. Holder, former Deputy Attorney General, Associate Judge of Superior Court, and U.S. Attorney, spoke highly of Judge Iscoe's intellect and dedication.

Attorney Robert Liotta spoke highly of Judge Iscoe's determination and compassion for young people, as demonstrated through his leadership as the Scoutmaster of his Boy Scout Troop. Mr. Liotta is an Assistant Scoutmaster in the Troop and said he was particularly impressed with how important it is for Judge Iscoe to



Associate Judge
Craig S. Iscoe

involve all of the boys in the whole scouting experience regardless of their abilities. Mr. Liotta noted that Judge Iscoe sets an example for the Scouts by leading rigorous backpacking and camping trips.

The Honorable Larry Parkinson, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Department of the Interior, spoke of Judge Iscoe's skills as a trial lawyer and also his compassion, noting in particular Judge Iscoe's handling of a child witness in a homicide in which the child's father had killed his mother. In addition to winning the case,

Judge Iscoe encouraged the child in his schoolwork and took him to the zoo one Saturday when he discovered that he had never been to the zoo.

Judge Iscoe's wife Rosemary Hart held the Bible as he took his Oath of Office administered by Judge J. Ramsey Johnson. The judge's teenage sons David and Mark had the pleasure of robing their father.

INSTALLATION OF MAGISTRATE JUDGE DIANE MARIE BRENNEMAN

By Louis Kelly, Senior Operations Manager to the Clerk of the Court

Magistrate Judge Diane Marie Brenneman was installed on Friday, February 20, 2004. The ceremony was well-attended by Magistrate Judge Brenneman's family, friends and colleagues. Magistrate Judge Brenneman's husband and children and other family members all participated in the brief but emotionally charged ceremony. The corridor outside the courtroom was filled with colleagues and friends unable to be seated inside.

Ms. Paulette E. Chapman, President of the Women's Bar Association Foundation, shared some very warm and humorous accounts of Magistrate Judge Brenneman's sacrifice and desire to offer her service and legal expertise to those in the city who could least afford good counsel. She shared how hard she worked on any assignment to make sure the bar and other associations provided the level of service commensurate with what is expected from the legal community. Her two-year volunteer experience as a teacher in India prior to enrolling in law school is a testament of her sacrifice and commitmen



Magistrate Judge
Diane Marie Brenneman

to helping others. Her career decisions and actions, more than her words, speak volumes about her character, her priorities and her love to help those in need. Her former law firm partner Mark G. Levine spoke extensively about how much he respected and admired Magistrate Judge Brenneman for her legal mind and her integrity. Throughout her career she has been recognized for her tenacity and compassion in representing her clients, for which she gained the respect and admiration of many.

The culmination of the ceremony was the administration of the Oath of Office by Chief Judge Rufus G. King, III, as Magistrate Judge Brenneman's husband Lyle held the Bible. Her daughter Sara Chauhan and her sisters Deborah A. Redfield and Nancy Vegher placed the robe around her. A reception commenced immediately following the ceremony.

Magistrate Judge Brenneman is welcomed as the newest member of the court family.

BILINGUAL EMPLOYEES PLAY SPECIAL ROLE IN COURTHOUSE

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

With an increasing Spanish-speaking population in our community, the Courts have worked to enhance access to court services. Nancy Matos, a recent addition to the Human Resources Division, has been recruiting bilingual employees to help meet this goal. When court employees who have direct contact with the public can speak Spanish fluently, they are better able to fulfill their duties as liaisons between the Courts and the community. The bilingual employee program is crucial to meet one of the paramount strategic goals here at the Courts: to ensure equal access for all.

With this issue of *Full Court Press* we begin profiling some of the staff in these bilingual positions —

Gregoria Iglesias:



Gregoria Iglesias

Gregoria has worked as a Bilingual Probation Officer for approximately nine years and is currently assigned to the Northwest Field Unit. Gregoria enjoys working with Hispanic clients since they come from so many different countries and cultures. Ms. Iglesias is from a “beautiful island in the Caribbean,” Puerto Rico. While she is fluent in Spanish, she says that language variations are still a challenge because Spanish has so many different dialects and accents. Gregoria says her clients speak the language differently depending on the region in which they were raised and level of education they attained. She says that while most of her clients are bilingual, their parents often cannot speak English. She says that it is interesting to work with a variety of nationalities because she has the opportunity to learn about their culture, language, and traditions. She hopes that the Courts can continue to develop programs to provide more effective services to Hispanic clients and their families.

Rosemary Burgess:

Rosemary works for the Crime Victims Compensation Program in Superior Court. This program provides financial assistance to victims of violent crimes in the District of Columbia. In the past couple of years, the District has seen a large increase of violence in the Latino community. Rosemary’s job is to advocate for those Spanish-speaking clients who otherwise could not communicate their needs. In that capacity, she helps facilitate the intake process with the program and sees people begin to get the assistance they need to deal with the crime they experienced.



Rosemary Burgess

Jorge Nava:



Jorge Nava

Jorge serves as a Bilingual Probation Officer with the Juvenile Intake Unit. After moving to New York City from Argentina as a 13-year-old, he attended school with mainly minorities, he said, giving him the opportunity to become not only bilingual, but “bicultural.” Jorge says it is very important not only to learn the Spanish language but to understand the different cultures that one may encounter with a Spanish-speaker. His previous service as a school administrator has prepared him for his duties here at the Courts dealing with teenagers. Jorge believes that it is a growing responsibility for the public sector to provide services for Spanish-speakers.

