



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

February 2017

Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby Designated as the New DC Court of Appeals Chief Judge

Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby has been designated as the Chief Judge of the DC Court of Appeals, effective March 18, 2017. She has served on the DC Courts bench for 21 years. In 2006, President George W. Bush appointed Judge Blackburne-Rigsby to the DC Court of Appeals. She previously served in the DC Superior Court for six years as an associate judge and five years as a magistrate judge.



noted that she "brings a wealth of experience and commitment to the position of Chief Judge.. [and that she].is widely respected by colleagues, court staff, litigants, attorneys, public officials, and members of the local community." The Commission also said that the comments they received about the judge were "uniformly laudatory, praising Judge Blackburne-Rigsby's leadership, intellect, and demeanor."

In announcing Judge Blackburne-Rigsby's appointment, the DC Judicial Nomination Commission

Judge Blackburne-Rigsby chairs the DC Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and

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First Drug Court Graduation of 2017

Wednesday, January 18, 2017, marked the very first Drug Court Graduation of the year, complete with motivation and a great deal of applause. Courtroom C-10, in the Moultrie Courthouse, was filled with guests and supporters of the program including DC Superior Court Chief Judge Robert Morin and Drug Court Presiding Judge Wendell Gardner.

As participants in the program received their certificates to transition into a new phase, the graduates were greeted by an alumnus of the program who

felt, after completing Drug Court, that he must do his part to give back. He spoke about his drug use that began in 8th grade with marijuana which escalated to PCP, citing the death of his parents as an event that was difficult for him. He encouraged the participants in their post-graduate walk stating, "Don't use adversity as an excuse, life will always bring you adversity."

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DC Superior Court Welcomes Two New Magistrate Judges



Magistrate Judge Jones Bosier (center), accompanied by family members, is sworn in by Judge Zoe Bush.

Tanya M. Jones Bosier has been a member of the DC Bar for the past 15 years. Most recently she served as an Assistant General Counsel for the DC Courts. Prior to her employment with the DC Courts, Magistrate Judge Jones Bosier worked as an Assistant Attorney General, DC Office of Attorney General (OAG). While at OAG, Magistrate Judge Jones Bosier gained extensive experience in abuse and neglect, administrative, child support, domestic relations, domestic violence, public benefits, and procurement law and intervention proceedings. She also received the 2013 Wilbert J. Parker Award for her dedication and service of the Fathering Court Initiative as well as the WCL (American University Washington College of Law) 2015 Adjunct Professor Service

Award for dedication to students and the law school community. Magistrate Judge Jones Bosier received her Bachelor of Arts, *cum laude*, from Syracuse University and her Juris Doctor from American University Washington College of Law. She also served as law clerk to the Honorable Zoe Bush, 2000-2001.

Heide L. Herrmann practiced with the US Department of Justice for the last 16 years. Most recently she was a Trial Attorney in the Consumer Protection Branch of the Department, where she prosecuted fraud and other crimes in federal courts across the country. From 2008-2014, Magistrate Judge Herrmann served as an Assistant US Attorney in the DC US Attorney's Office, where she prosecuted sex offenses and domestic violence crimes in the DC Superior Court. Magistrate Judge Herrmann also served in the Justice Department's Commercial Litigation Branch and Environment & Natural Resources Division. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Geology and English, *cum laude*, from Case Western Reserve University and a J.D., *cum laude*, from Case Western Reserve School of Law. Upon graduation from law school Magistrate Judge Herrmann was an associate with Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP, in Cleveland, Ohio. She clerked for Hon. Solomon Oliver, Jr., U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio, 1999-2000.



Magistrate Judge Herrmann, accompanied by family members, as she is sworn in.

Sign up for the DC Courts Alert System

The DC Courts Alert system automatically sends notifications by e-mail, cellular phone, text message, and/or land line to all registered users.

Make sure you stay tuned and receive emergency alerts on building closures, weather conditions, and network and power outages by signing up or updating your information using the following link: <https://dccourts.onthealert.com>

DC Court of Appeals Launches Appellate Mediation Program

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals recently launched an appellate mediation program for cases in which all parties are represented by counsel. Civil cases -- including probate, child custody and visitation, and marital property cases and DC agency appeals -- will be eligible for mediation.

