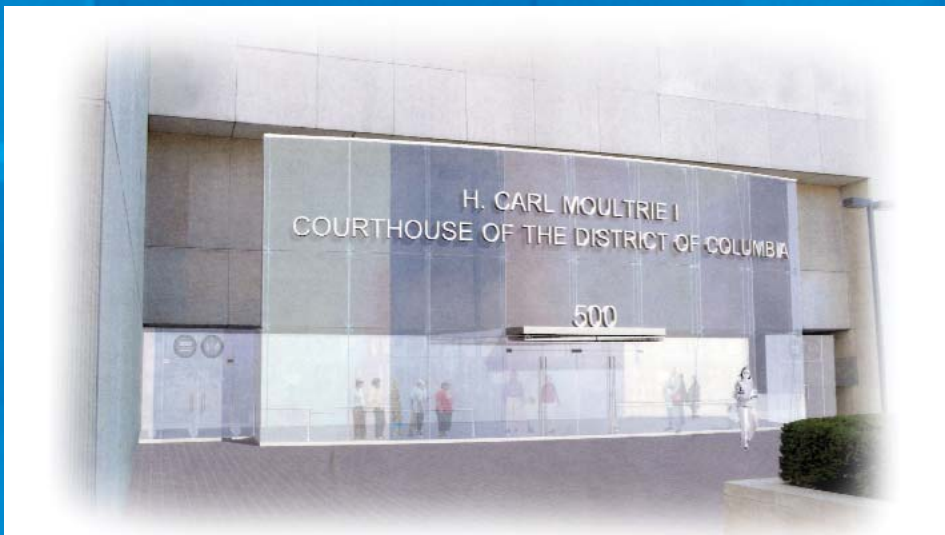


# District of Columbia Courts

State of the Judiciary



2008

Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All

# District of Columbia Courts

State of the Judiciary



2008

Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All





# CONTENTS

From the Executive Officer of the District of Columbia Courts	1
Message from the Chief Judges	2
State of the Judiciary of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008	3
Governance of the District of Columbia Courts	26
Judges of the Court of Appeals	27
Judges of the Superior Court	28
Organization of the District of Columbia Courts	31
Organizational Chart	32



H. Carl Moultrie Courthouse

District of Columbia Courts  
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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 provide this report of the Courts' accomplishments and activities in 2008. The State of the Judiciary 2008 highlights innovative programs and practices undertaken during the year to provide high quality justice for the citizens of the District of Columbia and to ensure that the Courts operate as effective stewards of the public trust.

This was an exciting year for the District of Columbia Courts. We launched our second five-year strategic plan, entitled *Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008-2012*. Already, in just one year of implementation, we have made substantial progress in meeting the goals and priorities of the strategic plan, as described in this report. The Courts' strategic plan, as well as detailed statistical information on court caseload activity, are posted on our website at [www.dccourts.gov](http://www.dccourts.gov).

We also welcomed a new Chief Judge in the Superior Court. The Honorable Lee F. Satterfield was appointed Chief Judge of the trial court in September. Formerly the Presiding Judge of the Family Court, Chief Judge Satterfield played a key role in restructuring the Family Court, following passage of the District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001. Chief Judge Satterfield takes over the leadership of Superior Court from the Honorable Rufus G. King, III, who retired after eight years as Chief Judge and 24 years on the bench. During Chief Judge King's tenure, in addition to the Family Court restructuring, the Superior Court installed a state-of-the-art integrated justice information system, and established special criminal courts to better serve residents who live in Wards 7 and 8 east of the Potomac River. While Chief Judge King's accomplishments are too numerous to mention here, on behalf of the entire D.C. Courts' family, we applaud his many contributions to the Courts and the citizens of the District of Columbia.

The District of Columbia Courts look forward to continuing our journey to fulfill our vision: "Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne B. Wicks". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anne B. Wicks  
Executive Officer  
District of Columbia Courts

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUDGES



Greetings to the People of the District of Columbia,

We at the District of Columbia Courts have been working hard to serve you, and we are delighted to provide you with this report of our accomplishments in 2008. This year was challenging for the Courts, as we again began the year with a significant staffing shortage. Fortunately, with the support of the President and the Congress, our funding improved substantially with our fiscal year 2008 appropriation, which increased our operating budget by 18%. By the end of the year, we were able to reduce our personnel vacancy rate by one-third, relieving some of the pressure on our court staff and enabling the Courts to address some pressing priorities.

We launched our second five-year strategic plan in 2008. Entitled *Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008-2012*, the plan identifies strategic goals in six areas: providing fair and timely case resolution; promoting equal access to justice; maintaining a strong judiciary and workforce; preserving and modernizing court facilities and leveraging technology to operate efficiently; ensuring the safety of court participants and the Courts' readiness to operate during an emergency; and ensuring public trust and confidence in the Courts.

The State of the Judiciary 2008 provides an overview of initiatives and programs undertaken this year to process cases more timely, to enhance access and fairness for all litigants, to streamline court procedures for the convenience of those we serve, and to promote public safety. The Courts partnered with other agencies and organizations to provide mental health services to defendants, training workshops for family law attorneys in child welfare law, assistance to litigants without lawyers, and other services. We installed a new jury management system that is expected to increase the accuracy and efficiency of the juror summoning process. We continued to implement courtwide performance measures that will enhance our operations and public accountability.

We wish to thank our colleagues in the judiciary and court staff who worked tirelessly to administer justice and assist the thousands of District residents who sought court services this year. It is indeed a privilege to work side by side with such dedicated public servants.

In closing, we note that the District of Columbia Courts will continue to work hard on your behalf. The people of the District of Columbia deserve a court system that is, as our vision says, "Open to All, Trusted by All, with Justice for All."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric T. Washington".

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee F. Satterfield".

