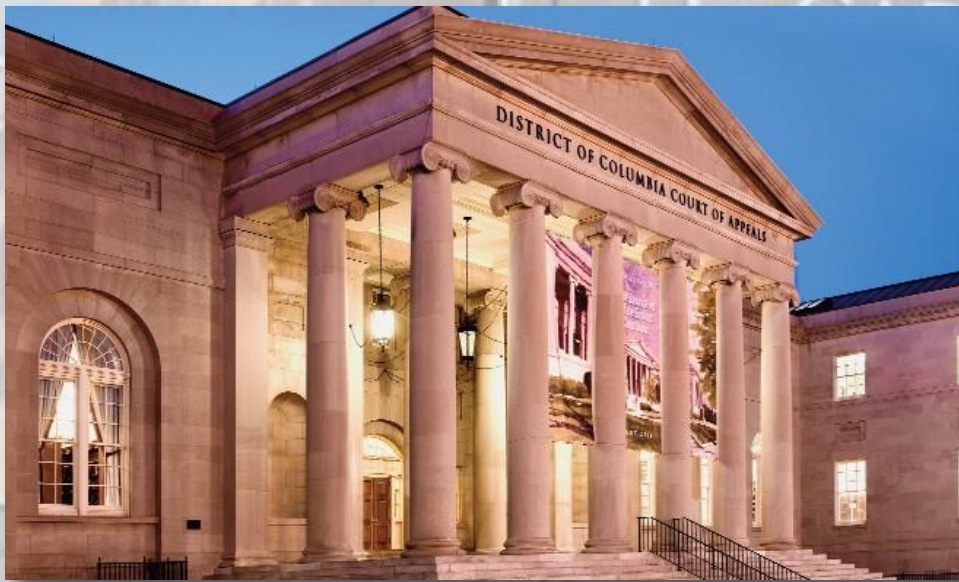


District of Columbia Courts

Annual Report

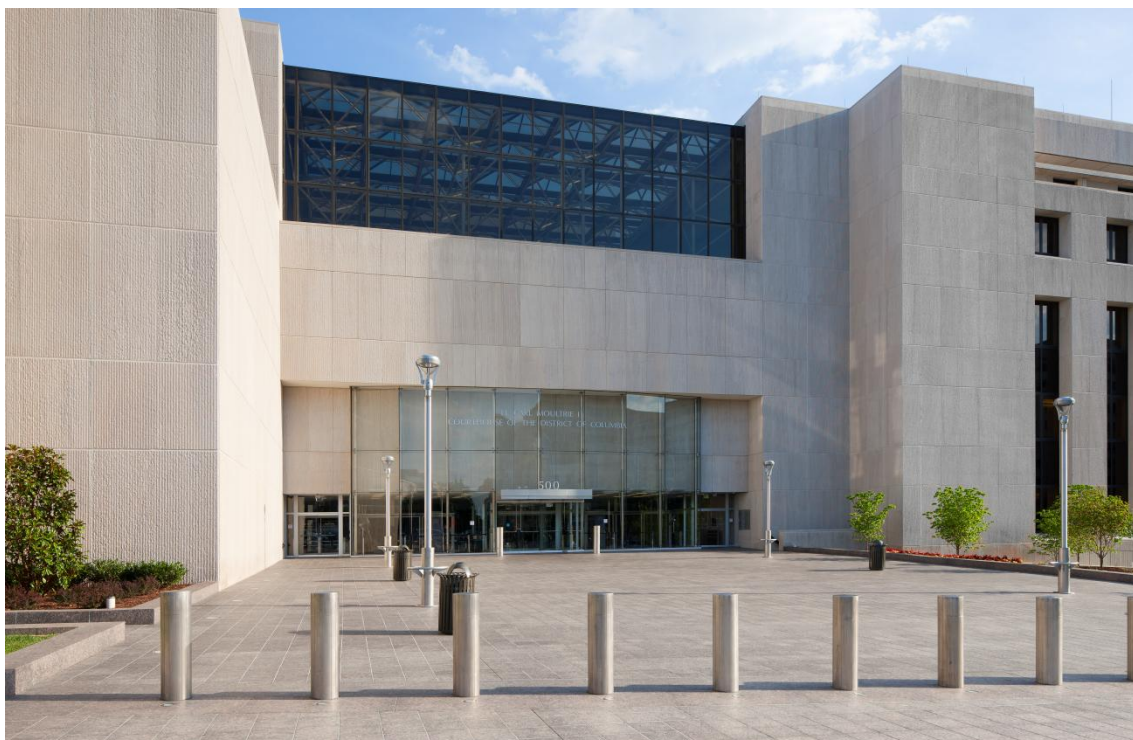
2014



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CONTENTS

From the Executive Officer of the District of Columbia Courts	1
Message from the Chief Judges	2
Report of the District of Columbia Courts, 2014	3
Governance of the District of Columbia Courts	34
Organization of the District of Columbia Courts	35
Organizational Chart of the District of Columbia Courts	36



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FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

On behalf of the District of Columbia Courts, I am pleased to transmit our *2014 Annual Report* that provides information to the public on the achievements of the District's judicial branch in the past year as we work to accomplish our strategic goals and fulfill our mission to protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and resolve disputes peacefully, fairly and effectively.

As an institution that interacts with thousands of our community members each day, the Courts have focused in recent years on the people who make up our organization, who are its face. We have engaged in initiatives to build employee engagement and public service and to incorporate in our daily behavior a set of values, introduced in our 2013 strategic plan. These values, accountability, excellence, fairness, integrity, respect, and transparency, describe *how* the Courts expect to conduct ourselves as we work to carry out our mission. I invite you to visit our website, www.dccourts.gov, to read the strategic plan and learn more about the D.C. Courts.

The D.C. Courts take great pride in serving the people of the District of Columbia. We appreciate the dedicated judicial officers and court staff who work every day to realize our vision of being:

Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All.

Sincerely,



Anne B. Wicks
Executive Officer
District of Columbia Courts

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUDGES

Greetings to the People of the District of Columbia,

The District of Columbia Courts are your judicial branch of government; we are here to serve you. Guided by our strategic plan, the Courts strive to understand the legal needs of our community and to meet those needs with innovation and collaboration. In addition to the public input in our strategic planning process, the Courts keep in touch with our communities at neighborhood meetings, appellate arguments at local law schools, and satellite offices for various functions. In the following pages, you can read about some of our efforts to address the issues raised by our neighbors and enhance our services to the public, such as partnerships with executive branch agencies on problem-solving courts, legal assistance in the courthouse from volunteer attorneys, and work to internalize new values that will drive our performance as a court system.

Accountability to the community we serve is a vital element of the strategic plan, and this report is part of our work in that regard. The D.C. Courts continue to refine performance measures to inform the public about how well we function. We invite you to visit our website at www.dccourts.gov to learn more about your judicial branch of government.

Finally, we thank our colleagues in the judiciary and the entire staff of the D.C. Courts for their work to administer justice. It is a privilege to work with these dedicated public servants, our colleagues at other agencies, and the many volunteers from the D.C. Bar, who show strong commitment to meeting the legal needs of our community.



Eric T. Washington
Chief Judge
District of Columbia Court of Appeals



Lee F. Satterfield
Chief Judge
Superior Court of the District of Columbia

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS, 2014

The District of Columbia Courts make up the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. The Courts serve the public in the District of Columbia: those who live, work, and visit the Nation's Capital.

The Courts' strategic plan, which is formulated with input from the public, court personnel, and others, guides our work to administer justice for the community. *Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2013 - 2017* identifies five strategic goals that give direction to the Courts' activities as we carry out our mission to protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and resolve disputes peacefully, fairly and effectively in the District of Columbia and strive to achieve our vision, which is the title of the plan: "Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All." This report discusses activities that the D.C. Courts have undertaken in 2014 to enhance service to the public in each of the areas below.



Strategic Goals

Goal 1: *Fair and Timely Case Resolution* focuses on deciding cases on their merits, in accordance with the law, and in a timely manner. This strategic issue involves ensuring that the jury pool is a reflection of the community and that the poor have quality legal representation, as well as efforts to keep bias and discrimination out of the courthouse. The Courts must balance fairness with timeliness and use sound management techniques, alternative dispute resolution, and good communication to process cases efficiently.

Goal 2: *Access to Justice* compels the Courts to make it as easy as we can for people in the community to come to court, seek redress, and use the services available to them. Opening satellite offices and juvenile drop-in centers in the community, providing services in multiple languages, and assisting litigants without lawyers help further the community's access to justice.