Beginning with cases filed on January 23rd, appellants are required to file a Screening Statement with the Notice of Appeal or Petition for Review that provides information to assist the Court in selecting cases for mediation. If a case is selected, participation in the mediation process is mandatory. Parties, counsel and non-parties with authority to settle the case are required to participate in the mediation. Cases will be mediated by volunteer mediators, selected and trained by the Court, at no charge to the parties.

“The DC Court of Appeals is excited to have an appellate mediation program; such programs have been successful in the federal courts and in many

other state courts in resolving disputes in a way that is satisfying to both parties. Appellate mediation will help the Court to meet its strategic goal of resolving cases in timely and efficient manner, while ensuring procedural fairness” said Chief Judge Eric T. Washington.

The Court of Appeals Mediation Program Coordinator, Ms. Scottie Reid, is responsible for the day to day operation of the program and handles the recruitment and training of mediators. While the parties involved in cases selected for mediation are required to participate, parties and/or attorneys whose cases have not been selected, but who are interested in requesting mediation, may do so by contacting Ms. Reid. She can be reached at 202-879-9936 or at areid@dcapeals.gov. Mediations will generally be held in Court Building B (510 4th St. N.W.).

For more information on the program, go to www.dccourts.gov/appellatemediation.

DC Superior Court Mediation Partner Receives Award



Congratulations to one of the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division’s community partners, Abel Enrique Núñez, on receiving the 2017 John Thompson Jr. Legacy of a Dream Award! Mr. Núñez, executive director of the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), received the award at the Kennedy Center’s *Let Freedom Ring* concert on Jan. 16, 2017. Georgetown University presents the annual award to an inspirational local leader as part of the university’s commitment to addressing key issues in DC.

Founded in 1981, CARECEN provides many services for the D.C.-area Latino community, including direct legal assistance, housing counseling, citizenship education, and community economic development. Multi-Door and CARECEN have collaborated for nearly six years in providing dispute resolution services to CARECEN clients. Philip Dobrydnio and Joselyn Urquilla, our bilingual Dispute Resolution Specialists, take turns staffing the clinic on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. Please join Multi-Door in congratulating Mr. Núñez on this award!

New Court of Appeals Chief Judge—

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Access and serves as Co-Chair of the District of Columbia's Access to Justice Commission. She is past-president of the National Association of Women Judges and currently serves as Chair of the Board of Managerial Trustees for the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ).

Judge Blackburne-Rigsby graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and earned her law degree from Howard University Law School, graduating in the top five percent of her class. She served as the Lead Articles Editor of the Howard Law Journal and Co-Captain of the Charles Hamilton Houston Moot Court Team.

Following law school, Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was an associate at the law firm of Hogan Lovells US LLP (formerly Hogan and Hartson) in Washington, DC, where she litigated commercial, real estate, employment discrimination, and education matters before state and federal courts and administrative agencies. Judge Blackburne-Rigsby later joined the DC Office of the Corporation Counsel (now Office of the DC Attorney General), where she served as Special Counsel and as Deputy Corporation Counsel in charge of the Family Services Division, managing 65 attorneys and support staff, responsible for child abuse and neglect, child support enforcement, and domestic violence cases. Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has taught Trial Advocacy at the Harvard Law School and teaches Professional Responsibility as an Adjunct Professor at the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law. She has also taught Continuing Legal Education courses for the District of Columbia Bar.

Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has received numerous awards for her legal, judicial and community service. She is married to Judge Robert Rigsby, Associate Judge on the DC Superior Court, former Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia, and a Colonel and Military Judge in the United States Army Reserves.

Registration for the 18th Annual Youth Law Fair is Now Open



The 2017 Youth Law Fair will take place on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at the Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Avenue NW, from 9:30am-2:30pm. This year's theme is "OMG, I thought I deleted that!" - focusing on social media profiles, pictures, information permanence and the ever increasing digital footprint of social media.