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

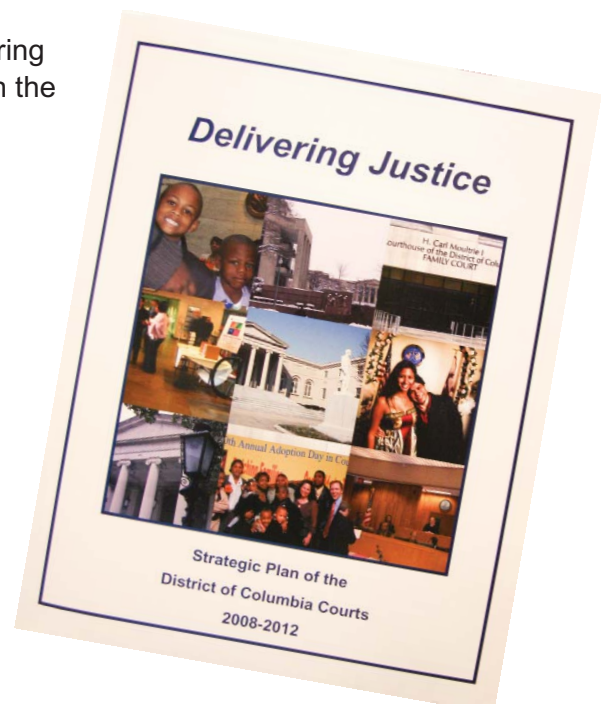
## STATE OF THE JUDICIARY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS, 2008

2008 marked an important milestone for the D.C. Courts, as we launched our second five-year strategic plan, *Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008-2012*. The new Plan builds upon the Courts' achievements and goals set forth in our first courtwide plan published in 2002. *Delivering Justice* reaffirms the Courts' commitment to manage our resources strategically to accomplish our mission.

The D.C. Courts are implementing a comprehensive strategic agenda to ensure fair and timely case resolution and full access to the Courts for all persons. The Courts strive to maintain a strong judiciary and skilled workforce that is always prepared to meet the changing demands of the community we serve and the environment in which we work. It is also essential to maintain a sound infrastructure, and the Courts continue to make substantial investments to upgrade court facilities and use technology to enhance operations. Since September 11, 2001, the Courts are especially attuned to the increasing security risks courts and all public institutions face, particularly here in the nation's capital. A special focus of our current strategic plan is security and disaster preparedness. Finally, as a public institution, the Courts are committed to openness and accountability to the community we serve. We are constantly seeking to better understand the changing needs of our diverse citizenry, and to serve our community through innovative programs and practices. We also have an obligation to inform the public about our unique role and responsibilities as the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government, and to communicate our progress in achieving the Courts' mission to deliver justice.

This report highlights the Courts' achievements during 2008 and previews future initiatives planned to accomplish the Courts' strategic goals in these areas:

- **Fair and Timely Case Resolution**
- **Access to Justice**
- **A Strong Judiciary and Workforce**
- **A Sound Infrastructure**
- **Security and Disaster Preparedness**
- **Public Trust and Confidence**





## 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 promote public safety and confidence in the Courts.*

### CASELOAD ACTIVITY

The D.C. Courts consistently have among the highest case-loads in the country. The most recent statistics compiled by the National Center for State Courts<sup>1</sup> show that the D.C. Court of Appeals has the highest population-adjusted appellate caseload of any jurisdiction without an intermediate appel-

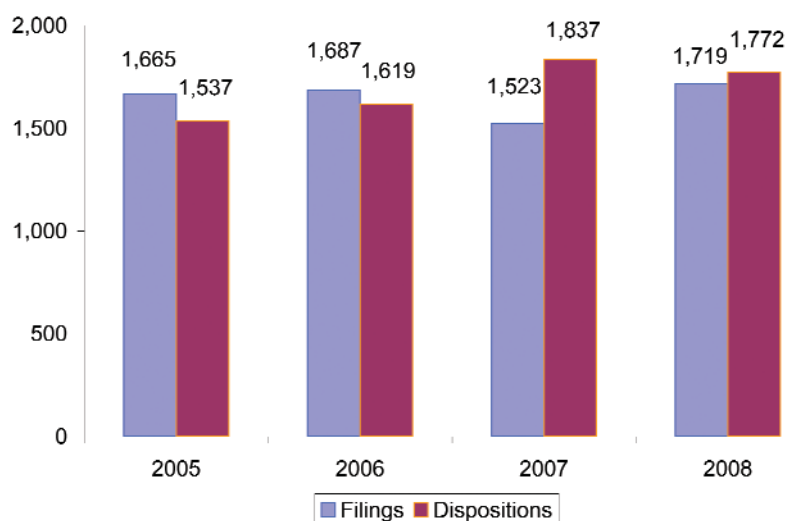
late court. At the trial court level, the Superior Court ranks 6th among all jurisdictions with unified courts in the number of population-adjusted cases filed.

*D.C. Court of Appeals* Case filings in the Court of Appeals increased 13% in 2008, to 1,719 appeals. Criminal, civil and agency appeals comprised 80% of the incoming cases. The Court disposed over 1,770 cases. Since case dispositions outpaced case filings, the Court had a greater than 100% “clearance rate” which is a measure of case processing efficiency. Disposing of summary disposition motions significantly contributed to the very efficient clearance rate.

“The Courts are committed to ensuring that our time standards and other operating procedures are consistent with best practices throughout the country.”

Chief Judge Eric T. Washington

Court of Appeals Case Activity, 2005-2008



<sup>1</sup> Schauffler, Richard. "Examining the Work of State Courts, 2007". National Center for State Courts. February 5, 2009  
<[http://www.ncsconline.org/D\\_Research/csp/2007\\_files/Examining%20Final%20-%202007%20-%20201%20-%20Whole%20Doc.pdf](http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Research/csp/2007_files/Examining%20Final%20-%202007%20-%20201%20-%20Whole%20Doc.pdf)>.

*D.C. Superior Court* Over 115,000 new cases were filed in Superior Court in 2008. Half (55%) of these cases were civil matters, one-quarter (24%) were criminal cases, 12% were family cases including child support, divorce and juvenile matters, 6% were domestic violence cases, 2% were Probate cases, and 1% were tax cases. Superior Court disposed nearly as many cases as were filed or reopened during the year. Nonetheless, 55,417 cases were pending at the end of the year.

