



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

April 2014

“We the People: A Call to Duty,” A New Juror Orientation Video

By Anita A. Alexander and Suzanne Bailey-Jones

The new DC Superior Court’s juror orientation video debuted in March with an enthusiastic audience. It features film clips from famous movies like “A Time to Kill,” “12 Angry Men” and “Amistad” to name a few. Chief Judge Lee Satterfield opens the film addressing the audience and speaking about the value of jury service. This 20 minute video makes the historical constitutional connections to juries easily understandable and exciting. It features music and clips of famous people like, Samuel L. Jackson, Gregory Peck, Matthew McConaughey, Jon Voight and Kevin Spacey.



Andrew Ferguson speaking to jurors.

shown here last year for one of the Court’s Black History Month events. He has also produced films and videos for the White House and the Vatican.

“I am pleased that we have this new video which illustrates just how vital the role of jurors is in the American judicial system,” said Chief Judge Satterfield. “The video is a mini-documentary about the jury process. It includes clips from classic American movies – some humorous but most serious – in order

The video was produced locally by Noel (Sonny) Izon of Interactive Communication Technology, Inc. Mr. Izon has directed several films, including “Choc’late Soldiers from the USA”—a documentary about African-American soldiers who went to Britain to prepare for D-Day. In fact, this film was

to demonstrate what jury duty is all about. It’s an honest assessment of what the process is like, designed to explain to those reporting to jury duty what their day, or days, will involve. Hopefully those who watch the video will come to understand the important role that jurors play in ensuring that our constitutional rights are upheld.”

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April Update from the DC Courts Executive Team: Employee Viewpoint Survey, Cross-Training, Flexplace and Values

Employee Viewpoint Survey

We want to start by thanking everyone who provided feedback through the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. It is worth noting that the response rate for the DC Courts was 68%, whereas the response rate across federal agencies was 48%. Also, the Employee Engagement Score for the DC Courts was 75, compared to 64 in the Federal Government.

We are currently in the process of analyzing the results and exploring areas that we need to focus on, and are committed

to continue building on a strong foundation. Thank you, once again, to everyone who completed the survey.

Cross-Training

The Cross Training Pilot Program has been approved and is being rolled out this month with orientation sessions in all buildings. Then in June, all employees will be able to apply to participate in one of 45 job-shadowing opportunities, or one of 15 cross-training intensive slots.

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Open To All Trusted By All Justice For All

Multi-Door Mediator to Receive 2014 Scoutt Prize from DC Bar Foundation

By Jennifer Herman



Mr. Bishop with Jeannie Adams, Director of Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division, at the 2013 Mediator Appreciation Event. Photo: Karen Leichtnam

James “Jim” Bishop, a devoted mediator in Multi-Door’s Family Mediation Program (the Family Program), will receive the Jerrold Scoutt Prize from the DC Bar Foundation on May 15, 2014. The award recognizes Mr. Bishop’s four decades of service in the *pro bono* field and his dedication to helping his clients. He first began serving the public as a volunteer at Legal Counsel for the Elderly while attending Lincoln University. He also interned at the Neighborhood Legal Service Program during his college and law school

summers. After graduating from Howard University School of Law, he went to work for the DC Bar, helping low-income clients. He moved to his current position, Director of the Catholic Charities Legal Network, in 1993 and has since helped expand its *pro bono* legal services in DC and southern Maryland.

Mr. Bishop’s public service does not end with his professional commitments. Since 1986, he has mediated cases in Multi-Door’s Family Program, making him the most tenured media-

tor on its roster. “Jim has been a faithful, dedicated member of the Family Program for nearly 30 years,” says Matthew Centeio-Bargasse, Family Mediation Program Officer. “He is a tremendous support to the Program not just as a mediator but also as a mentor and supervisor for the Saturday mediation cases.” Mr. Bishop speaks passionately about his service to the Family Program’s clients; he says that he likes helping families “move on with their lives, move past the impasse they may be at with child custody so that they can continue on as co-parents.” This desire to help people get to a better place in their lives also drives his professional work, he says.