Goal 3: *A Strong Judiciary and Workforce* reflects the Courts' commitment to having highly skilled judges and court staff serve the public and drive the administration of justice in our community. The Courts support training programs to maintain and improve skills, sponsor diversity programs, require accountability, and recognize performance as we strive to foster employee engagement and high achievement.

Goal 4: *A Sound Infrastructure* requires modern and up-to-date facilities and technology to ensure that they support efficiency and make it easy for the public to access court buildings, information, and services. The Courts must provide a safe and secure environment for the administration of justice and continued service to the public in the event of an emergency.

Goal 5: *Public Trust and Confidence* is the foundation of the administration of justice in a democratic society. Through transparency, communication, and accountability to the public, we strive to ensure that the community trusts the Courts to resolve its disputes in an unbiased manner.



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Values

The D.C. Courts' values guide the behavior and conduct of judicial officers and court staff.



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.

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GOAL 1: FAIR AND TIMELY CASE RESOLUTION

The D.C. Courts place a high value on ensuring due process and equal protection for all parties who seek justice from the Courts. At the same time, the Courts recognize that “justice delayed is justice denied” and are committed to resolving cases expeditiously. We strive at all times to balance the dual goals of fairness and timeliness while ensuring that every case receives individual attention and that all cases are handled as efficiently as possible in keeping with our duty to use public funds responsibly and to promote public safety and confidence in the Courts.

IMPROVING TIMELINESS TO RESOLVE CASES

To live up to the first strategic goal, fair and timely case resolution, the D.C. Courts must balance fairness and timeliness, utilizing best practices in case management. Each case that comes before the court must be decided based on its facts and the law, recognizing each party’s right to due process and equal protection under the law. Each case must also be decided in a timely manner without unnecessary delay.



Historic Courthouse Entrance

Court of Appeals. In 2014, 1,538 new cases were filed in the D.C. Court of Appeals, and the court disposed of (or completed) 1,846 cases. A common measure of court efficiency is the clearance rate, a comparison of cases completed to cases initiated (filed or reopened). At a clearance rate of 100% a court is keeping pace with its workload by resolving one pending case for each new case filed. The Court of Appeals achieved a clearance rate of 118% in 2014.

Court of Appeals Caseload Activity, 2014

Category	New Cases Filed		Cases Reopened	Cases Disposed		Cases Pending* December 31, 2014	Clearance Rate*
Mandatory Appeal & Bar Cases	1,481	96%	23	1,787	97%		
Original Jurisdiction Matters	38	2%	0	35	2%		
Discretionary Jurisdiction Matters	19	1%	0	24	1%		
Total	1,538	100%	23	1,846	100%	1,521	118%

*The pending caseload and clearance rate are being reported in total, rather than by category.

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Moultrie Courthouse

D.C. Superior Court. In 2014, 91,436 new cases were filed in the Superior Court. Slightly more than half of the caseload (52%) was civil matters. The remainder of the new filings was 22% criminal, 14% family, 9% domestic violence matters, and 3% probate. The Superior Court realized a clearance rate of 95%.

Superior Court Caseload Activity, 2014

Division	New Cases Filed		Cases Reopened	Cases Disposed		Cases Pending September 30, 2014		Clearance Rate
Civil Division	47,298	52%	1,030	50,244	53%	11,251	34%	104%
Criminal Division	20,286	22%	6,606	20,911	22%	6,903	21%	102%
Domestic Violence Unit	8,004	9%	259	8,380	9%	1,156	4%	101%
Family Court Operations	12,654	14%	250	12,568	13%	4,308	13%	97%
Probate Division	2,667	3%	500	2,920	3%	7,340	22%	92%
Tax Division	<u>527</u>	<u><1%</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>411</u>	<u><1%</u>	<u>1,681</u>	<u>5%</u>	77%
Grand Total	91,436	100%	8,651	95,434	100%	32,639	100%	95%

Tracking Court Performance. Performance measures reports for all operating divisions track Time to Disposition, Trial Date Certainty, and Age of Active Pre-Disposition Caseload. These reports allow the chief judge, presiding and deputy presiding judges, and division directors to monitor each division's performance on a monthly or routine basis. Armed with this information, decision-makers can evaluate established business practices, determine where opportunities for improvement exist, and modify goals to encourage enhanced performance for the community. Each operating division provides a status report twice a year to court leadership on its performance in each of these categories.

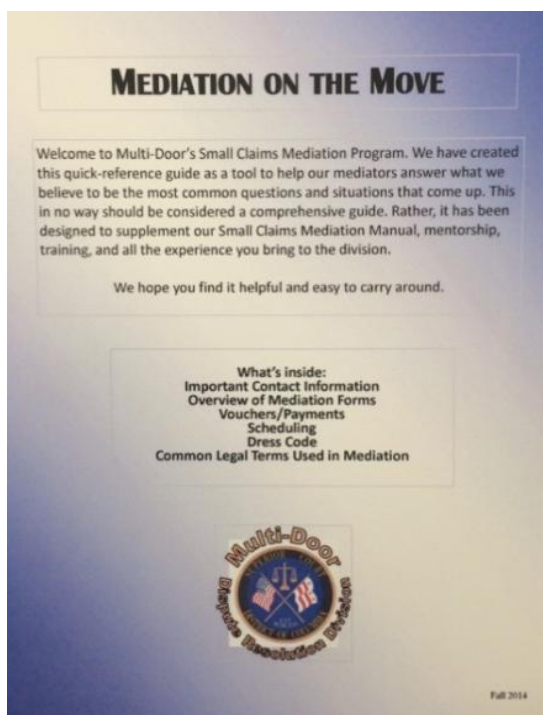
ENHANCING FAIR CASE RESOLUTION

Skilled Family Court Attorneys. The court offered attorneys who practice in the Superior Court Family Court several training opportunities this year so that highly skilled attorneys represent children and families. In addition to training on trial skills, special education law, and ethics provided by the Children’s Law Center and

training tailored to newly appointed attorneys on the special education panel, brown bag lunches were held throughout the year on topics such as new case law, pre-trial procedures, psychological assessments, using investigators, and obtaining medical records. In addition, in March, the annual two-day Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute (NDPI) was held for current Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN), Guardian *ad Litem* (GAL), juvenile delinquency, and special education panel attorneys.

Skilled Appellate Attorneys. The Court of Appeals worked to ensure that highly skilled attorneys represent litigants in appellate cases. In October, the court conducted training for Criminal Justice Act panel attorneys, who are evaluated annually for retention on the panel. In November, the court offered a continuing legal education course on appellate practice for members of the District of Columbia Bar.

Skilled Mediators. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) helps the D.C. Courts process cases efficiently, usually without judicial intervention, and helps parties resolve their own disputes at a lower cost. To ensure that highly skilled mediators are available to help parties resolve their disputes, the Superior Court recruited and trained 24 new mediators this year. In addition, the court provided 25 training programs to 251 mediators on a variety of technical and theoretical topics designed to increase mediators’ knowledge and effectiveness. In October, to make small claims mediation more efficient and more focused on the parties, the court created a “Mediation on the Move” guide to provide mediators with information—at their fingertips—on forms, legal terms, and procedures.



Small Claims Mediation Guide

Child Welfare Legal Clinic. To provide quality legal representation to families and to encourage law students to become child welfare lawyers, the Howard University School of Law operates a child welfare legal clinic in the Family Court.

INNOVATIONS IN CASE PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

Juror Enhancements. A jury representative of the community is fundamental to perceptions of fairness. The Superior Court is committed to ensuring that the jurors summoned and those reporting for duty meet this goal. Continuing to employ an evidence-based approach to summoning jurors, the Superior Court achieved a juror utilization rate near 80% for the second

year in a row, making significantly more efficient use of jurors' time and summoning tens of thousands fewer citizens for jury duty. Juror utilization represents the percentage of jurors who reported for jury service who were sent to a courtroom for jury selection. The court continues to refine a model it developed that uses statistical data, case management reports, and analysis of trials scheduled 30 to 45 days in the future to predict the court's need for jurors and issue summonses accordingly.

We the People: A Call to Duty, a new video introducing jurors to the service they have been called to perform, debuted in March. The video explains not only the practical aspects of jury service but also the significance of this civic duty to the community. The video features art and movie clips that depict important aspects of jury service and its importance in our system of justice. The video is available on the Courts' website at www.dccourts.gov/juryvideo.