Superior Court Caseload Activity, 2008				
Division	New Cases Filed		Cases Disposed	Cases Pending December 31, 2008
	No.	%		
Civil	63,374	54.9%	66,197	20,484
Criminal	28,227	24.4%	26,720	11,154
Domestic Violence	7,323	6.3%	8,232	875
Family Court Operations	13,606	11.8%	13,094	15,504
Probate	2,652	2.3%	3,571	6,927
Tax	310	0.3%	154	473
<b>Total</b>	<b>115,492</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>117,968</b>	<b>55,417</b>

## IMPROVING TIMELINESS TO RESOLVE CASES

A major focus of the Courts in the next few years is to improve timeliness in resolving cases. In 2008, the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court made steady progress towards this goal.

*Case processing timeliness.* The Court of Appeals has made significant gains in enhancing the timely resolution of cases by achieving the lowest overall time on appeal in five years. The average time on appeal decreased by 16%, from 645 days in 2007 to 544 days in 2008. This progress is largely due to increased efficiencies in court processes, and the court's renewed commitment to resolving appeals in a more timely fashion.

*Time standards.* The Superior Court established time standards to resolve cases in all divisions. The standards balance the seriousness and complexity of the cases with guarantees of due process and fairness for all parties. The Court will monitor its progress in achieving the time standards and make adjustments as needed.

*Speedy trials for detained juveniles.* The Family Court successfully addressed the mandates of the District's Juvenile Speedy Trial Equity Amendment Act of 2007, which set forth time requirements for deciding the cases of juveniles detained prior to trial. To meet the timelines, Family Court increased the number of judges assigned to hear juvenile cases and monitored hearing dates, continuance practices and other factors. A study conducted six months after employing these measures showed significant improvements over the previous year. In 2008, over three-quarters of cases involving securely detained youth and those charged with serious offenses met the 45-day adjudication time frame compared to slightly over half in 2007. Over 80% of cases involving youth in shelter care were adjudicated within the 45 day period, compared to approximately half in 2007.

*Mediation services for domestic relations litigants.* Mediation is an alternative to expensive and time-consuming lawsuits, which often yields an outcome that is more satisfactory to the parties than a decision by a judge. In mediation the parties in a dispute meet with a neutral third party, called a mediator, to discuss their differences and negotiate a “settlement” that is satisfactory to all parties. The settlement is then presented in court, and the judge may



Mediators explaining the process to new clients.

approve the settlement in an official court order. The Superior Court operates an internationally-recognized alternative dispute resolution program which offers mediation in civil, family, probate and tax cases. In 2008, the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division began to offer mediation services to litigants in divorce, custody and visitation (domestic relations) cases. In this pilot program, dispute resolution specialists provide mediation services to families in rooms immediately outside each domestic relations courtroom. This on-site service offers litigants convenience and saves time, sometimes days, in scheduling screening interviews and subsequent mediation sessions.

*Mediation of medical malpractice cases.* To facilitate the resolution of complex medical malpractice cases, the Superior Court established a special mediation calendar to which judges refer cases when there are issues that may be amenable to resolution or clarification through mediation, thereby fostering a quicker resolution of the cases either in mediation or at trial.

*Mediation of appellate cases.* In addition to the above-mentioned mediation programs, the Court of Appeals operates an appellate mediation program in which certain civil appeals, identified as having issues amenable to resolution, are referred to Senior Judges for mediation.

## ENHANCING FAIRNESS AND QUALITY OF JUSTICE

The D.C. Courts strive to ensure fairness and preserve and protect the rights of everyone who comes before the court. We recognize that many factors affect the quality of justice and especially people’s perceptions of court decisions. Crime victims, for example, may be satisfied that a defendant is found guilty at trial, but may still feel victimized due to medical expenses incurred, lost wages to attend trial, or other crime-related expenses. While the court may be able to process a minor misdemeanor case quickly, a defendant with mental illness who does not receive needed treatment services may re-appear in court again and again. Neither the defendant nor his or her family members, nor the community at large, is likely to feel that the justice system had a positive impact in this case.

As a result, the Courts continually look for ways to help address the broad range of needs presented by individuals and families appearing in court, while remaining mindful of our primary role to render court decisions efficiently and effectively. A few of the Courts’ initiatives in 2008 to enhance fairness and the quality of justice are highlighted below.



*Helping victims of violent crime.* With the support of funds from the Federal Government's Office for Victims of Crime and payments ordered by judges of criminal defendants, the Superior Court operates a Crime Victims Compensation Program to assist victims of violent crime in the District of Columbia. In 2008, the Program processed nearly 3,000 requests for assistance and awarded nearly \$9.5 million to crime victims. These monies assist crime victims and surviving spouses and children of homicide victims with crime-related expenses such as medical, counseling and funeral bills, lost wages and support, and emergency housing.

*Assisting defendants with mental health needs.* A large number of criminal offenders in the District of Columbia have mental health needs that are unaddressed. These individuals, who are often homeless or substance abusers, appear in court repeatedly for minor, "quality of life" offenses such as public drinking, panhandling, prostitution and some drug offenses. In an effort to stop the "revolving door" pattern of court appearances, the Superior Court established a pilot Mental Health Diversion Court which completed its first year of operation in 2008. Over 150 individuals charged with misdemeanor offenses who suffer from severe and chronic mental illness received assistance in obtaining mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and other support services.



Chief Judge Satterfield, Judge Keary, Councilmember Catania, Department of Mental Health Director Steve Baron, Mayor Fenty and Ken Courage, CEO of the Psychiatric Institute of Washington.

**"T**he Urgent Care Clinic should help connect defendants who come before the court suffering from major mental illnesses with necessary mental health services, and reduce the chances of re-offending. In both ways our community will be better off." Judge Ann O'Regan Keary, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court's Criminal Division

The Superior Court also collaborated with the District's Department of Mental Health to open a Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic at the courthouse in 2008. The clinic provides immediate, on-site access to mental health evaluations, services, and medication for individuals who appear in court exhibiting signs of mental illness and/or substance abuse and are referred to the clinic by a judge, defense attorney, or other criminal justice agency staff. The Psychiatric Institute of Washington provides direct mental health services to defendants who need them, and assists the Court in connecting defendants to community mental health treatment.

*Increasing the number of qualified child welfare lawyers.* The Superior Court partnered with the University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law to develop a child welfare legal clinic in the Family Court. The goal of the clinic is to introduce students to the practice of child welfare law by providing them with both an academic and practical experience under the instruction of senior faculty attorneys, with the hope that young lawyers will become interested in pursuing this area of practice.