NEW EMPLOYEE – NANCY MCKINNEY – JOINS CRIMINAL DIVISION

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Nancy McKinney has been named branch chief of the Case Management Branch of the Criminal Division. The case management branch is responsible for handling all active criminal cases from traffic to felony 1, ensuring that paperwork and case files are accurate and available when scheduled for court. The branch staff receives motions, processes appeals and diversion paperwork, and prepares cases for arraignment and presentment in courtroom C-10. Nancy says, “I have a great, very experienced staff and am enjoying my days



here in Superior Court.”

Nancy spent her childhood years in Tucson, Arizona and later attended college at the University of Arizona. Previously, she worked at Tucson City Court and Austin Municipal Court where she served for 12 years as a Deputy Director. Just prior to joining Superior Court, Nancy was employed as a Senior Business Manager for a case management software vendor here in Washington, DC, designing systems for criminal justice agencies and private law firms, training users, testing software and managing projects.

UNSUNG HEROES

by Joy Chapper, Deputy Clerk of Court, District of Columbia Court of Appeals

Over the past two years, quietly and largely out of view, one of the most significant achievements of the D.C. Courts has taken place: the elimination of the backlog of transcript requests for proceedings taken on tape. In 2000, there were 1,007 transcript orders pending. At the end of 2003, that number had dropped to 148 – an 85% decrease! It is even more impressive when you realize that

additional, new transcript orders continued to come into the office. Under the able leadership of Gregg Poss, the people responsible for this achievement are the 20 members of the Central Recording and Transcription Branches of the Court Reporting and Recording Division: Donald Carter, Lori Edley, Sheila Bennett, Pamela Cary, Ophelia Grimes, Jacqueline Hogue, Lawrence Marshall, Sandra Robin, Constance Robinson, Valarie Williams, Chiquita N. Cheek, Tonya Coleman-Lee, Charles Dunn, William F. Ford, Kevin Hurd, Kwame Jackson, Sr., Aaron J. Jones, Sr., Damon Parran, Alvin Milton, and Michael Simms.

The backlog in tape transcript orders was, in large part, the result of technological problems as well as increases in requests once all courtrooms went “on line” with digital recording. Solving those problems took away the barrier to performance, but left the Transcription and Central Recording staff with a huge volume of tape orders and a lot of pressure to perform. Delays in transcript



Transcription Branch from left to right; (front row), Ophelia (Fran) Grimes, Lori Edley, Valarie Williams, Gustina Jacqueline Hogue; (back row), Pamela Cary, Sandra Robin, Lawrence Marshall, and Sheila Bennett.

preparation had seriously affected the appellate process, with hundreds of appeals basically at a standstill until transcripts were completed. These delays affected caseload within D.C. Court of Appeals, the work flow of attorneys handling appeals, and, most importantly, the lives of individuals whose appeals were pending.



Central Recording Branch (left to right) Kwame Jackson Sr., Michael Simms, William Ford, Kevin Hurd, Tonya Coleman-Lee, Donald Carter, Aaron J. Jones Sr., Alvin Milton, and Damon Parran.

Attorneys placing new orders were routinely told that it would take six months or more for a transcript.

The Transcription and Central Recording staffs stepped up to the plate. Everyone’s participation was essential. Many of the transcript requests had to be researched exten-

sively. This meant numerous hours spent in clerk’s offices examining case jackets to determine if a hearing had been held for the proceeding date requested. It required determination and detective-like skills to get to the bottom of “problem cases.” Each proceeding ordered had to be located on the master tape, duplicated, and sent to be transcribed. Many, many times this required that staff listen to hours of audio to locate a case. While the production of many transcripts was contracted out, the Transcription staff produced a large volume of transcripts.

This hard work has had a significant impact on the Court of Appeals, as appellate records were completed with the filing of transcripts. The elimination of the transcript backlog will ripple through the appellate process until appeals with once-delayed transcripts are briefed and decided.

This, in turn, will adversely impact “time on appeal,” making it appear that it is taking longer to resolve cases as the Court decides these older cases.

The elimination of the transcript backlog, in conjunction with business process reengineering and management initiatives, has enabled the Transcription and Central Recording staff to produce new transcript orders in a timely fashion.

This is the most significant effect, as it will enable the D.C. Courts to meet one of its strategic goals: to administer justice promptly and efficiently. Congratulations to the staff of the Central Recording and Transcription Branches for a job well done!

NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IS UP AND RUNNING!

By Meghan Aberle, Intern Volunteer Coordinator, HR Division

The Human Resources Division launched an internship program in September 2003. During the inaugural semester, seven college interns volunteered in three offices of the D.C. Courts. By the spring 2004 semester the program had grown in popularity and the Courts welcomed about 30 interns into eight different offices of D.C. Courts. In the first three months of the year, these interns volunteered over 1,600 hours.

The interns' experience at the Courts is a unique one. They are able to gain valuable hands-on experience in the administration of justice, while helping court staff. The tasks range from helping the Small Claims file clerks, to collecting data for the Family Treatment Court and, of course, working with law clerks in a judges' chamber.