We the People: A Call to Duty

Alternative Dispute Resolution Expansion. In September, following the first phase of a study of ADR use in cases with a history of intimate partner violence (IPV), a new screening tool was implemented. The study, conducted by Indiana University and the University of Arizona through a grant from the National Institute of Justice, compared the Mediator's Assessment of Safety Issues and Concerns, (MASIC) to the court's screening tool and found that the MASIC revealed more information regarding IPV and related risk factors (e.g. injury, fear), leading to better identification of high risk cases and underscoring the need for

systematic IPV screening procedures in mediation. In cases with IPV, techniques such as shuttle mediation and video conferencing are utilized to help parties resolve their disputes outside of the courtroom while preserving safety. The second phase of the study, expected to be completed in three years, will examine approximately 250 volunteer cases with a history of IPV randomly assigned shuttle mediation, video conference mediation, or court to determine whether mediation increases a victim's safety and improves outcomes for these parties.

Family Treatment Court. The Family Treatment Court keeps children with their parents during substance abuse treatment, rather than placing the children in foster care. Since its inception in 2003, approximately 130 women have gained sobriety and successfully completed the program. In January, the Superior Court launched an expanded and newly redesigned Family Treatment Court, providing increased access to substance abuse treatment services for families in the child welfare system, enhancing the array of treatment and supportive services available to participants, and, for the first time, targeting both mothers and fathers involved in the child welfare system. The Family Treatment Court not only keeps families together, but also saves money for the District by reducing the number of children in foster care.



The Multi-Door Family ADR Research Team receives recognition.

Community Court. Community courts address the underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior and apply a problem-solving approach to criminal justice, collaborating with local organizations to help offenders give back to the community through community service, to hold them accountable, and to address quality-of-life crimes. In 2014, the Superior Court's Community Service Program assigned 2,411 defendants to community service, and over 57,000 hours of service were performed. On two Saturdays this summer, 48 Community Court defendants participated in Community Service Clean-Up Days, helping the D.C. Department of Public Works remove debris, rake, and prune at two parks.



Community Court defendants clean up a park.

Mental Health Court. This year, 312 individuals successfully completed the Mental Health Community Court, which draws on community resources to serve persons in the court system with mental illness, resulting in the dismissal of 283 cases. To strengthen collaboration and to ensure that defense attorneys understand the requirements and goals of the Mental Health Court, training was provided this year to the Superior Court Trial Lawyers Association and to mental health community support workers.

Drug Court Improvements. The Drug Court, a problem-solving court operated in collaboration with the Pretrial Services Agency that serves substance-dependant or addicted defendants with non-violent criminal charges, completed program changes to conform to ten national best practices for successful drug courts. The Drug Court provides these defendants drug treatment, supervision, drug testing, and sanctions and incentives. In 2014, 81 defendant's cases were dismissed after they successfully completed the drug court program.

Foreclosure Calendar. To address a surge in foreclosure cases—more than 650 were filed in 2014—the court consolidated foreclosures to a single calendar, established expedited alternative dispute resolution with specially trained mediators, and made housing counselors available to help borrowers understand their options and take advantage of opportunities to avoid foreclosure. The Legal Aid Society and Legal Counsel for the Elderly provide attorneys to assist litigants.

Parenting Services. The Program for Agreement and Cooperation in Contested Custody Cases (PAC) educates parents and prepares them for mediation in order to reduce conflict, thereby reducing the adverse effects of their disagreements on their children. Twenty-four education seminars, in English and Spanish, throughout the year helped 773 parents understand the impact of custody disputes on their children.

Improving Juvenile Justice Procedures. In July, the Superior Court convened a working group to improve the juvenile intake and arraignment process. The group includes Family Court judges and staff as well as representatives from other juvenile justice system agencies: the D.C. Office of the Attorney General, the Public Defender Service, the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Metropolitan Police Department, and the U.S. Marshals Service.



Family Court Entrance to the Moultrie Courthouse

Moving Toward Paperless. The Superior Court has a goal to move away from heavy reliance on paper. Toward that end, this year—

- Civil Actions and Landlord Tenant cases went paperless; filings are maintained only in the case management system and are immediately available for public viewing;
- Removal of cases to the U.S. District Court was automated, with cases transmitted by email;
- Domestic Violence protection orders transitioned to a jacketless system; the record of the case is now preserved electronically and over 99% of documents are scanned within 24 hours;
- Initiation of a civil case involving the Judge-in-Chambers (JIC) was automated, minimizing the number of trips litigants must take to and from the JIC office and reducing waiting times;
- Paperless case management was implemented for neglect matters;
- Electronic filing was implemented in juvenile and neglect custody orders;
- Electronic filing was implemented for Department of Corrections requests for juvenile clearances;

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- Emergency mental health filings moved to encrypted email, so that attorneys receive emergency petitions and their appointment orders quickly and confidentially and can expedite visits with their clients;
- “One-stop shopping” was implemented for transcript payment in which the collection of payments occurs in the same location as transcript pick-up; and
- Processing paper financial documents in the Office of the Auditor-Master was automated, eliminating data entry and expediting processing of cases.

GOAL 2: ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Ensuring that all District residents have access to justice is an increasing challenge for the D.C. Courts for many reasons. The number of non-English speaking residents continues to grow in the metropolitan area. In addition to language barriers, many of these residents, from Spanish speaking countries, Africa, and Asia, have very different expectations of courts based on their native cultural experiences. Low-income residents can face legal problems due to urban development and the lack of affordable housing. Low-income residents may also be less able to leave their jobs to attend a court hearing or serve as a juror. Educational differences affect people's ability to access court services. There are also a number of District residents who are illiterate or have very limited reading skills, which severely hampers their ability to read and understand court orders or fill out court forms. In addition, there are potential barriers to justice based on race, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities, and the like. Since 1996, the Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and Access has maintained a steady focus on identifying and reducing such barriers to justice.



Main Entrance to Moultrie Courthouse.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

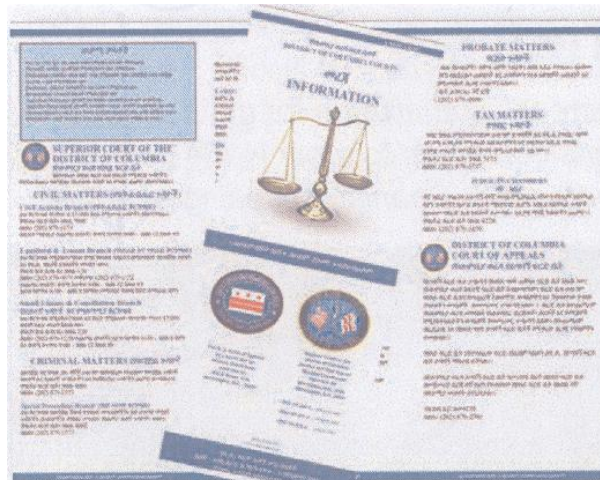
Access Program Coordinator and implementing a formal Language Access Plan. This year, the Courts solicited feedback on the plan from legal services and LEP organizations to ensure that the plan is effective and responsive. The Courts offer courtwide interpreter services—in person and by telephone, display signage in both English and Spanish, maintain a list of bilingual employees and their languages (court employees speak more than 20 languages), publish brochures in the most prevalent foreign languages, and provide forms and information lines in multiple languages. The Courts provided interpreters 8,137 times this year, predominantly for Spanish speakers; other frequently used languages include Amharic, French, Korean, Tigrinya, and Mandarin. Throughout the year, court staff and mediators were trained on court interpreting and related procedures, interpreters were trained on courtroom procedures, and bilingual employees learned about legal vocabulary in Spanish and English.

Disability Access. Ongoing activities to enhance disability access include accommodations for persons with low vision, wheelchair loans, and readers for the blind. The court accommodates those who arrive late to Small Claims and Landlord Tenant courtrooms due to delays in the public paratransit system; persons who cannot appear at proceedings in person may make video or telephone appearances; and assistive technologies are provided. For disabled employees, the D.C. Courts continued to provide adaptive technologies and ergonomic equipment and furniture, to alter procedures, and to inform employees about accommodations.

Live Streaming Oral Arguments. Leveraging technology to increase access to justice, the Court of Appeals began video-streaming live oral arguments in June, building on existing access to audio broadcasts. More than 1,200 viewers tuned in to watch the first video-streamed proceedings in June. The Court video streamed additional oral arguments in September and November and plans to continue video streaming oral arguments that may be of interest to the public.