The Youth Law Fair was established in 2000 to provide an opportunity for young people in DC to have positive and interactive experiences with the law as well as an expanded view of the judicial system, local community resources and the pursuit of higher education. Over 200 students have attended previous years' events. Activities include: speak-out sessions, mock trials, courthouse tours, exhibits, a catered lunch and even prizes.

Attorneys are needed as volunteers to assist students in the mock trials as they play the role of defense and prosecuting attorneys, jurors and witnesses. General volunteers are needed as well to help with other tasks such as monitoring activities, and providing information and guidance to students. Attorneys and volunteers will be asked to attend a preparation meeting at the courthouse on Friday, March 17, 2017 from 6:00pm-7:00pm. Court employees and their children are welcome to attend and volunteer!

For more information and links to register as a student, chaperone or attorney please visit:

<https://www.dcbbar.org/sections/connect/youth-law-fair.cfm>

DC Courts Welcome New Chief Security Officer

Thomas Hedgepeth has been selected as the new DC Courts' Chief Security Officer. Mr. Hedgepeth is no stranger to the Courts, having served in various capacities with the US Marshals Service for the Superior Court, including Supervisory Deputy Marshal, Acting Chief Deputy Marshal, and Acting US Marshal. During his tenure he played a major role in numerous security enhancement projects at the Courts including the Security Control Center, the access control system and the judicial chambers entry system. He worked closely with the Executive Office and the Capital Projects & Facilities Management Division in the development of the security plans for many construction projects. In addition, he served as the US Marshals



Service's Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) for the court security officer contract.

More recently, Mr. Hedgepeth worked at the US Marshals Service Headquarters as the Chief Inspector for the Office of Security. In this role, he was responsible for the national security equipment program and security systems development and installations. He also served as the Responsible Management Official for Agency Health and Safety Programs, consisting of training, course development and OSHA compliance.

Mr. Hedgepeth began his employment with the DC Courts on Tuesday, February 21st. Please welcome him to the DC Court family!

Living Our Values

Values Spotlight: Probate Division Values Team

Values team leads efforts to more fully live the values



Since 2014, the DC Courts have been working in earnest to adopt and fully "live" the six values: accountability, excellence, integrity, fairness, respect, and transparency. Many court-

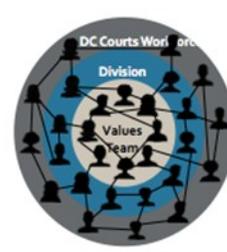
wide initiatives have been put in place as a result, all of which have been discussed in some level of detail in this newsletter.

For example, Business Leadership Meetings, Quick-

Start for Managers, Conversations@Core, Values Leadership Council, Values Pulse Check Surveys, and DC Courts

Leadership 360 assessments. All of these activities are intended to increase awareness and under-

Probate Values Team was established to bridge the gap



Probate Values Team Purpose

Collaborate with management and staff to:

- Understand drivers behind Probate's current state
- Explore how to achieve Probate's desired future
- Better understand the barriers to the desired future
- Work collaboratively with both the management team and staff
- Make recommendations live the values more fully

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LIVING OUR VALUES
DC COURTS VALUES IN PROBATE:
A VIEW FROM THE CUBICLE

standing of the values and leadership principles as well as build skill in living them day-to-day.

In addition to the courtwide initiative, each division has undertaken its own effort to bring the values to life. Because each division varies in terms of size, function, and strengths and challenges, each divisional effort requires a distinct focus. Full Court Press will, through a series of articles, shine a spotlight on the efforts being undertaken within several divisions to share progress, highlight innovative values-related activities, and celebrate key successes. This edition will focus on the Probate Values Team.

Values Team Purpose

The Probate Values Team was among the first of two divisions to set up values teams (the other division being Multi-Door).

The intent of having such a team was to have a group of “change champions” embedded within each branch to create action plans in order to bring the values to life. February 2016 marked the first joint Probate / Multi-Door Values Team change workshop – where both groups met to explore their role as change agents and what would be expected as members of a values team.