*Resolving conflicts in contested custody disputes.* Custody disputes are among the most volatile cases which come before the court. Parents may be angry, highly emotional, and unable to focus on the best outcomes for their children. These disputes have the potential to cause long-term damage to the children involved, to divide siblings, and to generate conflict for years. Research shows that the level of conflict between caregivers may be the single most important factor in predicting a child's adjustment and psychological well-being later in life. In 2008 the Family Court collaborated with the American Psychological Association to pilot a program that assists adult caregivers of limited financial means who are involved in long-standing and/or contentious custody disputes regarding parenting or visitation. The Office of the Parenting Coordinator helps families resolve custody and visitation issues and advises judicial officers on how best to monitor and meet the "best interests of the child" standard in these cases.

*Supporting recently incarcerated fathers in re-entering their communities.* Increasingly, society recognizes the important role of fathers in promoting children's well-being and the stability of families. Since late 2007, the Family Court has partnered with District and Federal Government agencies, and the inter-agency Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, to provide support to fathers who are leaving jail. These men face many challenges in finding employment and becoming financially and emotionally responsible for their children. In 2008, the Fathering Court served 29 men, providing employment counseling, parenting classes, and individual case management services. Successful participants made great strides in making timely child support payments, obtaining employment and reintegrating into the lives of their children and community. The program will graduate its first class in early 2009.

*Involving families in treatment of youth under court supervision.* Research shows that involving family members in providing treatment and support for troubled youth makes a critical difference in their successful rehabilitation. Children who feel connected to their caregivers and families are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior and more likely to stay in school and refrain from drug and alcohol use. In 2008, probation officers in the Family Court's Social Services Division completed a comprehensive training and certification program to employ a new method of case management for youth under court supervision. This new approach, called family group conferencing, is an internationally recognized model of case management that enables youth entering the juvenile justice system to develop their own treatment plans with the participation of their families and other support professionals.

**"T**his program will reverse that cycle, helping previously incarcerated fathers have a meaningful role in their children's lives. We know that children benefit from having both parents involved in their lives. Moreover, offenders are less likely to re-offend when they are appropriately connected to their families. In the end the community benefits when those returning from a period of incarceration have a meaningful opportunity to be productive parents."

Magistrate Judge Milton Lee,

Presiding Judge, Fathering Court Program

*Protecting incapacitated persons who are wards of the Court.* To enhance the Court's ability to ensure that incapacitated adults under court guardianship receive high quality care, the Probate Division created a new guardianship assistance program in 2008. Under the program, the Court appoints social work students from local universities as court visitors who meet with and review the health care needs of incapacitated persons who are wards of the Court. During the program's first four months of operation (September - December 2008) over 500 hours of service were provided to 43 individuals. The program is enhancing the level of care provided to these vulnerable individuals.

*Courthouse release program.* The Superior Court worked closely with the D.C. Department of Corrections and the United States Marshals Service to implement a pilot program that will enable criminal defendants coming to court from the D.C. Jail to be released directly from the courthouse rather than transporting them back to the Jail prior to release. The new program enables prisoners who are released by a judge to gain freedom earlier and saves government resources.



## 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, the Middle East and Asia, have very different expectations of the 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 be less able than higher-income residents to leave their jobs to attend a court hearing or serve as a juror. Educational differences also affect people's ability to access court services. For instance, people with less education may have less experience using computers and therefore may be less able to take advantage of electronic services offered by the Courts. 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 properly. 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.*

*Civil legal services for low and moderate income residents.* While the law requires the appointment of an attorney to represent low-income individuals in criminal and some family cases, there is no such requirement in civil cases. As a result, low-income and even moderate-income District residents face substantial hurdles when seeking remedies for civil legal matters. The Court of Appeals established the D.C. Access to Justice Commission in 2005 to examine the problems faced by low-income residents in seeking access to justice. This year the Commission released a comprehensive report (available at [www.dcaccesstojustice.org](http://www.dcaccesstojustice.org)) documenting the depth of civil legal problems facing low-income residents and the capacity of the legal services network to respond. The report serves as a blueprint for the legal community to address long-standing challenges in serving low-income residents.

*Legal representation for indigent persons in criminal and family proceedings.* By law, the D.C. Courts appoint attorneys to represent indigent adults in criminal cases and indigent juveniles charged as delinquents. The Courts also appoint attorneys to represent parties in certain family proceedings, and compensate service providers in guardianship and protective proceedings for incapacitated adults. The Courts paid more than \$45 million in 2008 for these services. Also, for the first time in six years, the Courts received funding and legal authority to increase the hourly rate paid to court-appointed counsel. The rate increase will help the Courts attract a pool of highly qualified attorneys to represent the indigent and children and families in the District of Columbia.

**“T**he Self Help Center’s role is to help our residents understand their legal rights and obligations, to demystify the court process, and to provide access to the legal system. The Court can be intimidating to those without a lawyer. The Self Help Center helps to take some of that fear away. The satellite office allows us to bring this important service into an underserved area of the District of Columbia.”

Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield

### *Self-help for persons without a lawyer.*

Many persons appearing in the District of Columbia Courts cannot afford a lawyer, or choose to represent themselves rather than hire an attorney. Family Court statistics show that 98% of petitioners and respondents in domestic violence cases, and 98% of respondents in paternity and child support cases, are not represented by an attorney (known by the Court as pro se litigants). Three-quarters (77%) of plaintiffs and 38% of respondents in divorce, custody and visitation cases do not have legal representation. In the Civil Division, 97% of defendants in small claims and landlord/tenant cases are pro se. The Court also serves a large number of probate litigants who do not have attorneys, specifically 98% of plaintiffs in small estates cases, 60% in trust cases, and nearly 45% in formal probate matters. Pro

se participation in the Court of Appeals ranges from 36% for civil actions and landlord/tenant matters to 86% for discretionary applications such as small claims and minor criminal matters.

The Courts strive to ensure that pro se litigants are not disadvantaged in the court process. In collaboration with the D.C. Bar, the Courts offer a number of free self-help centers for individuals in family, landlord/tenant, small claims, probate and, most recently, tax sale cases. These offices are staffed by attorneys who assist litigants or prospective litigants with understanding the court process, filling out forms, preparing for hearings, requesting continuances, and locating social and legal services providers. As funding becomes available, the Courts plan to expand pro se assistance to other operational areas.