Real-Time Court Reporting. The Courts continued to provide real-time court reporting in 19 courtrooms. Real-time reporting instantaneously translates the reporter's stenographic notes during court proceedings. The real-time transcript facilitates participation in court proceedings by hearing-impaired litigants and is made available on judicial and attorney computer screens. Enhanced access to court proceedings, the immediate transcript for the judge, the ability to research rulings and testimony, and the expedited production of transcripts continue to enhance the administration of justice.

Language Access. The Courts have devoted particular attention to this issue in recent years to assure language access to limited-English proficient (LEP) court participants, appointing a Language



An informational brochure in Amharic

Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVCP). In 2014, victims of violent crime received \$7.8 million in compensation for financial losses related to the crime, in compliance with federal standards. To enhance services to these victims, particularly to victims of domestic violence, the CVCP collaborated with My Sister's Place, D.C. SAFE, and other community groups that provide case management, counseling, and temporary emergency shelter. This year, the CVCP was honored by the Congressional Victims Rights Caucus and received an Award of Merit from the U.S. Navy for assistance provided to victims and survivors following the September 2013 mass shooting at the Washington Navy Yard. In December, the CVCP was recognized in a best practices newsletter published by the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime.



Laura Reed, Director of the Crime Victims Compensation Program, accepts Navy Award of Merit.

Child Care. The Courts provided child care in the courthouse to 369 children of jurors, witnesses, litigants, and other court users so their parents and caregivers could participate in court proceedings and conduct business with the Courts without the difficulty of finding alternate care for their children.

HELP FOR LITIGANTS WITHOUT LAWYERS

Domestic Violence Legal Assistance. Through the Domestic Violence Assistance Project, the Court is collaborating with AARP, the Legal Aid Society, and law schools to provide legal services to victims of domestic violence. Students assist parties several days per week, writing pleadings and answering questions, and this year there were more students from George Washington University Law School than ever before. The Domestic Violence Intake Center co-locates court services with community resources to provide “one-stop shopping” for victims. The Intake Center assisted 5,698 individuals in 2014, almost half (45%) sought protection orders and services at the community-based satellite Intake Center located in Southeast Washington.

Family Law Help. The Family Court Self Help Center, a free walk-in service that provides legal information in a variety of family law matters, served 8,378 people in 2014; in November, the Center assisted its 60,000th customer since its inception in May 2005. The Center offers a computer room where litigants can read about D.C. law and procedure, independently complete forms and other pleadings, and use an automated child support guideline calculator. This year, 54 volunteers were trained to assist Center customers. In addition, the court published a “Handbook for People who Represent Themselves in Divorce, Custody and Child Support Cases” as a resource to help self-represented litigants understand their cases.

Legal Assistance in Civil Matters. In July, the court initiated an internet chat to respond to the public’s questions regarding civil matters on-line in real time, serving over 900 people. In addition, the court published a “Handbook for Self-Represented Parties” that is distributed in the courtrooms to help litigants understand civil court proceedings and processes. Five centers in the courthouse provide legal and procedural information to litigants without lawyers in civil cases. The self-help centers are open part-time in collaboration with the D.C. Bar, law schools, and volunteer attorneys.

- The Consumer Law Resource Center assisted 550 individuals with debt collection, contractor disputes, automotive repair disputes, utility disputes, and issues involving violations of the Consumer Protection Procedures Act.
- The Landlord Tenant Resource Center served 5,145 individuals, including 4,118 tenants and 1,027 landlords. The Law Students in Court program also assists tenants.
- The Small Claims Resource Center assisted 262 people, both petitioners and respondents, with legal assistance and information regarding Small Claims cases. The Center is staffed by attorneys from the Neighborhood Legal Services Program and law students supervised by attorneys from the George Washington University Law School and the Columbus School of Law at Catholic University.
- The Tax Sale Resource Center, which assists litigants with tax foreclosure cases, served 89 litigants.
- The Consumer Court-Based Legal Services Project, a partnership of The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia and AARP's Legal Counsel for the Elderly, assists unrepresented litigants primarily with debt collection matters. The Legal Aid Society assisted 169 individuals and referred 13 consumers to other legal service organizations or *pro bono* counsel. The Legal Counsel for the Elderly represented more than 35 seniors.

Probate Assistance. The Probate Resource Center served 761 people in 2014, an increase of 10% over 2013. Operated with the D.C. Bar, the Center assists unrepresented parties with estate administration, helps parties gather information needed to proceed with the probate process, prepares documents, and helps parties understand how property should be distributed to beneficiaries. In adult guardianship cases, the Center assists members of the public with court filings and in bringing matters to the attention of the court. For the self-represented public filing small estates, the court provides Small Estates Specialists who walk litigants through the process. In addition, the Probate Division continued live chats through the D.C. Courts' website to provide the public real-time online responses to questions regarding probate matters. Beginning in September, self-represented litigants could engage an attorney to represent them for a part of their case (a limited appearance, rather than the full representation typically required of attorneys), making it easier and less costly to obtain the services of an attorney.

Role of the Judge. The Courts' Code of Judicial Conduct (revised three years ago to follow the 2007 American Bar Association Model Code of Judicial Conduct) includes a provision on the judge's role in facilitating self-represented litigants' right to be heard. Specifically, "judges should make reasonable accommodations" to help these litigants understand court proceedings and be heard. In 2014, a video that depicts several scenarios with unrepresented litigants was used to train new judicial officers.

GOAL3: A STRONG JUDICIARY AND WORKFORCE

A strong judiciary and workforce are essential to the Courts' ability to administer justice effectively. The D.C. Courts' judiciary is recognized as one of the most distinguished in the country, and our administrators and staff are highly talented and experienced public servants. The Courts have made substantial investments in training for all judges and staff. We also seek out shared training opportunities with justice system partners, to enhance our mutual understanding of the challenges faced in delivering justice effectively and to develop collaborative solutions.

The D.C. Courts have 1,300 judges and court staff who directly serve the public, process the cases, and provide administrative support—in short, who carry out the work of administering justice in the District of Columbia. Each of these individuals must possess up-to-date skills and a commitment to public service. The Courts must encourage them to strive for excellence, embrace diversity, and engage fully and enthusiastically in their work.

AN ENGAGED AND INVOLVED JUDICIARY

January 2014, with a response rate of 65%. The Partnership for Public Service "Best Places to Work" index ranked the D.C. Courts ninth compared to mid-sized Federal agencies. D.C. Courts employees reported high levels of satisfaction in areas of Skills-Mission Match, Work-Life Balance and overall employee satisfaction. As a result of the survey findings, the Courts continued work to improve performance management and launched division-specific projects in Human Resources, Education and Training, Civil, and Criminal. The WOW – Working on Wellness – program and the Work/Life Balance committee continue to enrich the Courts' organizational culture, launching a flexplace pilot program, adding fitness classes, concierge services, food demonstrations, and health lectures, with hundreds of employees participating. Internal communications improved, with a 45% increase in intranet use and recruitment of employee writers for the Courts' newsletter.

Building a Great Place to Work. The D.C. Courts continued a multi-year initiative to enhance employee engagement and public service by making the D.C. Courts "A Great Place to Work." To obtain feedback from court personnel, the Courts participated in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey in December 2013 and



Employees take advantage of a brown bag lunch with the E-Team.

Reaching Out to Employees. To build a culture of communication and to support the Courts' value of transparency, the Executive Team, comprised of the Executive Officer, the Deputy Executive Officer, the Clerk of the D.C. Court of Appeals, and the Clerk of the D.C. Superior Court, communicates regularly with employees through quarterly brown bag lunches, employee focus groups, and bi-monthly updates in the Courts' newsletter and on the intranet.

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Living Our Values. Living Our Values is a new courtwide effort to bring to life the organizational values set forth in the Strategic Plan. It is a training and development initiative to integrate the Courts' values and behaviors into day-to-day operations and culture. The Living Our Values initiative incorporates substantial employee participation in the design of action plans, avoiding a top-down approach, to ensure that the plans address employees' concerns. Following dozens of focus groups and on-line surveys, 30 employees were appointed to the Values Leadership Council. Two themes that emerged from employee feedback sessions are (1) improving management practices and collaboration to become more consistent across the organization and (2) empowering employees to provide recommendations to improve work processes and encouraging innovation and creativity. In October, all executives, division directors and deputy directors participated in a two-day Values Leadership Summit, and in December, all managers, from front-line supervisors to executives, gathered at the first-ever, day-long Values Leadership Conference to explore the Courts' culture, leadership principles, and values.