Team Process

During spring and summer 2016, the Probate Values Team met weekly to identify strengths of the division and opportunities relative to the values. Probate values team members used data gathered from the values pulse check survey, conversations with staff, structured interviews, and paper and pencil surveys.

The Probate Values Team analyzed the data, identified themes and ultimately arrived at two key

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** Develop and rollout communication and involvement plan across the entire probate division

Verbal



Print



Online



Monthly meetings, 1:1 meetings between managers and employees

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
✓	✓	✓	✓
- 2** Articulate, document, and share publically a consistent approach to flex-time/CDO/alternate work arrangements/time and attendance


- 3** Organize social committee to help Probate celebrate, recognize, and learn



CLOSING

- Recommend reconvening on July 19th to receive feedback from management about recommendations (we want feedback)
- Schedule a Town Hall meeting in July (we propose July 26th) PVT to support content development in conjunction with management team / Anne
- Schedule the next quarterly report with PVT in September to discuss progress and additional recommendations

DC Courts Win Court Statistics Reporting Excellence Award

The DC Courts are proud to have received this award from the Conference of State Court Administrators, one of just six courts nationwide to receive the award. The DC Courts are one of just six court systems to win a Court Statistics Project 2016 Reporting Excellence Award.

Collaborative efforts by members of the Strategic Management Division, IT Division, and operating divisions of the DC Superior Court resulted in the reporting of statistics for 67% of publishable case types. The DC Courts thus achieved the fourteenth place in the nation for providing caseload statistics to this national database, compared to thirty-sixth place in 2014.

The work to separate the trial court's 2015 caseload data to match the national standards set by the State



Court Guide to Statistical Reporting allowed for more detailed reporting of Family Court and Civil Division case types. Efforts this year are aimed at providing similar expansion to the specificity of Criminal Division case types for the 2016 report.

The DC Courts participate in the Court Statistics Project to further the goal of expanding access to court information, promote transparency, and foster greater public trust and confidence by utilizing the results of court statistics to make data-informed decisions.

For more information, click here: [Court Statistics Project Awards page](http://www.courtstatistics.org/Other-Pages/Awards.aspx) [<http://www.courtstatistics.org/Other-Pages/Awards.aspx>]

Drug Court Graduation—

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Judge Gardner said a few words to the graduates after former Drug Court Judge Gregory Jackson made an appearance, as previously promised. Upon Judge Jackson's arrival, an excited buzz erupted in the room from attendees. Many of them had Judge Jackson preside over their own Drug Court cases in the past. Greeting the crowd with a smile, he said "I miss you all, what I miss most is being able to talk to you. I will continue to come back for as many graduations as I can." Judge Gardner closed out the ceremony, introducing himself to the attendees and sharing how excited he was to be back on the Drug Court calendar. He also expressed how impressed he was with

the positive changes to Drug Court as well as his excitement to continue on the journey with new program participants.

Values Spotlight— Continued from page 6

strengths and two opportunities for the division. The strengths identified were accountability and excellence. Identified opportunities were transparency and fairness.

In late summer of 2016, the Probate Values Team presented its first set of recommendations to the Probate management team. The recommendations were aimed at increasing transparency and fairness while maintaining areas of strength. (See image showing the three main recommendations shared with leadership).

Team Results

Probate has adopted quarterly town halls as a result of Recommendation 1, as well as focusing on re-vamping its approach to internal communication via intranet site and email communications. Currently, a time and attendance policy is being reviewed by a cross-branch team of employees and managers. Finally, the social committee has organized several events to promote cross-team collaboration and sharing, camaraderie, and recognition.

To-date, the Probate Values Team continues to meet bi-weekly and is preparing for 2017 recommendations to management.

Contributors to the values efforts in the Probate Division, include: Aisha Ivey-Nixon; Antionette Reese; Sonya Roundtree; Bradley Edge; Angela McMurray; T. Denise Kornegay; Jeffrey Kearney; Bonita Lilly; Rashida Jamall; and Kevin Schofield.



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.