The Scoutt Prize is not Mr. Bishop’s first award for his work. In 2011, he was honored by the John Carroll Society for providing outstanding legal services and legal education to DC residents. Both honors are well-deserved, according to Karen Leichtnam, ADR Training Manager at Multi-Door. “I have known Jim Bishop [...] since he ran the DC Bar’s Attorney Client Arbitration Program. His work there, at Multi-Door, and at Catholic Charities all speak loudly to his commitment to public service. I can’t imagine anyone more deserving of this recognition.”

Thank you for your continued service, Mr. Bishop, and congratulations on receiving the 2014 Scoutt Prize!

Juror orientation video from page 1

Andrew Ferguson is an invigorating narrator. He is a professor at the David A. Clarke School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia and author of the book “Why Jury Duty Matters,” which is a citizens’ guide to the constitutional process. He also served as a panelist with Judge Lynn Leibovitz on the Kojo Namdi show about jury service in March 2013. He readily agreed to be the narrator of the video.

The court team who worked tirelessly on this effort consisted of Hebert Rouson (Special Operations Division Director), Suzanne Bailey-Jones (Juror Officer), Jose Idler (Executive Office) and Norma Thompson (Courtroom Technology). The development and preparation process included viewing orientation films from New York State and Montgomery County, Maryland as well as a thorough reading of Mr. Ferguson’s book.

Developed to fully engage the jurors’ motivation for jury service, this video exceeded its goal. Mr. Rouson said, “the Court appreciates the time, commitment, and willingness of District of Columbia residents to serve as jurors in upholding our de-



Andrew Ferguson (left) confers with Sonny Izon (far right).

mocracy. While jury duty is probably not often viewed that way – as such an important component in maintaining our nation’s guaranteed freedoms, our aim would be that the “*We the People: A Call to Duty*” orientation video would help shape the lens through which citizens see their

vital role.”

The video is a visual guide to inform our residents about jury service through an amazingly creative and powerful story of how serving on a jury can impact the rights of all citizens to be tried by a jury of their peers. This video highlights the invaluable contribution someone can make in the legal process by performing their civic duty.

The Emancipation Story of Judiciary Square

By Anita Jarman

Among the festivities for this year's Black History Month, DC Courts' employees had the opportunity to put on their detective hats and solve the "Emancipation Story of Judiciary Square." Divided into teams, the sleuths were given a daily clue that unveiled a fictional story based on historical facts. Each team played the role of an African-American being auctioned, enslaved, and eventually freed by the enactment of the DC Emancipation Act passed in 1862.

The story focused on the trial of two ship captains, Daniel Drayton and Edward Sayres, who were approached in Philadelphia, 1848, about aiding the escape of slaves in DC City, Georgetown, and Alexandria. Drayton and Sayres chartered *The Pearl* for \$100 and assisted approximately 77 enslaved men, women, and children in order to carry out one of the largest attempted escapes from slavery at one time. After leaving White House Wharf and sailing down the Potomac River, *The Pearl* was pursued by armed men who brought back the passengers thus leading to the trial of the two captains in Old City Hall which is now the DC Court of Appeals' Historic Court-house. Participants learned that slaves were auctioned in Judiciary Square, where the majority of the DC Courts buildings



These windows provide a glimpse into the past as this is where the Drayton and Sayres trial took place in the Old City Hall, now the Historic Court of Appeals.

are located. Also, students of the game learned about people who assisted in the plot of escape, such as Paul Jennings – an African-American man, purchased by former first lady Dolly Madison, who wrote the first memoir of a servant's life in the White House. Jennings was eventually bought and freed by Senator Daniel Webster, whose residence was once said to be located in the vicinity of 5th and D Streets, NW. The mystery game was the first of its kind for employees at the Courts.

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ACCOUNTABILITY

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

EXCELLENCE

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

FAIRNESS

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

INTEGRITY

We demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behavior.

RESPECT

We treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and understanding.

TRANSPARENCY

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

A Rich History Uplifted through Word, Dance and Fellowship

By Lula Cox-Raye

The 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 gave the Black History Month Committee (BHMC) the chance to bring new and exciting events and activities to our community.