The **Family Court Self-Help Center**, staffed by court personnel, provides unrepresented people with general legal information in a variety of family law areas, including divorce, custody, visitation, and child support.

The **Landlord Tenant Resource Center** provides assistance to both unrepresented landlords and unrepresented tenants in residential housing disputes.

The **Small Claims Resource Center** is staffed by attorneys from the Neighborhood Legal Services Program and law students, accompanied by supervising attorneys, from The George Washington University Law School and The Columbus School of Law at Catholic University. The D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program coordinates the Resource Center's activities.



*Family Court Self Help Center.*



The **Probate Resource Center** assists unrepresented parties or potential parties with estate administration, helping parties gather information needed to proceed with the probate process, preparing documents, and helping parties understand how property should be distributed and transferred to beneficiaries.

The **Tax Sale Resource Center** provides information on real estate foreclosures and their implications for real property and personal taxes. The Center advises homeowners how to navigate through the administrative process of reclaiming real property that has been sold at tax sale.

**“T**o ensure that justice is available to all members of our community, the Courts continually strive to identify and eliminate barriers to access.”

Former Chief Judge Rufus G. King III

*Community-based services for court users.* Recognizing that many District residents in need of court services cannot come to the courthouse without great difficulty due to lack of transportation, limited financial means, job requirements, physical disabilities or the like, the Courts have established a number of community-based programs that offer services to the public.

In 2008, the Family Court established a Self Help Center in the Southeast quadrant of the city, home to the District’s poorest residents, to assist unrepresented parties in domestic relations and child support cases. The Center operates out of the offices of Bread for the City, a private non-profit social services organization on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Court hopes to expand the Center’s hours of operation in the future.

To preserve public safety while reducing reliance on secure detention and shelter home placement for court-involved juveniles, the Family Court opened a second Balanced and Restorative Justice Center (BARJ) in the Northeast quadrant of the District. This new Center provides twice the space of the first center opened in Southeast in 2007, thereby permitting Court Social Services to increase the number of youth participating in the Drop-In Center Programs as well as the types of services provided. These Centers have office space for probation officers, large recreation and learning rooms, and satellite courtrooms. The Centers offer an alternative to detention for youth in need of pretrial supervision.

Also in 2008, the Crime Victims Compensation Program partnered with My Sister’s Place, a shelter for female victims of domestic violence, and the SAFE on Call advocacy program, to provide temporary emergency shelter to domestic violence victims during evenings and weekends when the Court is closed. A new community-based office was opened in the Light-house Center for Healing and Hope in the Northeast quadrant of the District to provide a location for victims to seek assistance without having to travel to the courthouse.

*Language interpretation assists non-English speakers and persons with hearing impairments.* The number of non-English speaking District residents is growing at a fast pace. According to the 2000 Census, there are approximately 38,000 residents who are considered “limited English proficient,” an increase of 30% since 1990. Spanish speakers constitute two-thirds of these residents. Other large language groups include French, Amharic, Chi-

nese and Vietnamese. To ensure that these residents have full access to the justice system, the Courts provide language interpretation services using federally certified interpreters primarily in criminal and family proceedings. In 2008, the Office of Court Interpreting Services provided Spanish language interpreters in over 7,300 matters, an increase of 13% over the previous year alone and a seven-fold increase from 20 years ago. To handle the increasing demand for Spanish language interpretation, the Courts hired a full-time Spanish interpreter. Requests for other foreign language interpretation also rose by 2% in 2008, to 889 events. The Office of Court Interpreting Services offers sign language interpretation for persons with hearing impairments who have criminal or family cases.

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**Washington, DC Jurisdictions**

In the jurisdictions that accept eFiling, rules were written based on the use of paper documents and manual deliver processes are available, changes were necessary to accommodate the new electronic filing procedures.

**Washington, DC Clerks Online**

Clerk	Jurisdiction
Duane Delaney	District of Columbia Superior Court
Derrick Monroe	Branch Chief, Civil Actions Branch

**IT IS MANDATORY TO EFILE CIVIL I CASES**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 5, 2007, IT IS MANDATORY TO EFILE DESIGNATED CIVIL II CASES**

It will be required to efile and eServe opposing counsel on active/pending cases and new cases in the DC Superior Court effective February 5, 2007. The only documents that will NOT be efiled are: Complaints, Affidavits of Service, In Forma Pauperis filings (IFP), pro se filings, motions to seal a document and the document, those documents that require a seal or signature of the Clerk of the Court such as a Writ or Summons and those documents that are exhibits that are not capable of being scanned for uploading such as a tangible object.

**GETTING STARTED TO EFILE IN DC SUPERIOR COURT**

Even if you do not need to efile on a case, you must register with CaseFileXpress in the event that opposing counsel needs to eServe you. For new registrations, you will register your firm first and create a firm registration code. Next, you will register individuals in your firm with the associated firm code. Everyone that uses CaseFileXpress will need their own user id and password including but not limited to attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants and legal secretaries. We will need the attorney's bar number and email address when registering. To register, [click here](#).

**MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR USING CaseFileXpress**

- Windows 2000 operating system or later
- Internet Explorer 6.0 (NOTE: Netscape web browsers are not supported)
- 56 Kbps Internet connection (standard dialup)
- 64 MB or more memory (RAM)
- 400 MHz Processor
- Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0

**EFILING TRAINING**

CaseFileXpress offers onsite training at the DC Superior Court's training facilities typically one week a month. If you are not receive our monthly training announcements. In addition to onsite training, we offer web training for your firm or you can join our training community.

Case File Xpress tool used for e-filing.

*Electronic filing expanded to all civil actions.* In 2008, the Superior Court expanded electronic filing (eFiling) to all civil actions. This program enables attorneys and self-represented litigants to file motions and court pleadings electronically after the initial complaint thereby avoiding a visit to the courthouse. In addition to saving time and money, eFiling allows for instantaneous service of pleadings. The Court plans to expand eFiling to small claims and landlord tenant cases in the near future.

