



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

June 2013

“Destination Excellence”: Courtwide conference addresses values and employee engagement

On April 19th, the DC Courts hosted a court-wide conference on organizational values and goal achievement. The conference, themed “Destination Excellence,” featured Vernice “Flygirl” Armour – America’s first African-American female combat pilot – as keynote speaker.

Drawing on her leadership experiences in combat, Vernice outlined how a “breakthrough” mentality can facilitate teamwork and leadership in a work environment, and help an organization to achieve its goals. “You know exactly how you fit into the plan,” said Vernice, “now engage that inner leader!” Flygirl’s most powerful message was that “Leadership is from the inside out; it’s a responsibility for each of us. You are not working a 9-5 job; you’re impacting lives every day. Acknowledge the obstacles, and give yourselves permission to engage!”

Following Vernice’s motivational keynote, Dr. Tyrone Jackson, Deputy Director of the Human Resources Division, delivered a presentation on the organizational values underpinning the Courts’ Strategic Plan. Leading off with a message on the need to strive for excellence, Dr. Jackson reviewed the Courts’ values—**Accountability, Excellence, Fairness, Integrity, Re-**

spect and Transparency—laying out what those values look like in our behaviors. By guiding our actions toward each other and the public, values are an essential ingredient in achieving the Courts’ vision and strengthening our organizational culture.

The conference was rounded out by several workshops, offered in both morning and afternoon sessions, empowering employees to tackle rumors and gossip in the workplace, build team-oriented relationships effectively, and develop trust in the workplace.



Vernice “Flygirl” Armour engages the audience

From the DC Courts Executive Team June Update

Performance Management, Interacting with Employees and Public Service Recognition

Performance Management: we all have a role to play

The month of June is an important one in our performance management cycle. On the one hand, we begin performance appraisals for the previous year; and, on the other hand, we set up performance management plans for the following year.

Performance management is an area we have been focusing on, understanding that it is crucial to have a strong system that supports a high-performing culture and a Great Place to Work. We remain mindful of the concerns brought by employees,

raised in the townhall and other venues, and are committed to revitalizing the system.

Last year, the Courts hired a Performance Manager (Ms. Pamela Hunter) who has been tasked with reviewing the system and facilitating its fair and consistent implementation. Training and outreach have been a priority over the past few months, and supervisors in every division have been briefed on the performance management cycle, how it works, and best practices for improvement.

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Open To All Trusted By All Justice For All

As we revitalize our system, we ask everyone to take an active role in the performance cycle. Managers should conduct the process with transparency, fairness and consistency.

Employees should seek to have conversations with their managers to clarify expectations, responsibilities and share concerns. Communication is the guiding principle for having a successful outcome, both in terms of creating a performance plan and executing tasks.

The Human Resources Division's Performance Management Team has created a series of materials to assist managers and employees through the appraisal and planning processes. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to them and make use of their resources.

Conversations with employees: listening and interacting through employee events

The E-Team has set a goal to have periodic events with employees, kicking off this initiative with a Town Hall meeting in December. In April we initiated a series of brown-bag lunches and were pleased to see a number of you at our most recent brown bag

lunch in the Historic Courthouse just a few days ago. These events are open to all employees and our goal is to foster interaction, so that we can share ideas, updates and hear from our employees.

A number of very good suggestions were made at our April brown-bag lunch. One of the suggestions was to create a list of administrative committees at the courts, so we could all know who the members are and what the committees do. In response, we created a list of all committees, including all members, which has now been posted on the intranet.

We welcome everyone's ideas, big and small. Some ideas will take time to consider and implement, some of them may not be suited for our environ-

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.



DC Courts Executive Team (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.

ment, and some of them will be great contributions toward improving our workplace.

Public Service Recognition

As always we thank everyone for their public service. Having recently celebrated Public Service Recognition Week, we were reminded of why we serve at the Courts. The comments shared on the intranet campaign during the celebratory week were profound and inspiring, and it was exciting to see what some of the divisions and units did to thank our employees.

We are proud of our Courts and the public service we provide everyday.