One way the Courts have been able to offer these valuable internships is through the Federal Work-Study Program. College students in the work-study program receive a grant as part of their financial aid package each year that can be used to cover costs of internships. Below are comments from one of the D.C. Courts' federal work-study students and his supervisor. If you would

like to find out more information about the Courts' internship program, please e-mail Meghan Aberle, Intern Volunteer Coordinator, at meghana@dcsc.gov.

Comments by Toni F. Gore, Branch Supervisor, Domestic Relations Branch: "The Domestic Relations Branch Clerk's Office (DRB) was the proud recipient of collegiate interns via the Federal Work-Study Program. The students worked side-by-side daily with deputy clerks, courtroom clerks, managers and judges. The court staff embraced the opportunity to train and work closely with the interns. It gave the deputy clerks and courtroom clerks the experience of supervising, which in itself was a catalyst that sparked motivation. The staff power of the interns contributed to the expeditious and effective processing of divorce, custody, visitation, standby guardianship, annulment, adoption, relinquishment, termination of parental rights and legal separation cases. Each intern, after training by staff, participated in the daily operations of DRB with minimum supervision while producing a quality work product that is reflective of their abilities. We in DRB are most grateful for their contributions."

An essay by Darrell Owens, Domestic Relations Branch Intern:

"The Lucky Oxymoron"

I must admit, when I first heard about some crazy program called the "work-study" program, I wondered to myself what kind of strange contradiction that really was. The way it sounded, I thought I could get paid to do my homework, something I was regretting having to do in college anyway.

Six-months later, and wouldn't-cha-know-it, I found myself looking down at the small piece of paper entitled "Financial Aid," and there it was ... looking back at me with two hollow offset eyes ... a work-study award. I took a deep breath and tried to figure out exactly what that meant; whatever it was, I wasn't looking forward to it.

Now that I've almost completed my time at the District of Columbia Superior Court, this is perhaps the best job I've ever had. I work downtown right in the courthouse itself watching and experiencing a different side of the law than I had ever been accustomed to. Instead of just having the prosecution and defense angle, I am experiencing and working in the part of the court system most people don't think of when they think of going to court.

This is my second semester interning at the Superior Court. I work in the Domestic Relations Branch; they handle things like divorces, child custody, and adoptions. I worked upstairs learning the ropes for a semester, but now I've been given the chance to intern with Judge Ramsey Johnson and the courtroom clerk, Ed McGee.

It didn't take me long to realize the opportunity I received because of the work-study grant was a great break. And I don't mean that as a cliché. It was an actual opportunity for me to find out what happens behind the scenes, and truly gauge the depth of the law that I hope to one day practice.

Working last semester, I got a chance to participate in big events at the court as well. I helped out with our Adoption Day celebration and festivities and helped put together some of the materials used that day.

Working at the District of Columbia Courts provided an experience, which I can easily say I would do again in heartbeat. In retrospect, I guess the only thing I should have been surprised at was the fact I actually got the job in the first place. A year ago I never would have imagined having to look for a job as lucky, but every morning I step into that courtroom to begin work, I can't help thinking how lucky I am.



Domestic Relations Branch Intern Darrell Owens with Judge John Ramsey Johnson and courtroom clerk Edward McGee.

DANA FRIEND AND ANITA ALEXANDER - COURT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GRADUATES

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Mr. Dana Friend and Ms. Anita Alexander recently graduated from the Court Management Program offered by the Institute of Court Management of the National Center for State Courts. CMP is designed to address the training needs of court managers through intensive courses and a concluding seminar. The five courses of CMP develop participants' knowledge, skills and abilities in case flow management, information technology, court performance standards, fiscal management and human resources.

The week-long concluding seminar combines elements of leadership, management techniques, and specific court issues in a program that provides par-



Dana Friend
Deputy Fiscal Officer



Anita Alexander
Appeals Officer

Participants with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve their professional goals as court managers. Participants explore the roles and purposes of courts; deal with the concepts of judicial independence and interdependence; become familiar with various leadership and management theories as they apply to courts; take time to recognize and appreciate their own conceptual and interpersonal skills, as well as those of others; develop new team-building techniques; and, through interactive group work, understand the importance of good communication as they move to higher levels of critical thinking.

Congratulations to Dana Friend and Anita Alexander!

IJIS SnapShot

By Greg Hale, IJIS Project Manager, IT Division

In early December 2003, the IJIS Project Team completed the implementation of Phase 1 of the Superior Court's new integrated justice information system (IJIS). Over the next three to five years IJIS will replace the court's twenty or so independent, automated databases with a single system allowing the tracking of individuals and cases across divisions. With the exception of the Paternity & Support Branch, all

operations of the Family Court and Social Services Division are now using the IJIS CourtView system.

The IJIS Project Team is currently focused on the implementation of the Probate/Tax and Civil Divisions. "Go Live" for Probate/Tax is currently scheduled for May 17th. Training for Probate/Tax users was held in March. Implementation in

the Civil Division will follow later in the year.

To support IJIS implementation, the Information Technology Division is upgrading the PCs in all of the courtrooms throughout the campus. After the upgrade is complete, clerks and judges will have the ability to use the new CourtView software from any courtroom.