*Electronic access to case information and court forms.* With the advent of the internet, it is possible to provide much more information about cases and court procedures to the public. The Courts are taking advantage of the opportunities created by the world wide web to bring information electronically to persons conducting business in the Courts and the general public. At the same time, we are carefully examining the impact of providing information over the internet on people's privacy and public safety. Following extensive study by the Courts' Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Court Records Committee, the Superior Court began providing access to selected civil case dockets over the internet in 2007. By accessing the Courts' website ([www.dccourts.gov/pa](http://www.dccourts.gov/pa)), the public can view case dockets and status information, images of all filings, court orders and schedules of upcoming case-related events. In 2008, the Court expanded this pilot project to include all civil cases and, in the future, expects to include other case types as well. The Court of Appeals used the award-winning website to publish instructions, forms, opinions, practice tips, and rules, as well as to enable the public to listen live to oral arguments over the internet.

In addition to electronic case information, the Courts provide the public with access to court forms and procedural information over the web. In 2008, the Court of Appeals launched "fillable forms" on the Courts' website. Litigants can now fill out appeals forms on line, for printing and delivery to the Court. The Superior Court collaborated with the D.C. Bar on a "Hot Docs Initiative" which enables litigants to access, complete and submit court forms electronically to the Court. This remote filing capability saves substantial time and costs associated with hand-delivering or mailing hard copy documents to the courthouse.

*Greeters assist visitors in navigating court facilities.* People coming to court are often under stress and intimidated by the prospect of a court hearing before a judge. Between 5,000 and 10,000 visitors walk through the courthouse doors every day, and for an individual coming to court for the first time, or even the occasional visitor, it can be daunting to

navigate to one of 90 courtrooms and hearing rooms, multiple Clerk's Offices and several court buildings within the Judiciary Square complex. While an Information Center in the main lobby of the Moultrie Courthouse provides much assistance to court visitors, this year the Courts established a Court Greeters Program to help the public navigate court facilities. This program provides trained volunteers who greet people coming into the courthouse during the busy morning "rush" hours (8:30 to 10:00 am). Strategically located on different floors of the courthouse, the greeters welcome visitors and provide directions to courtrooms, filing counters and other public offices.



*A Court Greeter assisting the public.*



*Family Court Self-Help Center staff accept the Office Public Service Award from Chief Judge Washington and former Chief Judge King during the Courts Annual Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony.*

## A STRONG JUDICIARY AND WORKFORCE

*A strong judiciary and workforce is 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 and continuing education 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.*

*Continuing education for the judiciary.* Judicial officers in the Court of Appeals and Superior Court participated in more than 10 training workshops during the year, totaling approximately 35 hours. The training addressed a wide range of topics including Supreme Court decisions, science and the law, the future of the legal profession, negotiation techniques, post-traumatic stress disorder, security and civil rights.

### *Judicial and Bar conference on The Future of the Legal Profession.*

In April, the Court of Appeals and the D.C. Bar hosted a biennial joint conference convened by Chief Judge Eric T. Washington. The theme of the conference was "The Future of the Legal Profession" and panel discussions focused on generational changes in approaches to "lawyering," problem solving courts, and equal access for litigants without lawyers. In a keynote address, the Honorable Chief Judge Thomas F. Hogan, U.S. District Court, urged conference participants to embrace the changes occurring in the legal profession while remaining steadfast to the traditions of public service and high ethical standards.



Conference co-chair Judge John Fisher and Chief Judge Eric T. Washington.

*Juvenile justice best practices.* In June, over 250 attorneys, social workers, members of the judiciary and others attended the Family Court's Juvenile Justice Summit: "Examining Evidence-Based Practices and Exploring Promising Programs." The summit provided a forum to educate stakeholders about locally based innovative and promising programs for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and served to inform and guide judicial decision making regarding available release options.

*Empowering families.* The Family Court held its seventh annual Interdisciplinary Training in October. The training entitled "Involving and Empowering Our Families" focused on the benefits of engaging family members when addressing the needs of youth in care. The high point of the conference was a panel presentation by youth addressing the effectiveness of both the child welfare and delinquency systems in meeting their needs and working with their families to ensure long term success. Through that discussion, participants came away with a clearer vision of how





*Management Training Class of 2008*

courts and agencies can work collaboratively with the families we serve and with each other. More than 375 participants including judges, court staff, social workers, attorneys, foster parents, non-profit organizations and other community stakeholders were in attendance.

*Child welfare law training.* In February, 40 attorneys who practice in Family Court received specialized training in child welfare law by the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC). The training, known as the “Red Book Training Course,” will enable the participants to become certified as child welfare law specialists. Following the training, the Court led study sessions for the participants in anticipation of a certification exam to be administered in the spring of 2009. The certification will encourage attorney excellence in the practice of child welfare law.

*Enhancing civility in the justice system.* Civility and decorum are vital to maintaining trust and confidence in the Courts. During 2008, the Family Court and the Criminal Division sponsored multi-disciplinary civility training for attorneys, judges, social workers and others to promote improved communication and understanding in court proceedings. The training sought to address the quality of interaction among the different agencies and groups that participate in the court process, as well as the treatment of defendants and other case participants.

*Continuing education for court employees.* In 2008, court employees completed approximately 15,000 hours of continuing education sponsored by the Center for Education and Training. Over 150 classes offered skill development in areas such as technology, customer service, staff supervision, leadership development, and project management. The Courts also expanded the orientation program for new employees to include mandatory training on topics such as Understanding Courts, Personnel Policies, Court Security, Sexual Harassment and EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity). As part of this year-long training program, the Office of Strategic Management began teaching a class for new employees on “Your Role in the Strategic Management of the D.C. Courts.” This class encourages employees to understand how their job contributes to the achievement of the Courts’ mission and strategic goals.

Following a highly successful first year, the new Management Training Program enrolled 21 employees in 2008. This competitive year-long leadership development program is grooming “high potential” employees as future court leaders through a rigorous series of classes and a required team project. This year’s award-winning team project was “Stay on the Right Side of the Law,” an educational program about the Courts for third grade students in the District of Columbia public schools. The program uses the story of the “Three Little Pigs” to teach students about the need for law and the value of lawfulness.