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*

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The Criminal Division's Great Place to Work Committee launches Adopt-a-School program

By Michael Brown, Case Manager, Criminal Division, DC Community Court

On Friday, May 3, the DC Superior Court Criminal Division's Great Place to Work Committee hosted 30 students and 2 counselors from McKinley High School. The goals of the event were to expose the students to employment opportunities at the Superior Court and in the legal/criminal justice field. The other goal was to enable the students to experience and see the positive perspective involved in this field.

The program consisted of 3 speakers, a tour of court facilities and lunch. The speakers were Duane Delaney, Clerk of the Superior Court; Ronald Machen Jr., United States Attorney for the District of Columbia; and Michael Brown, Case Manager, for the Superior Court's DC Community Court.



Michael Brown

Michael Brown, a native Washingtonian and a graduate of McKinley High School, discussed his 24 years of employment with the Court. Writing a report was the first step in applying for a position and there were a number of people, especially males, who did not get past that point. He encouraged the students

to give a lot of time and attention to developing solid writing skills.



Duane Delaney, Clerk of the DC Superior Court, shares thoughts on his career path with the students

Duane Delaney, a native Washingtonian and also a graduate of McKinley High School, discussed his 30 years of employment with the Court. His first job at the Court was as a

dishwasher in the cafeteria. His message centered on being goal oriented by staying in school and having persistence to gain more knowledge. His perseverance enabled him to rise from dishwasher to his present position. He informed the students of summer internships available at the Court.

Ronald Machen discussed his responsibilities of supervising the nation's largest US Attorney's Office, which includes more than 300 Assistant US Attorneys investigating and litigating both criminal and civil cases brought on behalf of the United States in the District of Columbia. Mr. Machen joined the US Attorney's Office in 1997. His message to the students was that if they had straight A's and knew appropriate behavior in an office setting then they should call him for a summer job.

The students were very attentive, energized and fully engaged during the entire program. Some of the questions they asked were: How long does it take to become a lawyer? Can we see the cell block? Did you find the job becoming harder or easier as you worked here? Does the judge use a gavel? Is everything being recorded in the courtroom? Has a prisoner ever tried to escape from the courtroom? Have the marshals ever ejected anybody from the courtroom? The students enjoyed the pizza lunch and were eager to stay longer once the program ended.



US Attorney for the District of Columbia Ronald Machen

The members of the Criminal Division's Great Place to Work Committee are Tenisha Jiggetts, Sonya Miranda, Cyrena Salley, Robert Dillard, Diane Keys, Christina Wong, Oliver Hignett, Robin Chambers, Maika Hodge and Michael Brown.

Family Court Social Services Division, “The Eyes and Ears of t



Within the past decade, the Family Court Social Services Division (CSSD) has launched a number of initiatives and interventions aimed at reducing delinquency and recidivism, and promoting responsible citizenship among District of Columbia children and adolescents. The vast majority of the CSSD’s efforts and programs have been developed by staff within the Division, with support from the leadership of the Superior Court, Family Court and Executive Office. With an eye toward enhancing public safety and working in collaboration with various city-wide agencies, the CSSD continues to identify innovative and timely alternatives to stem the tide of delinquency.

Building on these efforts, from April 1 through April 5, 2013, the CSSD facilitated and hosted a variety of strength-based, pro-social activities for youth under its supervision during the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and Public Chartered Schools (DCPCS) 2013 Spring Break. These events not only provided youth with a variety of recreational and educational opportunities, but also enhanced public safety and presented the opportunity for all CSSD youth to be positively engaged during the hours they would normally be in school and during evening hours as well.

On Monday, April 1, 2013, 40 CSSD youth and 5 chaperoning CSSD Probation Officers (POs) embarked on a three-day tour of designated historically black colleges and universities (HBCU). During the tours christened **HBCU Ride for Knowledge**, the youth visited Morgan State University, Coppin State University, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Virginia State University, and Virginia Union University. In addition to getting first-hand exposure to each institution’s campus life and a variety of academic opportunities, the youth were also provided an extensive historical overview, which included snapshots of the cultural and political realities which gave rise to each institution’s existence and evolution.

Not only did this great opportunity encourage youth to achieve life’s goals through education, but the tours also provided opportunities for CSSD youth to experience several higher education institutions. During the trips, several of the young people expressed eagerness to attend one of the many HBCUs visited.