Held outside the stately Ceremonial Courtroom in the historic Court of Appeals, the Kickoff Social, the first week in February, set the tone for a number of memorable and thought-provoking moments. In his opening remarks, Chief Judge Washington invoked the memory of the late Judge Julia Cooper Mack. A true trailblazer, Judge Cooper Mack embodied the best of the African American tradition of scholarship, dignity and grace.

As the first African American woman jurist to serve on any American court of last resort, Judge Cooper Mack raised the consciousness of her colleagues while piercing the glass ceiling. Appointed by President Gerald Ford in 1975, Judge Cooper Mack earned her bachelors degree from the prestigious Hampton Institute, now Hampton University and her law degree from Howard University.



Delivering the "I Have A Dream" speech: A standing ovation!

School student Nehemiah Sellers! The grandson of our very own Arlington Sellers (IJIS Facilitator), this impressive young man recited Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have A Dream" speech.

The program ended with a haunting interpretative dance movement inspired by singer Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and performed by Howard University student Kinaya Grayson. Perhaps it was the varying themes and emotions experienced throughout the event that made the Kickoff Social among the best yet.

The BHMC thanks all who made the Kickoff Social successful.

Understanding HStory: Reading & Discussion of "12 Years a Slave"

By Kathie Gant

On February 21, 2014 employees of the District of Columbia Courts met for a reading and discussion of the book "12 Years a Slave" by Solomon Northup. This event, sponsored by the Black History Month Committee, was entitled "Understanding HStory: Reading & Discussion of '12 Years a Slave.'" The event spotlighted the life of Solomon Northup a free, black man from New York State during pre-civil war America, who was kidnapped and enslaved for 12 years of his adult life; but who, remarkably, never gave up the hope of being freed and once rescued, wrote a book about his ordeal.

Black History Month Committee member Darryl Lesesne opened this well attended event and introduced the guest speaker, Clerk of the Superior Court, Duane Delaney. Mr. Delaney briefly summarized the book and in an interesting twist pointed out the historic relationship between the District of Columbia Courts and Solomon Northup. In particular, Mr. Delaney noted that the January 1853 trial of the abductors of Mr. Northup took place in the District of Columbia Circuit Court which is now our own District of Columbia Superior Court. Mr. Delaney even shared that through some research he was able to locate the name of the Chief Judge during that era, though he was unable to ascertain the identity of the Clerk of the Court in 1853.

Mr. Delaney further spoke about the April 16, 1862 experiment



A highly engaged audience at the book discussion.

in which President Abraham Lincoln signed a bill ending slavery in the District of Columbia. Passage of this law came 8 1/2 months before President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation. The law provided for the immediate emancipation and compensation to former owners of slaves who were

loyal to the Union of up to \$300 for each freed slave. The law also included voluntary colonization of former slaves to locations outside the United States and payments of up to \$100 for each person choosing emigration.

Mr. Havard Jones and Ms. Tracey Lashley-White, members of the Black History Month Committee, followed Mr. Delaney's enlightening remarks. Ms. Lashley-White opened the second half of the book discussion reading an excerpt from Mr. Northup's book. She focused on Chapter 14 in which Northup wrote..."and they [*the reader*] will find that ninety-nine out of every hundred [*slaves*] are intelligent enough to understand their situation, and to cherish in their bosoms the love of freedom, as passionately as themselves."

Mr. Jones asked how—if as Northup wrote, "the slave understood their situation"—did the slave owners and those who sanctioned the institution of slavery—either through approval or inaction—maintain the belief that slavery was a morally correct institution. He also asked the attendees to define the difference between a truth and a lie as it relates to Solomon Northup's book and life today. His statement, "How do you maintain the lie, believe the lie, and perpetuate the lie" led to a lively discussion in which those who read the book or saw the movie, as well as those who did not, fully participated. As time quickly passed, attendees were encouraged to share their opinions of the book and the conversation.

Light refreshments were served during the event and when asked, attendees proclaimed it a success. As a result of the rousing success of this event, the Black History Month Committee surveyed court employees about an official DC Courts Book Club.