HR News -- Mark your calendars

TSP Open Season
April 15 to June 30, 2004
Annual Wellness Fair
April 29 and 30th
in the Moultrie atrium

SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE DIXON ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE FUTURE

Judge Herbert Dixon featured in 8th National Court Technology Conference (CTC8)

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Last October, Judge Herbert Dixon presented a panel discussion at the 8th national Court Technology Conference sponsored by the National Center for State Courts. In this panel discussion, Judge Dixon and other judges from across the nation discussed the subject of electronic filing. Judge Dixon and the panel discussed typical hurdles and obstacles that are encountered whenever the subject of electronic filing is raised.

The session has received numerous accolades since its presentation. For example, the editor of the Glasser E-Filing Report wrote in the November edition of that publication that Judge Dixon's panel was one of the most "interesting sessions ... [at the conference] on the

topic of electronic filing," and that the session was "informative, entertaining and insightful."

In his 18 years here at the Courts, Judge Dixon has served as presiding judge of Civil Division and Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division. He is currently a member of the court's technology committee and chairs the electronic filing pilot project. Additionally, Judge Dixon is a frequent participant in national forums concerning court technology and electronic filing systems. In addition, he co-chairs the Electronic Filing Process Standards Committee of the National Conference of State Trial Judges.

Cont. from page 1.



Constance G. Starks, Register of Wills, lead the Probate Division Team and was very proud of the job they did.

Development Division. The target is to have 80% of survey respondents agree that employees are courteous and responsive in fiscal year 2004 and to have 90% agree by the end of fiscal year 2005.

The Division administered a customer service survey during the period February 23-27, as a key action step in its MAP objective to solicit input from Probate Division consumers regarding probate clerical operations and performance. A second survey will be conducted later in July 2004. This objective is strategically aligned with the court-wide goal to be responsive to the community. The expected outcome of the surveys is to provide a standard mechanism to receive and evaluate input from the public regarding Probate Division performance.

The targets of both the training and survey objectives thus far have been met, as well as a third MAP objective designed to enhance customer satisfaction by limiting waiting times to ten minutes in 95% of cases. A completed survey was received from over 75% of the persons assisted in the Probate Division on the days the surveys were administered. The results show that more than 90% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the service they received in the Probate Division was courteous



Judge José López and Crystal Williams facilitate Customer Service Training with Probate Division Staff.

and responsive. Ninety-five percent agreed that they received assistance within 10 minutes of waiting, and 96% agreed that their visit was a positive experience.



Constance O. Hill, Small Estates Supervisor, assisted in administering the surveys by greeting the public as they arrived in the Probate Division.

The customer service training held in February is the first segment of a two-part course planned for the Division. The second segment will be held in April and is designed as a refresher on appropriate answers to frequently asked questions. A panel of managers and supervisors in the Division will facilitate this segment. After completion of the two training programs, the Division will be conducting a second survey.

The completion of the first segment of the training, maintaining minimal waiting times, administering the first of two planned surveys and the achievement of high marks from its customers, are all celebrated milestones in the Probate Division's efforts to achieve its 2004 – 2006 performance objectives.

BLACK HISTORY CELEBRATION 2004

By Kathy Holiday-Crawford, Social Services Division

This year's Black History Month Celebration focused on the 50th anniversary of *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

The celebration began with a tour of the Anacostia Museum to view the "Crowns" exhibit. Lorraine Grimaldi and Shirley Davis, of the Social Services Division, coordinated this grand affair, with buses taking those who signed up over to the museum to see the exhibit.

During the second week, an event entitled "Hearing Our Voices Through Music and Poetry" spotlighted the talent of students at Moten Elementary School, Jefferson Junior High School, Charles Hart Middle School and Ballou High School, as well as the Smothers Elementary School D.C. Scores poetry slam team. The young people serenaded the audience with talent that awed the crowd. The entire performance was moving, but when the Jefferson Junior High School choir dedicated the song "What About the Children" to their brothers and sisters at Ballou High School, there was not a dry eye in the house! The Honorable Tara Fentress was the Mistress of Ceremonies and Benjamin Hyman chaired the planning committee.

The committee that organized the third and final week's event was chaired by Carl Johnson and Nareissa Smith. Dr. Janet Sims-Wood presented a slide show on the history of *Brown vs. Board of Education* entitled "Separate But Equal Has No Place." Nareissa Smith moderated the panel discussion that followed, on the theme "50 Years Later Where Are We And Where Are We Going? *Brown vs. Board of Education*." The panel participants were Ashley Allen, Justin Cruz, Shalonda Williams (students of School Without Walls), John Yang, Esq. and Professor Cynthia Mabry (Howard University School of Law). The audience was delighted with music from Jefferson Junior High School. After all the festivities were over, guests enjoyed a delectable luncheon in the Jurors Cafeteria.

A special thank you to Administrative Services, Central Recording, Social Services Transportation Staff, Aramark Corporation, Chief Judge Annice Wagner, Chief Judge Rufus King, Judge Lee F. Satterfield, Magistrate Judge Tara Fentress, and Willard Stephens.

Stay tuned for next year!

Note: This year's Black History Month Committee was chaired by Kathy Holiday-Crawford, Administrative Probation Officer, Social Services Division. Other members included: Fannie Barksdale, Carroll T. Boswell, Johnnie L. Brown, Shirley Davis, Vivian Fulbright-Bright, Lorraine Grimaldi, Leah Gurowitz, Benjamin Hyman, Carl Johnson, Louis Kelly, Cheryl Lonon and Nareissa Smith.

Mystery Photo



Eleven years ago - Can you identify the four court employees shown here helping with the Hurricane Andrew Relief Drive?