Performance Management. The Courts continued work to foster a culture of collaboration and employee input around performance management, which is an important success factor in achieving a strong judiciary and workforce. All supervisors, managers, and senior managers participated in two days of training on Strategic Performance Management, and the Courts' Performance and Employee Relations Manager worked with supervisors across all levels of the organization on best practices and strengthening the D.C. Court's performance management process.

Cross Training. The Courts initiated a three-tiered cross-training program, including "Taste of the Courts," Job Shadowing, and Intensive Cross Training. A "Taste of the Courts" fair in May attracted hundreds of employees who learned about the functions and procedures of other divisions. A pilot job-shadowing program was conducted in the summer followed by a Cross Training Intensive pilot. The Strategic Management Division is conducting an assessment of these efforts.

Flexible Work Arrangements. A FlexPlace Pilot program was launched in May to assess whether flexplace will increase employee engagement and advance the workplace-related goals of the Strategic Plan. Eight divisions and the Court of Appeals are participating, and an evaluation report will be completed in 2015.

Training and Professional Development. "A Great Place to Work" requires skilled workers and leadership. Court of Appeals and Superior Court judges and magistrate judges participated in training



Courtwide Leadership Conference

programs and conferences to remain current on case law, societal trends, technological advances and numerous issues they must understand to make good judicial decisions. In 2014, the 131 judicial officers in the Court of Appeals and Superior Court completed over 3,800 hours of continuing judicial education during 16 judicial training programs. Court staff participated in 140 training programs, completing over 12,500 hours of professional

development, on topics including technology, leadership and management, performance management, coaching, team skills, communications skills, personnel policies, and customer service. The Superior Court Judicial Leadership Team, consisting of the Chief Judge and the Presiding and Deputy Presiding Judge for each Division, held a two-day retreat in October.

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A Collaborative Leadership Summit of the Superior Court division directors and deputies and the Judicial Leadership Team was held in January followed by quarterly facilitated meetings led by the Executive Officer and Chief Judge. The joint judicial/management conference in the spring focused on procedural fairness, and the annual Superior Court judicial conference in December addressed “Supreme Court Update and Security.” Court of Appeals judicial training programs examined “The Legal Profession: What is Wrong and How to Fix It,” “Freedom of the Press: The New York Times vs. Sullivan,” and the Lawyers’ Assistance Program.

The Courts continued ongoing efforts to offer educational opportunities to our partners in the District’s justice system. At the annual Family Court Conference, 300 professionals who work in or with the Family Court examined the prevention of teen pregnancy. In March, the Sixth Annual Guardianship Conference offered attorney and family-member guardians opportunities to learn about best practices in the care of incapacitated adults. Highlighting the Age Friendly D.C. Initiative, the conference included seminars on how to maintain housing and enhance the quality of life for vulnerable adults as well as an information fair on relevant community services. In September, newly appointed guardians received training on mediation in the context of the care of incapacitated adults.

Judicial Mentoring. Twenty-five judicial officers are participating in the Superior Court’s new Judicial Coaching Program. Experienced judges participated in several days of skills-based training to become coaches for their colleagues.

Management Training Program. Development of court staff is another key ingredient in “A Great Place to Work.” In September, 17 participants graduated from the Management Training Program, which offers 24 days of informative classes throughout the year taught by national experts and senior court officials and requires completion of a group project designed to strengthen and develop participants’ professional and personal skills. Projects this year included D.C. Courts Offender Fines Payment Accessibility and Enforcement Program; Speak Out – DCSC Online Customer Service Experience; D.C. Courts Present: Fair on the Square; and Courtesy Reminder Notifications.



Taste of the Courts fair.



Members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity joined by court staff during Black History Month.

highlighted the 100th anniversary of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity. Throughout the month, employees

Celebrating Diversity. The D.C. Courts honor the traditions and contributions of various cultures to our society and the local community. The Courts’ Black History Month events this year included a book club discussion of *Twelve Years a Slave*, Solomon Northup’s 1853 account of his abduction and sale into slavery; a showing of the documentary film *Freedom Riders*; an elementary student’s rendition of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech; and a step performance by local students that

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participated in a detective game based on the history of slavery in Judiciary Square. In October, the Courts marked Hispanic Heritage Month with a series of events including a presentation on South American coffee; a demonstration exercise class, set to Latin music; and the CORO Awards. The Community Agency Award was presented to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) for promoting higher education and internships for Latino students; James Ferg-Cadima won the Legal Community Award for his work as the Regional Counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF); and the Allen Klein Distinguished Service Award went to Monica Palacio for her work as the director of the D.C. Office of Human Rights.



Employees enjoy Hispanic Heritage Month activity.

Strategic Human Resources.

The Courts continued the Strategic Human Resources initiative to transform the Human Resources Division from a transaction-based function to a strategic partner in establishing court goals, determining the future workforce, and assuring mission delivery by promoting efficiency through technology and employee engagement and emphasizing accountability. A five-year Human Resources Strategic Plan is comprised of five strategic themes: leading through strategic human resources management; employee engagement and workplace culture; talent acquisition and development; performance management and accountability; and human resources competence and compliance management. The Division also continued to prepare for a seamless transition to a new human resources information and payroll system, reviewing court policies to ensure integration with the new system, preparing for data migration, and configuring and customizing the Human Resources Information System (HRIS). The Division provided benefits information to employees through a health insurance fair, sessions on topics such as financial literacy and retirement, and a payroll newsletter.

Public Service Recognition Week. In May, the D.C. Courts celebrated Public Service Recognition Week, beginning with participation in a Public Service 5K Run/Walk on Sunday. Court executives greeted employees arriving for work Monday and thanked them for their service. Throughout the week, employees recognized colleagues for exemplifying court values with “shout-outs” on the intranet. At a Friday rally that drew over 200 attendees, veterans and military families were honored, Metropolitan Police Department Assistant Chief Patrick Burke gave a keynote address on public servants’ positive influence on community, and two videos were shown featuring comments from court personnel on why they are in public service and the Courts’ rendition of the song “Happy” (to be in public service). In their monthly update, the Executive Team thanked court staff for their public service.



Recognizing Excellence. At the 33rd Annual Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony, the D.C. Courts recognized employees for exceptional job performance. Employees were honored for expanding



The Management Training Program “team project” winners.

and managing mediation, designing a new brochure for the Mental Health Community Court, producing the videos that enriched the Public Service Week Rally, improving practices in Small Claims Court, and exceptional customer service in the courtroom.

GOAL 4: A SOUND INFRASTRUCTURE

The D.C. Courts must maintain functional and accessible physical facilities in order to operate efficiently. The Courts occupy several historic buildings in the Judiciary Square complex which must be preserved and protected for the public and future generations. A major effort to restore, renovate, and upgrade the Courts' physical facilities has been underway since 2002 to ensure that court facilities and services meet public needs and effectively support court operations. Additionally, the Courts are making a substantial investment in technology to enhance operations. Technology must meet the needs of court users and the Courts' workforce while protecting sensitive information. With one of the highest case filing rates in the nation and thousands of people visiting the courthouse each day, the Courts face a significant challenge in ensuring safety. At the same time, the Courts must remain accessible. The citizens of the District of Columbia must have confidence that the Courts can continue to function in the event of an emergency.



The D.C. Courts' physical and technological infrastructure is the foundation for the administration of justice and efforts to foster strong employee engagement. Court buildings not only must facilitate efficient operations and make it easier for the public to access the court but also must lend dignity to the important public business conducted within their walls. Court technology supports staff productivity and provides new avenues to share information among judges and with the public. Heightened concern for security at courthouses and public buildings nationally is magnified in the Nation's Capital. A secure environment is critical to the fair and unbiased administration of justice for the community. The public relies on the Courts to continue to provide judicial branch services in the event of an emergency; in turn, the Courts must be prepared.

COURTHOUSE RESTORATION

The D.C. Courts occupy and maintain 1.2 million square feet of space for the administration of justice in the District. Maintenance and modernization of these facilities to support public access, safety, sustainability, and efficient operations are guided by a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan as well as an urban design plan for Judiciary Square.

Moultrie Courthouse. Construction continued on an addition to the Moultrie Courthouse to provide courtroom, public, and office space, thereby addressing a space shortfall identified in the Courts' Master Plan for Facilities. The first phase of the project, laying the foundation, is scheduled to be complete in 2015.