Following the tours, the CSSD learned that a number of participating youth, who were not quite sure of their future following high-school graduation, elected to enroll in college. For these youth, this was an excellent opportunity to interface with admission counselors and university staff and gather additional information while considering their future educational aspirations. During the visit to Morgan State University, each youth was given a tee-shirt with the University’s logo, while Hampton University provided each of the youth with a portfolio binder.

Simultaneously on April 1st, as the HBCU bus was on its way to Morgan State University, the lion-share of CSSD staff in conjunction with the Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) staff and officers from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), headed to the National Zoo to engage in a full scale cross-agency collaborative canvass of the zoo. Given that the Monday following Easter has historically served as African-American Day at the National Zoo, a day in which families visit the zoo for picnics and relaxation, staff from CSSD and DYRS reached out to the African-American community by sharing social services and public safety information and offering free handouts to zoo attendees.

Throughout the day MPD, Park Police and National Zoo Police expressed their gratitude to CSSD and DYRS for dedicating their time and presence to ensure African American Day on Easter Monday was a success. That same afternoon, additional CSSD and DYRS staff joined the MPD to canvass the Gallery



Visiting the National Zoo

the Judiciary,” hosts a week of youth outreach and education

Place area to assist in maintaining public safety, given the large volume of patrons anticipated in the area that day.

As a result of these efforts, and those of other law enforcement agencies, there were no youth arrested on April 1, 2013, truly underscoring the value of proactive efforts, collaborations and partnerships among public safety agencies.

On Tuesday, April 2, 2013, CSSD hosted an indoor Spring Fling at the recently dedicated Southwest Satellite Office/ Balanced and Restorative Justice (SWSO/BARJ) Drop-In Center. The day commenced with educational games, Zumba or as it is affectionately dubbed in DC “Z-GoGo,” and entertainment (thanks to MPD and their Girl Power program). CSSD staff fired up its SW BARJ grill and served hot dogs, burgers, snacks, and beverages. The day’s events culminated with featured guest speaker Joshua Lewis Morgan, NFL Redskins Wide Receiver and DC native. Addressing more than 100 youth and staff, Mr. Morgan shared his experiences growing up in the District of Columbia and encouraged the youth to stay focused on positive goals.



Group picture at the Southwest Satellite Office event

On Wednesday, April 3 and Thursday April 4, over 80 CSSD youth and staff visited the Kennedy Center to attend “Jason Invisible.” The play, based on the book entitled “Crazy” by Han Nolan, focuses on adolescence, the stigma of mental health, and the struggles young people confront in asking for help. This very interactive play utilized the “fourth wall” in the theater, creating an imaginary wall between the stage characters and the audience. Actors spoke directly to the audience and asked everyone in the audience to participate in the performance. At the end, the audience was invited to speak directly with the characters on stage and discuss the multitude of issues presented during the play. The play and the open dia-



CSSD staff, from left to right: Northwest Satellite Office Acting Supervisor Probation Officer (SPO) Regina Yorkman; Director Terri Odom; Southwest Satellite Office SPO Tosha Layton; Region II Program Manager Shelia Roberson-Adams; Northeast Satellite Office SPO Lisa Moxley; and Leaders of Today in Solidarity SPO LaJuan Woodland.

logue offered CSSD youth a wonderful opportunity to experience the performing arts and freely express themselves in a proactive, youth-friendly environment. The actors offered the audience members productive dialogue exploring mental health and various tools for recognizing when it is okay to ask for help and intervention from adults.

Finally, youth and staff from the Northeast BARJ Center planned and participated in a neighborhood block cleanup effort picking up litter and debris on streets surrounding the Center and distributing flyers for the local Police Service Area (PSA) and Civic Association Meetings. PSA and civic leaders continue to express their appreciation for the distribution campaign as many of the neighbors do not have access to the internet.

Prior to presenting all CSSD staff with Certificates of Appreciation, signed by Executive Officer Anne Wicks, Terri Odom, Director of CSSD shared her thoughts on the activities. She said: “What made Spring Break 2013 even more amazing is knowing CSSD staff were able to do all of the above, while still maintaining their day-to-day responsibilities. The hard work of all the staff whether on the ground, preparing and distributing refreshments, canvassing communities or manning the office, staffing intake and preparing for JM 15 or staffing the Youth Service Center, conducting evaluations and assessments or staffing the office to ensure a presence as their colleagues were out in the community contributed to a very successful week.”