Cont. from page 1.

The Court and CFSA hosted a day full of activities to honor the new families created by the over 400 adoptions in D.C. during 2003. At the ceremony, 46 adoption decrees were signed, creating 25 new families. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, one of the original sponsors of the Family Court Act, spoke of the progress that has been made and the continuing need for resources: financial, judicial and emotional. Superior Court Chief Judge Rufus King III and Family Court Presiding Judge Lee Satterfield, both adoptive parents themselves, presided over the ceremony which was covered by three local television stations as well as CNN. Local anchorwoman Barbara Harrison, traditionally the mistress of ceremonies for the D.C. Adoption Day ceremony, introduced the children to the audience, telling a bit about each child and how they came to be part of their new families. She gave each child a chance to say something to the audience; many did, taking the opportunity to tell their adoptive parents how much they loved them. After the official ceremony, the children were given gifts and honored at a reception with entertainment by the police band. Antwone Fisher chatted with the children and their parents, signed autographs and had his picture taken with many in attendance.



Magistrate Judge Pam Gray relates her experiences as a foster child as she introduces keynote speaker Antwone Fisher.



CFSA social worker Gwen Menefee with Antwone.



Magistrate Judge Julie Breslow with new mother Joann Lewis and son Rickey Thomas.

SENIOR JUDGE WEBBER PUBLISHES HIS MEMOIRS

By Leah Gurowitz, Director of Public Affairs

Judge Paul R. Webber III has published a book: “Enjoying the Journey: One Lawyer’s Memoir,” the story of his fascinating rise from Gadsden, South Carolina, to a legal career in California and Washington, to a judgeship on the D.C. Superior Court. As he mentions in the foreword, Judge Webber had frequently thought that he “should put words to paper about some of the fascinating people, places and things [he has] encountered thus far in [his] lifetime. Long known in the Moultrie Courthouse for his careful and masterful use of language, Judge Webber has a list of “fascinating people” with whom few could argue: Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall, Count Basie, Leontyne Price, and NFL Hall of Famer David Deacon Jones.

Judge Webber’s parents met at South Carolina State University, which was then known as the Colored Normal, Industrial, Agricultural and Mechanical College of South Carolina. His father was a teacher and principal of an elementary school in Gadsden, then a farm demonstration agent in nearby Aiken County, and later a football coach and assistant professor of agricultural economics, while his wife managed their two soda shops. Later on, Mr. Webber opened a car dealership and Mrs. Webber went back to school to get her master’s degree and taught science first at a local high school and then SCSU. Not content with these major accomplishments, Mrs. Webber earned a doctorate at American University and retired as a professor of science education at SCSU.

The landmark case of *Brown v. the Board of Education* was actually five cases that were consolidated, one of which, *Briggs v. Elliott* was from a rural area near SCSU. As the case was being prepared, Thurgood Marshall and other out-of-town lawyers would have meals at the Webbers’ soda shop and talk litigation strategy. Despite deciding in the plaintiffs’ favor, the Supreme Court did not require immediate desegregation, but rather that integration occur “with all deliberate speed.” Thus Judge Webber completed his education with a J.D. from the all-black SCSU.

The summer before his final year of law school, Judge Webber got a job at a new nightclub in New York City that



Senior Judge
Paul R. Webber, III

Count Basie had just opened! While in New York, his friend, George Price, took him to a party where his sister, Leontyne Price, graced them with a performance of several songs from *Porgy and Bess*. The following year, Judge Webber’s sister went off to medical school, but, as he put it, his parents did not have to suffer from “empty nest syndrome” – his youngest sister Sheryl was born.

Judge Webber practiced law in South Carolina for two years and then moved to Los Angeles for a position at UCLA Law School.

Prior to finding an apartment in the city for his wife and son, Judge Webber stayed with long-time friends Tommy and Purnell Lee. Years later, Purnell’s nephew Eric married the judge’s sister Sheryl. Eric is now a Court of Appeals judge – known to those of us in the courthouse as Judge Eric Washington – and Sheryl is an executive with United Parcel Service. They have three children, Lindsay, Erica and Eric Jr.

Judge Webber worked for Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company – and then moved back to D.C. to work in the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and later in the Neighborhood Legal Services Program. He later joined the law firm of Thompson, Evans & Dolphin and then was nominated to the Superior Court by President Jimmy Carter in 1977. At his Senate confirmation hearing Judge Webber was on a panel with Gladys Kessler, now District Court judge; the late Bob Shuker of the D.C. Superior Court; and Annice Wagner, now Chief Judge of the D.C. Court of Appeals.

Horace Ott, a high school classmate of Judge Webber, became a very successful musician and earned gold and platinum albums for his work with the Village People, Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis, Aretha Franklin and others. Judge Webber once asked him how he had risen to such reknown. The answer, as related in the Judge’s words, shows what he sees as the formula for success: “*Preparation had come face to face with opportunity, and hard work had created good luck.*”

COURTS CELEBRATE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Each year, the Courts host various events to celebrate the Hispanic heritage and the Latino presence in the D.C. community during Hispanic Heritage Month.

Chief Judge Annice Wagner and Chief Judge Rufus King kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month and introduced Karlísima, a local El Salvadoran painter. The artist's work was on display for two weeks in the Juror's Lounge. Much of Karlísima's work reflects

her Salvadoran ancestry, she explained, as well as her upbringing in the Washington area and its strong Hispanic community. Karlísima is known for her distinctive style, bright colors and mixing of spiritual themes and different

cultures.