Moultrie Courthouse addition foundation takes shape.



Foundation underway for the Moultrie Courthouse addition.

U.S. Marshals Upgrades. In 2014 the Courts completed a multi-year project to modernize the Moultrie Courthouse adult cellblock, defendant holding areas adjacent to courtrooms, the garage sally port where prisoners are transferred into the courthouse, and administrative space for U.S. Marshals Service personnel. This project was phased over several years to accommodate court operations, which could not be suspended for construction.

Facilities Management. In August, the Courts implemented a new Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) to improve efficiency in management of facilities and services by tracking work orders, work requests, and recurring preventive maintenance.

Safety Improvements. In June, the Courts completed upgrades of life safety features in the Moultrie Courthouse to meet current codes, protecting the public, judges, and court staff. Improvements in this multi-year project included reconfiguration of emergency exits, pressurizing emergency exit stairwells to improve fire safety, and upgrading the electrical system.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

Grant Management System. In May, the Courts launched a web-based tool to facilitate the tracking and monitoring of all grant-related activity. The Grant Management System (GMS) is composed of three major modules: a grant-seeking module that

initiates the grant process and lists funding opportunity announcements that are disseminated to court officials and judicial officers based on the Courts' strategic plan and operational program areas; a proposal development module that records application development activity and any pre-award requirements; and a grant award monitoring module that tracks the progression of grants through the post-award process, including compliance with grant requirements, modifications and special conditions. The system also generates routine status and performance reports based on courtwide grant related activities for overall compliance, annual budget submissions, and for court managers.

Panel Selection System. In May, the Courts implemented a system to facilitate judicial evaluation of attorney applicants for the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel. The new system, developed in-house, automates the process, which includes judges' recommendations on nearly 350 applicants' suitability to serve and determinations of appropriate case/panel assignments. The Courts plan to adapt this technology for other attorney panel evaluations.

VoIP Expansion. The Courts deployed Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone technology to the Historic Courthouse, Building A, Building B, and the sixth floor of the Moultrie Courthouse this year, building on its use in Building C. VoIP technology reduces capital and telecommunications costs and simplifies administration.

Marriage Bureau Technology. Two new technologies help the Marriage Bureau address increased demand. In October, a new computerized intake system was implemented to track walk-in customers and provide data on wait times, efficiency, and customer needs. Visitors sign in electronically with their names and the purpose of the visit and the information appears on the computer screens of the clerks, who serve the customers in turn. In addition, a new automated correspondence log helps the Marriage Bureau staff track thousands of written requests for copies of marriage records and ensure that they are fulfilled in a timely manner.

SECURITY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Court Security Month. In April, the Seventh Annual Court Security Month focused on the subject of violence in the workplace. Training on bomb threats was offered to all employees and security tips were posted on the intranet.

Court Security Officer Training. In April, Court Security Officers were trained on domestic violence. Topics included general information about domestic violence; how domestic violence parties interact in court, especially in courthouse hallways before cases are called; and ways to keep domestic violence victims safe while ensuring the fair and balanced administration of justice. Court Security Officers also received training on sexual abuse and mental health.

Emergency Preparedness. The Courts maintained “emergency preparedness kits” issued to all Court employees in the event a major disaster strikes while employees are at work. The kits are Occupational Safety and Health Administration approved and contain emergency food, water, shelter, sanitation, light, communication, and rescue supplies to sustain an employee for 72 hours or until first responders can arrive and the employee can safely return home.

Keeping Court Data Secure. The D.C. Courts have taken several steps this year to enhance cyber security.

- The enterprise storage system at the Courts’ Disaster Recovery (DR) site was upgraded. Effective in March, all data from the Courts’ main data center in Building C is replicated there and synchronized;
- The Courts revised the Information Security Directives in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidelines and applicable risk mitigation standards. The purpose of the Information Security Directive is to protect physical and IT assets, to provide guidance to employees on best practices in keeping computer systems safe, to provide IT professionals the authority to safeguard the Courts’ assets, and to increase awareness of security threats and vulnerabilities;
- The Courts’ IT Security Awareness Training Program this year consisted of an in-house developed webinar that includes a mandatory 15-question quiz. Security awareness is the knowledge and attitude members of an organization possess regarding the protection of the physical and information assets;
- The Courts implemented Duo Security software to enhance security of remote connections to the Courts’ network. The new software requires two-factor authentication for virtual private network (VPN) connectivity; remote workers must use both network login credentials and a security pin generated on their mobile devices. Additionally, a posture assessment scan that checks for the latest operating system and anti-virus software updates is conducted before any remote PC is permitted to connect to the Courts' network.



Webinar on security awareness

GOAL 5: PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

The people of the District of Columbia must have confidence that the D.C. Courts are accessible, fair, impartial, and independent in dispensing justice and resolving disputes. We continually strive to earn the trust and confidence of our community by understanding the diverse and changing needs of its residents and by being responsive and accountable. Cultivating and earning public trust and confidence is essential to fulfilling the Courts' mission in serving the public.

As institutions, courts hear cases brought to them by the public and other branches of government. Without confidence that their courts will resolve their disputes fairly and independently, the community would not avail itself of judicial branch services, jeopardizing the rule of law and civil society. The D.C. Courts strive to cultivate and earn the trust of the public in the District of Columbia through community information and public accountability.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Supporting Rule of Law around the World. The D.C. Courts support efforts to strengthen the rule of law and the development of justice systems around the world by hosting international judicial delegations sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for

International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and international cultural exchange organizations. This year, the Courts hosted 1,280 visitors representing 22 countries: China, Columbia, Norway, Kenya, Chile, Iraq, Bosnia, Macedonia, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, Uganda, Republic of Georgia, Canada, Argentina, Bangladesh, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Russia, and Panama. The Courts tailor the educational program to the needs and interests of each delegation (e.g. observing courtrooms or mediations, briefings with judges or court administrators, discussions about domestic violence programs).



Pakistani delegation visits the Domestic Violence Unit.

Education Outreach Initiative. The Court of Appeals held oral arguments in the community at two law schools this year, in April at American University's Washington College of Law and in November at the George Washington University Law School, giving District law students a first-hand look at appellate cases. Following the proceedings judges responded to non-case-related questions from the students.

Mediation in the Community. After increasing the hours in July 2013 at the Multi-Door satellite office at Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), the court saw a 56% increase in cases over the same period last year. The satellite office offers bilingual dispute resolution services on-site twice a month to individuals with employment, consumer, tenant, and other issues. The CARECEN staff pre-screens clients and schedules interviews with the Bilingual Dispute Resolution Specialist.

Community Court Outreach. The criminal Community Court continued meeting with the public to stay abreast of local issues and concerns. In April, judges spoke at two Metropolitan Police Department Citizens Advisory Council meetings, in the Sixth and Third Police Districts.

Outreach to Youth. In March, the D.C. Courts hosted the 15th Youth Law Fair, which focused on abuse of alcohol and drugs, particularly K2, a synthetic marijuana. With the assistance of Superior Court judges and members of the Bar, youth played all the roles in a mock trial. The fair also included courthouse tours, discussions, a poetry slam, and a “Speak Out” session. In July, the Courts hosted six high school students in a six-week program to develop workplace skills (e.g. teamwork, public service, professional conduct in interacting with members of the public and judicial officers) and earn community service hours required for graduation.

Outreach at Community Events. Participation in events and festivals in the community provides additional avenues for the public to learn about the D.C. Courts. For example, the Courts had a booth at the Adams Morgan Day Festival, where employees distributed information on a range of court services and responded to questions from the public. The Courts also participated in the H Street Festival, the Delta Sigma Theta’s Community Day at the ARC, a family and community health expo, an Ethiopian expo, and a federal Pro Bono Fair at the Department of Homeland Security, reaching over 650 people.

Clothing Drive. The Domestic Violence Unit and the Crime Victims Compensation Program held a clothing drive the last week of October (Domestic Violence Awareness month) for children in domestic violence shelters. The clothing drive was a success, collecting about 200 cubic feet of clothing, coats, and shoes for the children.



Students from Options Public Charter School visit the court.



A new family on Adoption Day.

Adoption Day. In November, the Superior Court co-hosted the 28th Annual Adoption Day with the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency, celebrating adoptions in the District and educating the community about the need for adoptive parents. Thirty-eight children were adopted during the ceremony. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and Mayor Vincent Gray spoke on adoption, and local newswoman Barbara Harrison served as mistress of ceremonies.