Stepping into Black History: Step Show

By Maynard Minor

On Friday, February 28, 2014 the DC Courts' Black History Month Committee hosted "Stepping into Black History" the annual Black History Month Step Exhibition. The step exhibition was to highlight the nine Black Greek Letter Organizations that comprise the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) also known as the Divine Nine. The National Pan-Hellenic Council was founded on May 10, 1930 on the campus of Howard University in Washington, DC. The NPHC was founded on the basis of unity of all nine Black Greek Letter Organizations.

The brothers of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. were recognized during the step exhibition, since they had recently celebrated 100 years of Brotherhood, Scholarship, and Service. A special step performance was given by the brothers of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. – Gamma Chapter located at Morgan State University. An additional step performance was given by the brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. – Mu Rho Chapter located at Towson University.

The step exhibition was well attended by the DC Courts' staff where they were able to become educated about the rich history of the Black Greek Letter Organizations. Many Court employees are members of a Divine Nine organization and they proudly wore their Greek letters in support of this event. The step exhibition ended with food and fellowship as it concluded the Courts' Black History Month celebration.



Recognizing the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity.

Without the dedication of the DC Courts' [Administrative Services Division](#) for each Black History Month event, this year's celebratory festivities would not have been such a success! The Administrative Services team made sure our events were properly set up well in advance and the team was always available in case of urgent adjustments.

*On behalf of the 2014 Black History Month Committee,
Thank you!!*



The DC Courts 2014 Black History Month Committee.

15th Annual Youth Law Fair

On Saturday, March 22nd, the DC Superior Court and DC Bar co-hosted the 15th Annual Youth Law Fair. This year's program, themed "Stand Tall against Alcohol and K2," gave youth from the Washington metropolitan area the opportunity to engage in an open discussion about alcohol and drug abuse as well as participate in courtroom tours, intimate conversations with attorneys and Superior Court judges, and a mock trial.

During the morning discussion, DC Superior Court Judge Melvin Wright held a candid conversation with the youth about their knowledge and experiences observing drug and alcohol abuse. Teens spoke about their feelings regarding family members who used drugs and alcohol as well as what happens when they are approached by peers about using drugs, specifically "K2," at school and social gatherings. "K2," also known as "spice," is a type of synthetic marijuana that can be legally purchased. According to Drugs.com, medical case studies and reports show, "...serious toxicities that occur with use of synthetic marijuana, and some users have required emergency room treatment."

Later in the afternoon, the teens had an opportunity to participate in a mock trial. The case was about a teen who hosted a party with his parents' consent but allowed attendees to drink alcohol and smoke "K2" against his parents' instruction. As a result, the party ended tragically and the parent was charged with manslaughter. The participants in the mock trial played the role of the judge, jury, plaintiff, defendant, witnesses, and attorneys. With the help of Superior Court judges and attor-



Judge Melvin Wright engages the youth audience.

neys from the DC Bar, the teens were able to understand not only the court procedures in a criminal case, but also the adverse effects of alcohol and drug abuse.

Marking its 15th year of educating youth about the judicial branch of government, this year's Law Fair was well attended by District residents as well as youth from Maryland and Virginia. Over the years, the DC Courts and DC Bar have used the Youth Law Fair to present relevant topics that allow teens to speak out about social problems and crime. The enthusiasm of the attendees could not only be measured by the participation in the discussions, but also by social media as the DC Bar covered the event via a live Twitter feed using the hash tag #YLF2014, sharing information about the event. The day concluded with a poetry slam and a "Speak Out" session.

April update from page 1

For the purposes of the pilot, the following five units are offering cross-training opportunities: Court of Appeals (Public Information Branch), Criminal Division, Crime Victims Compensation Program, Administrative Services Division, and Family Court. If the Pilot is deemed successful, a full-fledged program will be offered in 2015.

Flexplace (Telework)

The Flexplace Pilot Program is on track to start in mid-May under the leadership of the Human Resources Division. The E-Team was recently briefed on the details and was satisfied by



Brown-bag lunch in March.

the progress made in the planning process. Slightly less than 100 employees will participate in the pilot, which will run from May through December 2014, with a final report expected early next year. Flexibility, in general, has been a central theme for us and this is an initiative to explore how we can make flexibility work in a way that makes sense from a business perspective and could help us strengthen organizational performance. We want to remind everyone that other flexibility options are available to employees on a case-by-case basis.