Locally, she is famous for painting murals around the city and for her displays in various restaurants.

The Courts were pleased to have Karlísima and her artwork here for the celebration.



Dancers from the Oyster Bilingual School provided entertainment during the CORO awards.

their country and its relationship with the rest of the Spanish-speaking world. Mr. Toribio Biang Mba, First Secretary, and Ms. Paciencia Mata, Third Secretary, led the discussion. The audience enjoyed learning about the history and culture of this young African country through images and music.

Each year the Courts host the CORO Awards Ceremony – *coro* is the Spanish word for choir, and the CORO Awards stand for

Community, Outreach, Recognition and Opportunity. These awards are given in recognition of outstanding service to the Latino community that has enhanced the lives of area Latinos and the District of Columbia community in general. The 2003 awards were presented to: James F. Oyster Bilingual Elementary School; Spanish Catholic Center; EOFULA Spanish Senior Center; the Office of Interpreting Services for the District of Columbia Courts and Judge José López.



Hispanic Heritage Committee Chair William Agosto dances with featured artist Karlísima.

For week two, the Courts welcomed representatives from the Embassy of Equatorial Guinea for a presentation about



Attendees enjoy some wonderful Latin American food.

COURT GREETER PROGRAM

By Meghan Aberle, Intern Coordinator

In early January 2004, the D.C. Courts kicked off the revamped Court Greeter program with a new group of enthusiastic volunteers. In the past this program was recognized by the Council for Court Excellence as a model public service initiative. The new program will maintain the original purpose of serving the public, but has been re-designed to accommodate the schedules of the employee volunteers.

The volunteers are responsible for welcoming visitors to the Court and giving directions to offices and courtrooms. Each of the staff members selected to fill these volunteer positions is trained and wears an official designation indicating their special role. The greeters are stationed at posts throughout the court buildings from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m.

If you are interested in serving as a Court Greeter, please forward a personal statement addressing your interest to serve on the committee to Meghan Aberle, Intern Volunteer Coordinator, at x1-1218 or meghana@dcsc.gov. We hope you will consider volunteering for this very important function.



Rave Reviews



-----Original Message-----
 From: Lavallee, Peter (OCC)
 Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2003 10:45 AM
 Subject: A Note of Appreciation for the Help of Cyril Erugo

Dear Mr. Friend:

My name is Peter Lavallee, and I am the Communications Director for the District's Office of the Corporation Counsel. One of my many responsibilities is coordinating our monthly performance reports to the Mayor's office. Cyril Erugo of your staff has been invaluable to me in this effort for some two years. One of our performance measures involves tracking the fines collected for various offenses OCC prosecutes. Mr. Erugo has provided relevant statistics to me from your database on a monthly basis. He has been diligent in performing this task, always or nearly always providing the data to me before I even ask. Indeed, I dare say he has been more timely than some in our own office in providing the data we need!

As we have entered a new fiscal year, our performance measures have changed. Because I no longer will need the data Mr. Erugo has so consistently provided, I wanted to write a note to you to tell you what a great job he did, how much we appreciate his and therefore your help, and that it has been a true pleasure to work with someone as professional and friendly as Cyril is.

Regards,
 Peter
 --
 Peter Lavallee
 Communications Director
 Office of the Corporation Counsel

Ms. Diane King
 Director of Family Division

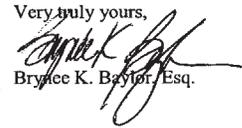
*RE: Ms. Deborah White Acting Branch Supervisor of
 The Juvenile and Neglect Branch*

Dear Ms. King:

This morning, I called your office and since you and Mr. Dickerson were not in, I was transferred to Ms. White and she was a breath of fresh air. Immediately after explaining the emergency situation and the fact that a child's life could be in issue, Ms. White promptly resolved the problem. Her level of professionalism sets the standard of excellence that innocent children in crisis deserve. Although I have heard often that constant interaction in very depressing environments can create certain amount of apathy, I believe that your division is perhaps the most important division in the court because you deal with the protection of children. Ms. White is the perfect match for your division and she has restored my belief that it is more than just a job, it's a service that truly helps others.

As the individual in-charge, I am sure that you are often overwhelmed with problems and complaints, I felt obligated to share a joy and sincere compliment. Thank you for your time.

Very truly yours,


 Bryce K. Baylor, Esq.

Mr. James Holland
 Director

Dear Mr. Holland:

I wanted to take this opportunity to commend you for the work of two of your staff members, Ms. Doris Brown and Mr. Michael Ruffoff.

Both of these wonderful employees were extremely diligent in ensuring that my expedited request for a transcript be fulfilled in a timely manner. Ms. Brown was thoughtful enough to monitor the progress of my request and inform me of all necessary details. She has a beautiful disposition, wonderful demeanor and excellent customer service skills. Mr. Ruffoff was also extremely proficient, detailed oriented and receptive to my calls. Therefore, because it is not always you come across such dutiful and dedicated employees, I just wanted to express my utmost appreciation for your job in choosing the right people for the right job. They are definitely an asset to your team and the court system.

Thank you, Ms. Brown and Mr. Ruffoff and thank you Mr. Holland. Have a Happy New Year!