Thank you CSSD for working with our youth and families and helping to keep our city safe!

New Judge-in-Chambers location

Judge-in-Chambers, one of eight offices in the DC Superior Court's Special Operations Division, has just relocated. Though they have moved down the hall from their old location, they've retained their room number (4220).

The Judge-in-Chambers office is responsible for hearing every type of emergency case from each division, with the exceptions of small claims and social services. The Judge-in-Chambers has the responsibility of making various decisions from whether a warrant should be granted to whether someone without an available relative should remain on life support. Like many offices of the court, there is little down-time in Judge-in-Chambers. They can hear as many as 1,200 matters per month, and often their work may continue after the close of business.

Thirteen senior judges preside in Judge-in-Chambers, rotating on a weekly basis. The staff consists of a courtroom clerk (Natalie Byrd), and three assistant courtroom clerks (Erika Thompson, Maria Saporteza, and Evelyn Smith). The staff, in addition to providing support to the judges, also assists the public with filling out forms consistent with Court rules and procedures.

Judge-in-Chambers' new location provides much-needed desk and counter space to handle the high volume of cases they see each day. It also has a lobby that provides adequate seating, a spacious counter, and a small conference room available to litigants for negotiation.

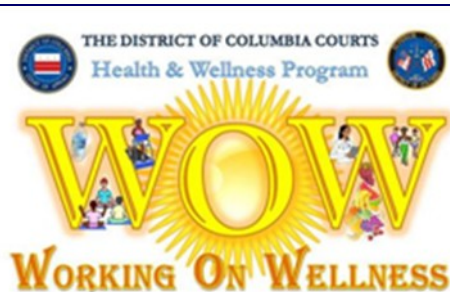
Most importantly, the new location has a courtroom, so parties no longer have to have their cases heard in the judge's office. Having a full-sized courtroom helps avoid the challenges of having sometimes volatile parties in close proximity to one another.

The courtroom also allows for the usage of electronic forms of evidence. Herb Rouson, Director of the Special Operations Division says, "I'm pleased that the Court, in consideration of the old location's impact on the administration of justice, has demonstrated its strong commitment to ensuring that we have a sound infrastructure in keeping with our Strategic Plan and initiatives."



Judge-in-Chambers Courtroom Clerk Natalie Byrd shows the new courtroom

Personal Trainer at the Courts



The WOW committee has arranged for personal training services to be available to DC Court employees (fee for services) as part of the ongoing commitment to improve employee health and wellbeing. The training sessions are generally scheduled in the exercise room in Building B and are conducted by DC Courts' employee Donnell Davis, from the Administrative Services Division, during his non-work hours.

Davis, who has been in the Health and Fitness industry for 15 years, started personal training in 2005 and became certified by the National Academy of Sports Medicine – one of the top three recognized certifications in the country. His training programs emphasize, but are not limited to, losing weight, toning and weight training.

"Working with my court employee clients has actually been some of the best training experiences I have had," said Davis. "The level of commitment they have had to accomplish their fitness goals is a personal trainer's dream, and they ALWAYS give

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5th Annual Guardianship Conference discusses best practices on guardianship assistance

By Aisha Ivey-Nixon, Program Manager, Probate Division Guardianship Assistance Program

On March 7, 2013, the Guardianship Assistance Program of the DC Superior Court Probate Division sponsored its 5th Annual Guardianship Conference at The George Washington University Law School. For this year's conference, the Guardianship Assistance Program partnered with the Health Insurance Counseling Project of The George Washington University.

More than 100 family, attorney, and non-attorney professional guardians attended the half-day conference entitled, *Navigating Dangerous and Difficult Situations*. The keynote speakers, Judge José López, Presiding Judge of the DC Superior Court's Domestic Violence Unit, and Janese Bechtol, Esq., Chief of the Domestic Violence Section of the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, spoke on the theme of domestic violence and how guardians may increase their awareness and sensitivity to how domestic violence may affect individuals under guardianship.



From left to right: Sonya Roundtree-McClain, Deputy Program Manager, Guardianship Assistance Program; John M. Campbell, Presiding Judge of the Probate & Tax Division; Aisha Ivey-Nixon, Program Manager, Guardianship Assistance Program.