PUBLIC TRUST

Tracking Court Performance. The Superior Court continued to implement and refine the courtwide performance measures approved by the Joint Committee. This year, the Court again focused on the efficient use of jurors who report for service. Enhanced juror utilization can benefit the public by reducing the frequency of summonses for jury service. In 2014, attention was also directed to timely disposition of motions, case disposition time, and

trial date certainty. In November, timelines were established to facilitate the prompt decisions on motions in neglect, adoption, and termination of parental rights cases. In addition, the Court worked to develop case management plans for each operating division to detail court actions, to monitor and control the progress of a case, to promote efficient and effective case processing, to ensure procedural due process, and to provide the public with information about the procedures. In August, the Probate Division published its case management plan, which outlines when and how to open a case, available forms, and performance standards and includes case flow charts for various case types. In December, the court published a domestic relations case management plan, which similarly includes procedures, performance standards, and flow charts to help streamline cases.



Judge Gregory Jackson congratulates Drug Court graduate.

Independent Program Evaluation. In addition to performance measures for each division, formal program evaluations are conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure effective services for the public and inform evidence-based decision-making. This year, the Community Court Expansion Project Study examined the implementation of the community court model in all Superior Court U.S. Misdemeanor cases compared to the East of the River Community Court model. The Adult Drug Court study is examining whether defendants who participate in the program have lower recidivism rates than those who do not. The evaluation will determine if recent program modifications have

been implemented as designed, including how participants perceive their treatment by the judicial officer and program staff, as well as whether the program services are delivered as planned, and any re-arrest activity of participants. The D.C. Courts remain committed to using information and data gathered in these independent evaluations and in less formal assessments to guide management decisions and responsiveness to the community.

Performance Reporting. The Courts continued phased implementation of a multi-year Business Intelligence (BI) initiative designed to analyze and integrate court data from various systems (e.g., case management, human resources, budget and finance) to enhance performance analysis, reporting, and public accountability. This software will capture data and create public scorecard reports on how the Courts are performing, as well as internal reports to guide management decisions. Benefits of the new system include faster and easier analysis of information and trends through reports that can be generated by senior court officials, faster and more frequent data updates, and customized dashboards that display near real-time information. This year judicial officers began using Motions Tracking Reports to capture the status of motions so that they can take action. Performance measure reports were enhanced for domestic violence, family, and tax cases. Multi-Door began using the BI reporting system, and the Civil Division converted its caseload inventory reports to the BI system.

Strategic Management. In April, to continue strengthening the Courts' strategic management and performance focus, a separate Strategic Management Division was formed, consolidating strategic management and research functions. The new division focuses on courtwide strategic goal planning and execution, performance measurement and reporting, and research and evaluation to develop and test new approaches to delivering services to the public. The Division enhances informed decision-making, and helps the Courts manage performance as the District's judicial branch, accountable to the public.

As the Courts continue to implement the current strategic plan, *Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All, Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2013-2017*, the Strategic Planning Leadership Council worked on initiatives to develop a Courthouse Code of Conduct to enhance public trust and confidence and a volunteerism initiative both to enhance public trust and confidence and to support and encourage an engaged workforce. To keep strategic management integrated in core business processes, new employees participate in very well received orientation classes that give the big picture view of how their jobs enhance the administration of justice. Division Management Action Plans provide a roadmap for each division's implementation of the Strategic Plan, and elements of the Plan are incorporated in individual employees' performance plans.

Services for Juveniles. To ensure public safety and address the needs of District young people under probation supervision, the Superior Court's Social Services Division augmented existing services with innovations. This year, the court began large-scale screening of youth for human trafficking and exploitation. In April, during the D.C. Public Schools spring break, to help youths stay out of trouble while they were out of school, the court collaborated with other juvenile justice agencies on a variety of strength-based, pro-social activities, including community service projects, a trip to New York City, and supervision at African-American Family Day at the Zoo. The Court participated in supervision of youth at several high schools during dismissal from school, which helped reduce crime on school campuses. During the summer, the court joined other agencies in additional curfew checks and monitoring of youth. The Child Guidance Clinic this year hosted three pre-doctoral interns, conducted approximately 700 psychological evaluations, and published numerous articles.

Strong Acquisition Practices. The Courts took several steps this year to strengthen acquisition practices and ensure that skilled staff carry out court procurement activities. The Courts worked to enhance competition and increase public accountability in procurements by early and open engagement with the industry. Surveillance of employee credit card transactions was increased by employing data-mining technology and implementing best practices to detect fraud, waste, and abuse. The Courts reduced administrative costs associated with micro-purchases and purchase orders by increasing the use of purchase cards.

Fiscal Responsibility. The D.C. Courts are committed to responsible stewardship of public resources for the administration of justice in the District of Columbia. Fifteen consecutive years of unqualified audits (FY 2000 – 2014) reflect the Courts' sound fiscal management. In addition, the Courts engaged the services of an independent audit firm to strengthen the Courts' financial-related internal controls pursuant to OMB Circular A-123.

The Courts receive federal funding to carry out our mission of protecting rights and liberties, upholding and interpreting the law, and resolving disputes in accordance with our strategic goals. Following a year of reduced budgets due to a sequester and a lapse in appropriations forcing the Courts, like the Federal Government, to shut down in 2013, the Courts' FY 2014 appropriation, enacted in mid-January, included \$197 million for operations, \$35 million for capital, and \$50 million for Defender Services.

The Courts' appropriation is supplemented by over \$3.5 million in grants that finance a variety of court functions, including compensation for victims of crime, a satellite intake center for victims of domestic violence, a supervised visitation center for family and domestic violence cases, continuing improvements to the processing of abuse and neglect cases to secure permanency for abused and neglected children, and specialized training to judicial officers, court staff and stakeholders to enhance the delivery of services to the elderly.

Regulation of the Bar. Among the responsibilities of the D.C. Court of Appeals is regulation of the attorneys licensed to practice law in the District and represent members of the public in court and in other legal matters. The Court of Appeals is assisted in this function by committees of attorneys and the public who generously volunteer their time. The Clients' Security Trust Fund reimburses clients for losses caused by dishonest conduct of their lawyers. In 2014, the Committee on Admissions reviewed over 3,000 applications for admission to the D.C. Bar to ensure that licensed attorneys are qualified to serve the community. The Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law investigated 29 complaints against unauthorized persons allegedly practicing law in the District, provided guidance to attorneys, and processed 356 requests from attorneys seeking *pro hac vice* appearances before the D.C. Courts. The Board on Professional Responsibility administers the attorney discipline system to protect the public and the judicial system from attorney misconduct and to preserve the integrity of the legal profession. In 2014, the Board disposed of 31 cases. The Office of Bar Counsel received 993 complaints of attorney misconduct, of which 423 were docketed for formal investigation.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

On the Bench

The distinguished judicial officers of the D.C. Court of Appeals and Superior Court strive to live up to the highest ideals of justice. They work publicly in the courtroom and behind the scenes, providing leadership to the Courts and the legal community.

Farewell. We would like to express our gratitude for their many years of service to the people of the District of Columbia to judicial officers who resigned, retired, or took senior status in 2014:

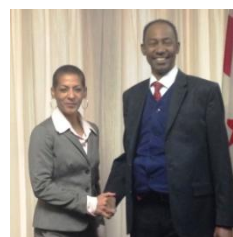
Superior Court

- Judge Natalia M. Combs Greene
- Judge Robert I. Richter
- Magistrate Judge Andrea Harnett

Welcome. New judicial officers installed in 2014 will be called upon to continue the tradition of excellence in the administration of justice. We welcome to the District of Columbia Courts:

Superior Court

- Magistrate Judge Adrienne J. Noti
- Magistrate Judge Sean C. Staples
- Magistrate Judge Renee P. Raymond



New Magistrate Judges Staples, Noti and Raymond.

Administrative Leaders

The Courts' executives strive to lead court staff in administering justice and meeting the legal needs of the community through effective and innovative policies and practices. Court Executive Service members and the deputy director in each division provide the leadership and vision to guide the Courts' staff in serving the community and carrying out our mission.