Mr. Lucas,

16 October 2003

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the dedication and efficiency of your marriage Bureau personnel.

I was treated most cordially and the process of obtaining my certificate of authorization was most efficient.

Thank you for such excellent service.

Superior Court of the District of Columbia
Washington, D.C. 20001

Chambers of
Kaye K. Christian
Judge

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rufus G. King, III
Chief Judge

FROM: Kaye K. Christian *KKC*
Presiding Judge
Probate & Tax Divisions

DATE: December 3, 2003

RE: Letter of Commendation for Natalie Byrd Courtroom Clerk

I write this letter of commendation with great pride and honor. I have had the good fortune to preside over the Probate and Tax Divisions of the Superior Court for over six years. I have been equally fortunate to have been assigned Ms. Natalie Byrd as my courtroom clerk. Ms. Byrd is assigned to the Register of Wills - Probate Division as a Courtroom Clerk. Prior to her promotion as Courtroom Clerk, she was employed as a Probate Clerk. She gained an extensive knowledge of probate law and procedure from her years in that office. She brought that knowledge, commitment and dedication for excellence to the courtroom. Ms. Byrd is an extremely able courtroom clerk who always goes the extra mile. She is courteous and respectful to the lawyers and litigants. She always conducts herself in a professional manner. She is well respected by the Probate Bar who always refers to her as "Ms. Byrd" never by her first name. She is a rarity among employees. Ms. Byrd has an eye for detail, which is reflected in her jacket entries as well as the proposed orders that she prepares for the Court's signature subsequent to hearings.

Ms. Byrd has grown professionally over the six years that she has been assigned as my courtroom clerk. She took night courses to obtain a college degree and has taken other classes to keep herself updated in areas relevant to her employment. Because of her expertise, Ms. Byrd has been called upon to train new employees to the Probate Division and other courtroom clerks. She is an able instructor.

Ms. Byrd is extremely innovative. She has designed numerous forms and form orders that have proven useful in the courtroom. I am hopeful that the Court will consider adopting some as official court forms.

Ms. Byrd has always insured that cases are prepared and ready to call at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Byrd has been an outstanding courtroom clerk who should be considered for an employee bonus award.

It is difficult to express adequately how privileged I am that Ms. Natalie Byrd has served as my courtroom clerk. She has made my courtroom a more efficient and pleasant work environment.

Juror Office
24 September 2003
Superior Court of the District of Columbia

To Whom It May Concern:

On Wednesday, September 24, 2003, I served as a juror at the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and would like to commend you and your staff for providing professional and quality service to all jurors.

One special person on your staff that caught my attention was Ms. Patty McDonald. Ms. McDonald explained all the instructions to jurors in a clear and concise manner.

However, Ms. McDonald was kind and patience with each juror who had questions that she had already responded too. She has a superb ability to handle people in a unique way that makes each juror feel respected.

Ms. McDonald deserves the highest recognition that your office can present to an employee of her exceptional character.

1-20-04

ATTN: Mr. Willard Stephens

Reference to: Mr. Nathaniel Henry

I would like to thank you, Mr. Stephens and your agency for assigning Mr. Nathaniel Henry to be my son's probation officer. Mr. Henry has done an exceptionally tremendous job as far as his duties are concerned. Mr. Henry has gone beyond the call of duty being a probation officer, mentor and consultant for my family. Mr. Henry has allowed me to lean on his shoulders, when I've been overwhelmed,

also had but me his car, as he carefully and attentively listened to my concerns. He's not only dedicated himself to my son, but to his other siblings as well. I feel that it is my right to notify his supervisor on how I feel about Mr. Henry's services rendered. I also would like to recognize and commend Mr. Henry for a job well done. Being the professional that he is, Mr. Henry made recommendations deemed necessary in my son's case, but I've

come to realize and understand, that dedicated probation officers like Mr. Henry are not given their just dues and aren't taken seriously as they should be in the court rooms. Mr. Henry has been on time, on target and committed to my son inspite of the current situation. I thank you Mr. Stephens, I thank your agency for having on board an extraordinary individual such as Mr. Nathaniel Henry. Thanks for a job well done.

TO: MS. DIANNE KING, SUPERVISOR
CHILD SUPPORT BRANCH
500 INDIANA AVE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001
Room 4335