*Youth participate in the “Stay on the Right Side of the Law” program.*

*Training academy for new juvenile probation officers.* Newly hired juvenile probation officers participated in an extensive training program developed in 2008 by the Family Court's Social Services Division. The 80-hour New Employee Training Academy features specialized training in supervision techniques, youth counseling and related subjects. Participants gain an understanding of the character, needs and interests of the juveniles they serve and are encouraged to try new approaches in moving youth under court supervision to brighter futures.

*Celebrating our cultural diversity.* The Courts honor the traditions of different cultural groups in the District of Columbia community by sponsoring educational events throughout the year. In February, the Courts celebrated Black History Month with two outstanding presentations. This year's theme was "The Origins of Multiculturalism." At one session, Master Iffy Marshall, a student at Hyattsville Elementary School, delivered an electrifying rendition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and the Honorable Vincent C. Gray, Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, discussed problems Dr. King rallied against that we still face, saying "Today, we come together to fortify ourselves for yet another year of social and economic challenges as we continue the unending and unyielding quest for full equality and civil right...to fight for the opportunity for everyone to enjoy the good life, irrespective of any factor that divides rather than unites." At the second session, the Reverend A. Colette Rice, Assistant Pastor of Mt. Ennon Baptist Church, spoke about the effects of rap music on our youth from the "Enough Is Enough Campaign." The Courts' choir, Voices of the D.C. Courts, provided musical selections.

In October, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with salsa dancing lessons by Dr. Werner Wothke and Ms. Maria I. Osorio. Dubbed "Uno, Dos y Tres... Bailemos otra vez" (One, Two, Three...Dance with Me), this event also featured a display of artwork created by artists from the Life Skills Center, D.C.'s only tri-lingual center (English, Spanish and Vietnamese) for adults with mental retardation. Our celebration concluded with the CORO Awards Ceremony. Honorees this year were: the Spanish Education and Development Center, which provides childcare, preschool and adult continuing education services to the District's Latino community; Ms. Kenia Seone-Lopez, of the Office of the Attorney General; Magistrate Judge Marisa J. Demeo, who encourages young Latinos to pursue legal careers; staff of the Courts' Executive Office, who have been instrumental in organizing community forums and other events to make the Courts more accessible to Latino residents; and Mr. Rodrigo Leiva, Executive Director of the Latino Federation of Greater Washington, an association of 35 non-profit organizations serving the Latino community in the D.C. Metropolitan area.



*Magistrate Judge Marisa Demeo accepts her award.*

In observance of American Indian Heritage Month in November, the Courts sponsored a special dance presentation by the Piscataway Indian Territory Musicians and Dancers, with the theme of "Honoring the First Americans." The interactive event included drumming, traditional dancing and singing, as well as historical and cultural commentary by Mr. Mark Tayac, son of Chief Billy Redwing Tayac, the 27th Hereditary Chief of the Piscataway Indian Nation, the original tribe in the area along the Potomac River.

## 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, and the Courts can report much progress in 2008. Additionally, the Courts are making a substantial investment in technology to enhance operations.*

*Restoration of historic D.C. Courthouse.* With the support of the President and the Congress, the Courts are renovating and modernizing the architecturally and historically significant 19th century Historic Courthouse, the future location for the District's highest court, the D.C. Court of Appeals. Officially listed as one of the nation's "America's Treasures," the Historic Courthouse, one of the oldest public buildings in the District, has been the site of many events in the city's history, serving as the first city hall as well as the site of the Lincoln co-conspirator's trial and the signing of the District of Columbia Emancipation Proclamation. The restoration, which must adhere to historical preservation standards, employs state-of-the-art enhancements and includes judicial chambers and courtrooms, a ceremonial courtroom beneath the historic grand entry and portico, and office space.



*View of the D.C. Court of Appeals during modernization construction.*

**“W**ith support from Congress and OMB, the Courts have made significant progress in ensuring that court facilities are accessible to the public, support effective operations, and reflect the stature of our judicial system.”

Anne Wicks, Executive Officer

*Upgrade of Judiciary Square.* On the perimeter of the courthouse complex at Judiciary Square, Courts' Buildings A and B are in the midst of a multi-year exterior restoration which includes complete repair and cleaning of the exterior stone, restoration of existing windows, replacement of doors, new signage, landscape improvements and the installation of facade lighting. This exterior work follows an interior modernization project completed last year.



*Moultrie Courthouse renovations.* In the 1970's era Moultrie Courthouse, work is underway to continue the consolidation of Family Court. Plans have been completed and construction has been initiated to improve the space occupied by the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS). The Courts and the USMS are working closely together to ensure that safety and security needs are met and space utilization enhanced. Other facilities improvements include the upgrade of the C Street entrance to the courthouse, major improvements to the corridors that secure judicial chambers, and upgrades to the fire alarm and security systems.



*H. Carl Moultrie Courthouse undergoing improvements.*

*State-of-the-art jury management system.* The Superior Court sends summons to hundreds of thousands of District residents annually to serve as jurors. Once summoned, prospective jurors must be qualified, checked in on their dates of appearance, selected for courtroom panels and paid at the end of their service. Managing this process, particularly the identification and random selection of potential jurors, requires a sophisticated computer system which can perform all these different functions at a high volume. In 2008, the Court installed a new, state-of-the-art computer system that will improve the efficiency and accuracy of the juror summoning and selection process.

*Wireless internet access for court users.* As a convenience for jurors, attorneys and the public, the Courts installed wireless internet access points in several locations in the Moultrie Courthouse. These areas enable people to use the internet while waiting for court matters.



## SECURITY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

*Courts and other public institutions across the country face security risks not contemplated a decade ago. The D.C. Courts' location in the nation's capital presents additional, distinct security risks which require constant monitoring. 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.*


*Emergency notification system.* In 2008, the Courts installed a new state-of-the-art emergency notification system that will transmit mass alert notifications to judicial officers, court staff and the general public during an emergency, disaster or other catastrophic event. This system allows officials to communicate with court participants throughout the Judiciary Square complex and from home through multiple mediums, including satellite, cellular, work or home phone, electronic mail and pager.