The Guardianship Assistance Program strives to provide education and resources to its guardians. To that end, the conference serves as a forum to provide information on best practices, community resources, and strategies in decision-making. Each attendee received materials addressing complex practice issues, services to assist victims of domestic violence, and medical house call programs in the metropolitan area. Sessions for this year's conference included "Paying for Healthcare with Medicare," "Changes in Housing: Balancing Least Restrictive

versus Protective Environments," "Ethics in Guardianship," and "Transitions during the Life of a Guardianship."

Opening remarks were provided by DC Superior Court Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield; John Campbell, Presiding Judge of the Probate and Tax Division; Anne Meister, Register of Wills; and Professor Suzanne Jackson of The George Washington University Law School.

The conference gave guardians an opportunity to network with their peers. At the conclusion of the conference, an "information fair" allowed guardians to discuss the breakout sessions and meet with local community agencies. The community agencies that participated in this year's information fair included: Attic to Basement Estate Cleanouts, Caregivers Institute, Community Senior Ethics and Practice Panel, Crime Victims Compensation, Department of Disability Services, DC Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Iona Senior Services, and the McClendon Center. Fair participants had an opportunity to meet agency representatives and explore how the wards they serve may benefit from the services offered.



The conference provided plenty of opportunities to network, share best practices and obtain new information.

The Guardianship Assistance Program is extremely grateful to its many supporters, extending thanks to those who donated their time and many talents to ensure the success of the conference. Special thanks go to Suzanne Jackson and Chris DeYoung of the Health Insurance Counseling Project of The George Washington University Law School. whose contribution of the facility site and Medicare options workshop led to the overall success of the guardianship conference.

DC Courts celebrate Law Day

On Wednesday, May 1st, the DC Courts celebrated Law Day under the American Bar Association’s theme of “Realizing the Dream: Equality for All”. This year’s ceremony at the DC Courts commemorated the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln.



The celebration took place on the steps of the Historic Courthouse.

Prior to the Law Day ceremony, the Courts’ hosted a one-hour Q&A session on twitter with Eric Washington, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, and Lee Satterfield, Chief Judge of the Superior Court.

The Law Day ceremony began with a brief welcome by Chief Judge Washington and was conducted in front of Lincoln’s statue, outside of the Historic Courthouse. “This is a day in which we pause to reflect on the significance of the rule of law for our country and our society. The courts in the nation’s capital have played a pivotal role in our country’s journey towards making sure that everyone has equal access to justice,” said Chief Judge Washington.

After the opening remarks, and a rendition of “Oh Freedom” by Debra Swingon-Stokes, the event featured a dynamic lecture

by Mr. Hari Jones, Curator of the African American Civil War Memorial Freedom Foundation and Museum. Mr. Jones’ lecture focused on African American contributions to Emancipation. A true patriot is “one who is willing to ensure that liberty, equality, and the pursuit of happiness are available to all in the body politic,” said Mr. Jones.



Hari Jones speaking at the event .

In closing, Chief Judge Satterfield thanked Mr. Jones and the crowd surrounding the courthouse steps. “We must think of just how far we—as a city, as a society, as a country—have come in the years since this building and this statue were built. But we must also remember that we are not there yet, there is work still to be done,” said Chief Judge Satterfield.

Continued from page 6, Personal Trainer at the Courts



Donnell Davis

100%!” The best part of training court employees, says Davis, “is the convenience and the atmosphere in the gym with the great quality of gym equipment that the court provides.” Davis looks forward to working with more court employees to help them reach their fitness goals.

Several employees have engaged Davis’ services. Kimberly Jarmon, of the Central Intake Center, was glad to hear that his services would be offered through the Courts. “It was an excellent thing for the courts to do, because it’s easier for a lot of people to go straight after work,” she said. “The hardest part about doing it is taking the first step. It hurt! Once you do that though, it gets easier to get up and go. You can mope and groan and whine and complain all you want – like I do – but the only response Mr. Davis will have is ‘Let’s go.’” Since working with Mr. Davis, Jarmon is feeling better and seeing the changes she wants. She is most impressed with Davis’ expertise and sensitivity to his clients’ limits.

For addition information and to schedule your personal training session (fee for services), please contact Donnell Davis at (301) 785-2950.