FEB. 20, 2004

DEAR MS. KING,

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMEND ONE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES, ONE, MS. SHERRY COPPET, FR, AS SHE PUT IT "ONLY DOING MY JOB". WHILE THIS MAY BE TRUE, IT'S NOT SO MUCH WHAT YOU DO BUT HOW YOU DO IT ALSO, AND IN DOING SO, MS. COPPET DOES HER JOB IN A TRULY PROFESSIONAL AND OUTSTANDING MANNER AND SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR SUCH. WHEN I HAD A PROBLEM WITH THE CHILD SUPPORT DIVISION THERE, I CALLED AND SPOKE WITH MS. COPPET AND ^{SHE} TOOK CARE OF ME IMMEDIATELY. SHE LISTENED TO MY PROBLEM, LOOKED UP MY CASE FILE, TOLD ME WHAT POSSIBLY HAPPENED AND WHAT I NEEDED TO DO IN ORDER TO GET IT CORRECTED. I DID WHAT SHE TOLD ME RIGHT AWAY AND SHE CALLED ME BACK TO LET ME KNOW SHE RECEIVED WHAT SHE NEEDED. SHE INFORMED ME WHAT WAS TO HAPPEN AND I ASSURE YOU THAT EVERYTHING HAS TURNED OUT JUST AS SHE TOLD ME. IT WAS SUCH A PLEASURE TO DEAL WITH MS. COPPET IN "ONLY DOING HER JOB" AND IN SUCH A TRULY OUTSTANDING MANNER. IN THIS DAY AND AGE IT IS A PLEASURE TO HAVE SOMEONE OF MS. COPPET'S CALIBER SERVING THE PUBLIC. PLEASE PASS ON MY THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO HER. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Kudos! you have made significant changes that have made the process more enjoyable since it can be a chore as well as a privilege to have jury duty. But the best change is the professionalism, consideration and attitude of the staff! Everyone came across as competent and caring, but - totally unexpected and appreciated - they were happy, eager to help and downright a major attribute to the District government. I hope that all of the government services can learn from how well the jury process was handled. We did not feel like cattle, but like valued citizens.

To : Diane King
Director
Family Court
D.C. Superior Court

Subject: Letter of Commendation for Outstanding Employees

Dear Ms. King,

Life in the District of Columbia can at times, be hectic. As a thirty-two year government employee, I know well the pace of our public service employees. All too often, good deeds often go unmerited and unappreciated. I wish to be the exception to this sad rule. I wish to take the time to personally commend the actions of several of your subordinates, who pulled together at the end of a very long day, to ensure that justice would be served in my instance. Please, allow me to explain, and name them in the order of their kindness and dedication to their duties.

Thanks to some great detective work on the part of Ms. Darlene Squirewell, the Team Leader for your Domestic Relations Branch, my motion was found, and my petition was calendered.

The receptionist handling my complaint, was Ms. Nolean Smith. She tracked-down my file, Mr. Muhammad Kabbany immediately obtained permission from Team Leader Darlene Squirewell, and went downstairs to get my file. Ms. Squirewell handled the phones while he was gone, and constantly assured me that they would handle my complaint to conclusion. She contacted her supervisor, Mr. Thomas Whitaker who came out to meet me and assure me that his department would make sure that the other office would get the necessary file as soon as it was processed.

It was at this time, that Mr. Kabbany returned with my jacket. He immediately was instructed by Ms. Squirewell to date stamp the jacket and start the processing of the court order. After this was done, Mr. Whitaker and Ms. Squirewell both assured me that the next day the court's order would be given to the other department for termination of the child-support. I did not mention that all of this took place just at closing time, and that all of these marvelous people did this on their own time! Their dedication to seeing me through this frustrating and difficult time in my life, meant the world to me. I am not easily moved, Ms. King, but I was close to tears. What outstanding human-beings you have on your staff! I wish to commend all of them, for holding fast to the creed that hangs on the wall of their office. "To give equal and fair treatment in justice, to all."

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

by Joseph E. Sanchez, Administrative Officer

WATCH OUT - the brick and mortar is flying...marked and significant progress has been realized on multiple District of Columbia Courts' capital project fronts:

LANDLORD/TENANT AND SMALL CLAIMS COURTS:

The Landlord/Tenant and Small Claims Courts moved into totally renovated and refurbished space on the first floor of Building B, October 2003.

CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM:

The Crime Victims' Unit moved into totally renovated and refurbished space on the first floor of Building A on January 23, 2004.

SOCIAL SERVICES FIELD UNIT:

The Social Services Field Unit moved into new leased space at 1724 Kalorama Road on February 1, 2004.

OLD D.C. COURTHOUSE PARKING GARAGE:

National Capitol Planning Commission staff review and approval of the Courts' Architectural and Engineering design submittals occurred on Wednesday, March 17, 2004. Construction of the new two-story underground parking garage located at the corner of Indiana Avenue and 5th Street is scheduled to commence in December 2004. Completion is scheduled for December 2005.

MOULTRIE COURTHOUSE - FAMILY COURT - JOHN MARSHALL LEVEL:

Family Court construction commenced on the John Marshall level on December 15, 2003. A targeted completion date of July 2004 is anticipated.

OLD D.C. COURTHOUSE - FUTURE HOME OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS:

The Commission of Fine Arts granted the Courts "preliminary approval" of its Architectural and Engineering design submittals on Thursday, April 15, 2004. The Court of Appeals testified before the National Capital Planning Commission requesting design review and approval on Thursday, April 1, 2004. Construction is scheduled to commence in January 2005. Completion is scheduled in February 2007.

MIGRATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS FROM BUILDING A TO GALLERY PLACE:

The final plans for the relocation of the Administrative Services Division, the Budget and Finance Division, the Center for Education, Training and Development, the Human Resources Division, and the Research and Development Division to 616 H Street, Northwest - Gallery Place are in process. The move is presently scheduled to take place during the week of July 26, 2004.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING COURT EVENTS:

TSP Open Season	April 16 - June 30
Judicial-Management Training	April 28 - May 1
In-service training	April 28 - 30
Annual Wellness Fair	April 29 - 30
Town Hall meeting at Bell Multicultural School	May 4 at 6:30 p.m.
Town Hall meeting at UDC Building 38	May 6 at 6:30 p.m.
Implementation of new Performance Management Program	July 1
Completion of new Family Court space on JM-level	July 2004