Living Our Values

We also want to highlight the Living Our Values initiative,

Continues on next page

Military Service Deposits: A Way to Have Your Prior Military Service Count Towards Retirement

A military service deposit is a payment made to the civilian retirement fund to allow creditable military service to be used toward retirement eligibility and in annuity computations.



are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System or CSRS-Offset and were employed on a CSRS-covered federal appointment prior to October 1, 1982, active duty service is creditable with-

out a deposit. However, if you are eligible for a Social Security benefit at age 62 (or at retirement if you retire after age 62), the active duty credit will be removed or not used in calculating your retirement benefit unless you pay a deposit..

- All active duty military service is potentially creditable for retirement purposes.
- Creditable service can also include active duty for training "summer camps" in the Reserves, Military Academy service, and retired military & National Guard service under certain circumstances.
- You may need to pay a deposit in order to receive retirement credit for it.
- There is a 2-year grace period from the date of your first retirement coverage to pay a military deposit in full and not be charged any interest. On the 3rd year anniversary of retirement coverage, interest will accrue annually until the deposit is paid.
- If you performed active duty military service after December 31, 1956 (after June 30, 1960, in the PHS Commissioned Corps), you may need to pay a deposit (including interest) prior to retirement in order to receive retirement credit for your military service. If you

- If you were employed on a CSRS-covered federal appointment on or after October 1, 1982, active duty service is creditable only if a deposit is paid.
- If you are covered by the FERS, active duty military service is creditable only if a deposit is paid.

If you have any question about whether your particular military service is creditable, please call Ms. Leticia Blackmon, Retirement Specialist on 202-879-2867 or email:

leticia.blackmon@dcsc.gov.

If you decide to pay the military deposit, it must be **paid in full before** you retire. Service periods that have a break of at least one day can be paid separately. The process to pay the deposit can take time so don't wait until right before retirement to begin!



From left to right: Court of Appeals Clerk Julio Castillo; Executive Officer Anne Wicks; Deputy Executive Officer Cheryl Bailey; and Superior Court Clerk Duane Delaney.

currently underway. Why are we focusing on values? One of our goals is to strengthen our organizational culture and become better performers to serve the public. Values guide our actions and help us strengthen our culture.

We have asked you to participate in focus groups and provide feedback on how we are doing as an organization in liv-

ing our values and will soon begin designing initiatives to incorporate and strengthen our values in our operations and day-to-day behavior. Thank you to all those who provided feedback and please stay tuned for more discussion about our values.

Finally, thank you to everyone who came to the brown-bag lunch in March. The purpose of the brown-bag lunch is to interact with employees and foster a dialogue on how to continue making the Courts a Great Place to Work.

Thank you everyone for your commitment and dedication.

DC Courts Executive Team

Anne B. Wicks, Executive Officer

Cheryl Bailey, Deputy Executive Officer

Julio Castillo, Clerk of the Court of Appeals

Duane Delaney, Clerk of the Superior Court

Kave Reviews

Marlena Otlans – Crime Victims Compensations Program

I am a recipient of your great services at the Crime Victims Compensation Program!

Ms. Otlans did not hesitate upon meeting me to make me as comfortable as possible under my circumstances. It seems to me that she puts herself in other's shoes and takes on the case personally and professionally...Ms. Otlans is very conscientious of the emotional stress and works expeditiously performing her expertise.

I am thankful to Ms. Otlans for going above and beyond my expectations and also for her dynamic display, representing the Crime Victims Compensation Program! Off the hook!

My heartfelt gratefulness and appreciation!



Marlena Otlans



Louis Kelly

Louis Kelly – Center for Education and Training

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you so much for your gracious hospitality yesterday at the court. The group was overwhelmed by your experience and knowledge, and gratified to be so warmly welcomed and hosted.

I wanted to let you know what an incredible experience they had overall, and share that when you left us in the other court room, they thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from hearing both opening arguments in a criminal case. It could not have been scripted better!

Thank you again for going out of your way to make the group's visit so beneficial.

A visiting delegation