Farewell. We appreciate the decades of service dedicated to the public in the District of Columbia of two court executives who retired:

- Val Cawood, General Counsel
- Duane Delaney, Clerk of the Superior Court

Welcome. A new director and two new deputy directors, all promoted from within the Courts, will be called to lead court staff with vision and strong values. We welcome to their new leadership positions:

- Zabrina Dempson, Director, Civil Division
- Toni Gore, Deputy Director, Family Court Operations Division
- Victor Quiros, Deputy Director, Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division

In Memoriam

In 2014, the D.C. Courts lost Court of Appeals Senior Judge Frank Schwelb, who passed away on August 13. Judge Schwelb joined the Superior Court in 1979 before being elevated to the appellate court in 1988. Judge Schwelb became a senior judge in 2006.

CONCLUSION

The D.C. Courts are justifiably proud of the actions undertaken in 2014 to further the administration of justice for our community. Continuous self-assessment and measurement of progress, input from the community, and study of best practices in other courts led us to the innovations, reforms, and ongoing practices described in these pages. The Courts are committed to public service and to ensuring that we meet the legal needs of each person who comes to the Courts, whether in person, on the phone, or electronically. We encourage you to visit our website, www.dccourts.gov, for detailed information on court operations, forms, statistics, and procedural guides. The D.C. Courts look forward to continued efforts to fulfill our mission, guided by our strategic goals, and to live up to our values as we realize our vision: “Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All.”



Historic Courthouse

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GOVERNANCE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The Joint Committee on Judicial Administration governs the District of Columbia Courts, as designated in the District of Columbia Court Reform and Criminal Procedure Act of 1970. The Joint Committee sets policy for the Courts and is responsible for administrative and financial activities, including capital projects to maintain safe and functional courthouse facilities; budget submissions; acquisition, spending and auditing; grant administration; general personnel policies; information management; statistical reporting; and performance monitoring. Five judges serve on the Joint Committee: the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, as Chair; the Chief Judge of the Superior Court; and three other judicial members, one elected by judges of the Court of Appeals and two elected by judges of the Superior Court. The Executive Officer, who is responsible for the administrative management of the District of Columbia Courts, serves as Secretary to the Joint Committee.



Building "C"

Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The District of Columbia Courts comprise the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. The Court of Appeals, the appellate court of last resort; the Superior Court, the trial court; and the Court System, the administrative offices, make up the D.C. Courts. Uniquely for a state-level court, the District of Columbia Courts' Judges are nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the United States Senate. They serve 15-year terms and are eligible to be re-appointed. The D.C. Courts are a unified court system, which means that there is one level of trial court in which all cases are filed. Magistrate Judges are appointed by the Chief Judge of the Superior Court with the approval of the Board of Judges. The D.C. Courts are financed by the Federal Government. The Courts' budget is submitted to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget for the President's recommendation and then forwarded to the United States Congress for final consideration.

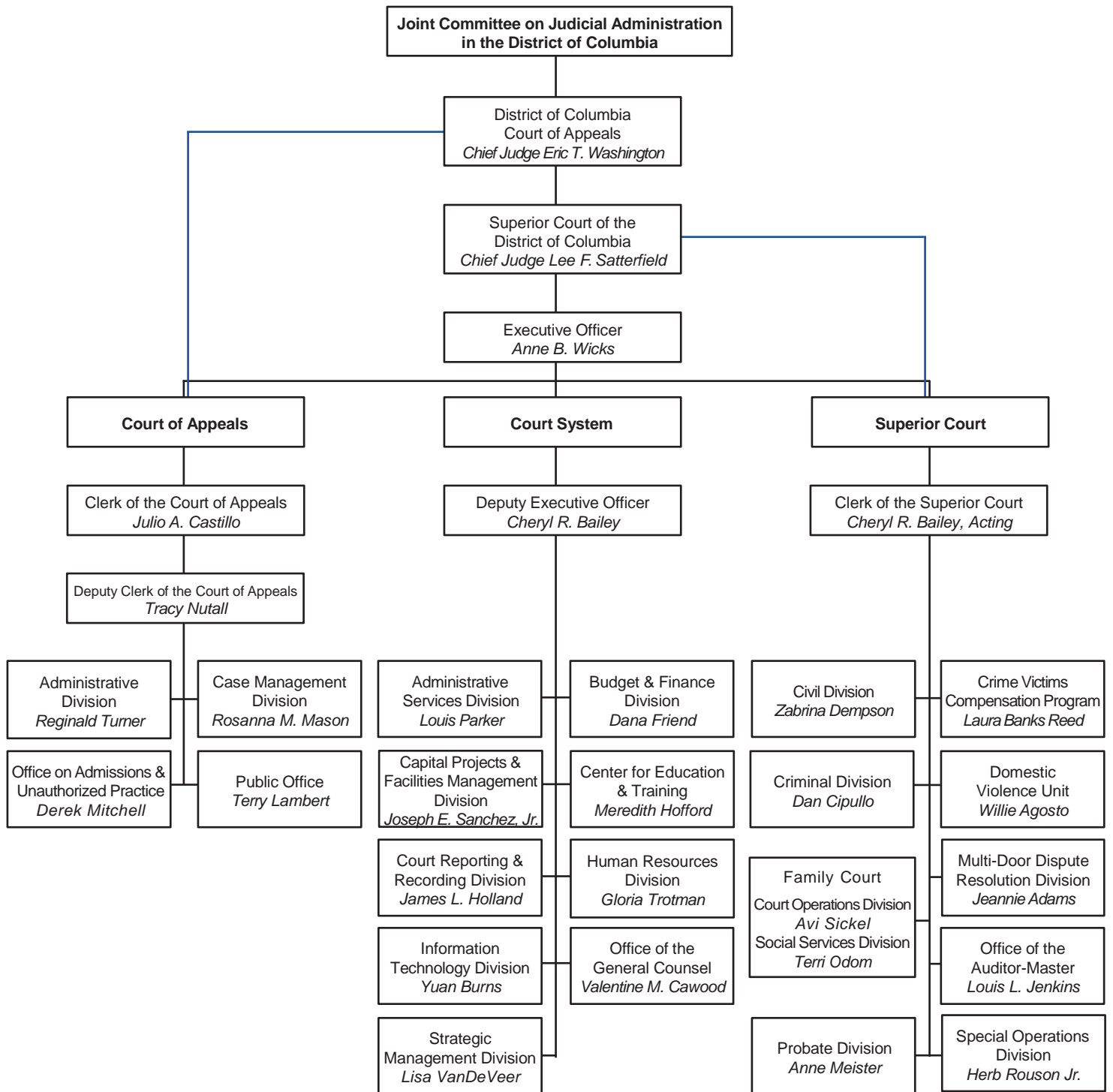
The **Court of Appeals** is the District of Columbia's highest court. There is no intermediate appellate court in the District, as in many states, so the Court of Appeals hears appeals directly from the Superior Court. The Court of Appeals also reviews decisions and orders of D.C. government administrative agencies. Final judgments of the Court of Appeals are reviewable by the United States Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals also manages the admission of attorneys to the District of Columbia Bar which, at approximately 100,000 members, is the second largest unified bar in the United States. The Court of Appeals also handles attorney disciplinary matters through the Board on Professional Responsibility.

In addition to the Chief Judge, eight Associate Judges serve on the Court of Appeals. Senior Judges, who are retired, also serve the Court on a part-time basis. Most cases are heard in three-judge panels, and on rare occasions the entire court sits to hear a case (called an *en banc* hearing).

The **Superior Court** is the trial court of general jurisdiction, which means that the Superior Court hears virtually all local legal matters, other than administrative adjudications. The Superior Court is comprised of divisions and offices that handle civil, criminal, domestic violence, family, probate, and tax cases; juvenile pretrial and probation supervision; alternative dispute resolution services; and crime victim's compensation. In addition to the Chief Judge, 61 Associate Judges serve on the Superior Court. Senior Judges serve on a part time basis. Twenty-five Magistrate Judges also serve in Superior Court, hearing criminal arraignments and presentments; child welfare, child support, and new juvenile cases; D.C. misdemeanor and traffic cases; small claims; temporary protection order; and other cases. The Associate Judges of the Superior Court rotate assignments in all divisions based on assignments by the Chief Judge.

The **Court System** provides services to both the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court under the direction of the Executive Officer. The Court System consists of a variety of administrative divisions that provide technical and support services, including contracting and procurement, legal counsel, capital projects, facilities management, budget and finance, human resources, training, strategic management, information technology, and court reporting.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS



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Notes





LINCOLN

H. CA COURTHOUSE OF

MISSION STATEMENT

**To protect the rights and liberties, uphold and interpret
the law, and resolve disputes peacefully, fairly
and effectively in the District of Columbia.**



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