*Coordinated emergency planning.* As a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Courts collaborate with the District and Federal Governments to ensure that criminal justice agencies in the District of Columbia have a coordinated response and can operate during an emergency. Court managers were trained on key elements of “continuity of operations planning” and are developing plans for their operations that will support the courtwide continuity of operations plan. The Courts selected an information technology disaster recovery site in Maryland that will enable our information systems to function during an emergency and will preserve official court records. In the event of a metropolitan area crisis or disaster, the Courts will switch immediately to this site and keep mission critical systems operational.

*Security and emergency preparedness awareness.* In April, the Courts launched the first Court Security and Emergency Awareness Month to highlight the importance of security and emergency preparedness. The event kicked off with a panel on “Lessons Learned and Future Directions” that examined the 2005 courthouse shooting in Atlanta as well as national courthouse security issues. The panelists were Judge T. Jackson Bedford and Court Administrator Judith Cramer of the Fulton County Superior Court in Atlanta, Georgia, and Zygmunt Pines, the State Court Administrator of Pennsylvania. A second session on “Judicial and Personal Privacy Protections in the Digital Age” was led by Judge James R. Brandlin of the Los Ange-



*Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Awareness Month Information Fair.*



les County Superior Court. This session covered techniques for maintaining the confidentiality of personal information and other security strategies for judicial officers. The United States Marshals Service, which is responsible for judicial security at the courthouse, taught several classes on “Personal and Professional Security” which covered physical safety at home and at work. Superior Court judicial officers also attended a mandatory training provided by the United States Marshals Service which examined judicial threats and security procedures.

An information fair for court staff and the general public provided information on individual and home preparedness, emergency procedures for persons with disabilities, fire prevention, identity theft and public transportation safety. Participating agencies included D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services, D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, D.C. Office of Disability Rights, the Metropolitan Police Department, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Federal Trade Commission, and the U.S. Department of Justice Federal Credit Union.

## 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. A few of our efforts in 2008 to connect with those we serve and to enhance our public accountability are described below.*

*Community outreach.* The Courts participated in a variety of community events and hosted several public forums this year to enhance our understanding of the public's perceptions and expectations of the Courts and to provide information about our role and responsibilities as the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government.

The Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and Access, in conjunction with the D.C. Office on African Affairs, hosted an outreach forum with the African immigrant community. Another forum was convened for the Latino community. During both forums, attendees provided suggestions on ways the Courts could enhance services to the public.

In February and November, the Criminal Division held public town hall meetings in Ward 7 and 8 to gain a better understanding of the problems faced by the East of the River community and to inform residents about the East of the River Community Court (ERCC). Over 300 persons attended the first town hall meeting, including D.C. Councilmember Yvette Alexander, members of the Metropolitan Police Department and the Police Advisory Council. Over 150 persons attended the town hall meeting in November, including D.C. Councilmember Marion Barry, Chief of Police Cathy Lanier, and Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield.



*Chief Judge Satterfield speaks at Ward 8 Town Hall Meeting.*

Annually in March, the Courts and the D.C. Bar co-host a Youth Law Fair for area high school students. This year's theme was "Internet Issues: Dangers of Social Networking and Blogs." Hundreds of students participated in mock trials on criminal issues involving internet blogs and other social networking sites. "Speak out" sessions fostered discussion among the students on the topics of personal responsibility for information placed in blogs, risks and benefits of social sites such as My Space, and other internet concerns. Since its inception in 1999, over 2,000 local high school students have participated in Youth Law Fair.



In May, the Courts commemorated Law Day by visiting local high schools to talk with students about the law and how it affects their lives. Eight judges and the Clerk of the Court of Appeals spoke about the rule of law, the structure of the D.C. Courts and their own careers. Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield began his remarks with congratulations for the students in his class, all of whom were graduating and had been accepted to attend college. The Chief Judge stressed that each graduate has the potential to be a leader who can someday make a contribution to the District of Columbia.

Also in May, the Courts observed National Mediation Week. Staff and mediators from the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division were available each day at information tables in the courthouse lobby to speak with attorneys, litigants, and the public about the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services that the Division provides to the D.C. community. Brochures and handouts were available describing family, child protection, civil, small claims, probate, tax and landlord/tenant mediation programs, and how to get involved in ADR.

In October, the Courts hosted the annual “Law School for Journalists” for print, radio and television reporters, editors and producers. Topics addressed included: “From Arrest to Arraignment to Trial – Explaining the Criminal Justice Process,” “The Domestic Violence Intake Unit – A Comprehensive Approach,” “How Do Members of the Press Get Access to Juvenile and Neglect Hearings?,” and “About Community Court.” Members of the press were appreciative of the valuable information provided by the judges and senior court managers, which will assist them in better informing the public.

In November, the Family Court hosted the 22nd Annual Adoption Day in Court, in collaboration with the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency. The keynote speaker was LeCount R. Holmes, Jr., a native Washingtonian and national motivational speaker. The adoptions of 16 children were finalized in a festive, public ceremony at the courthouse. In addition to these children, the Court finalized the adoptions of 195 more children during the year. Barbara Harrison, the well-known local television anchor, graciously emceed this joyous event, as she has for the past several years.



*Magistrate Judge Mary Grace Rook finalizes an Adoption Day decree.*



*Public accountability.* The Courts have continued to work to enhance the public's trust and confidence through efficiently managing resources, serving as prudent stewards of public funds and being vigilant in monitoring activities of the legal profession and court operations for the public good.

In its oversight role of D.C. Bar members, the Court of Appeals made significant revisions this year to the rules governing the bar disciplinary process. The changes strengthen the Court's ability to protect the public from attorney misconduct and streamline the procedures for handling attorney disciplinary matters. Key revisions permit the Court to suspend an attorney for failing to respond to an order of the Board of Professional Responsibility about an investigation of serious misconduct, and streamline the practice of reinstating an attorney's license to practice law where the reinstatement is uncontested.

The Courts also continued a multi-year initiative to implement courtwide performance measures that will enhance operations and public accountability. In 2008, the Superior Court adopted time standards to guide the resolution of cases in all divisions. These standards are intended to assist the Court in improving the time it takes for cases to be heard and resolved, thereby delivering faster justice and saving time and money for all court participants. The Court is working to implement several other performance metrics that will be used to monitor timeliness in the future. Other performance measures are being implemented to assess other key areas of court performance, including accessibility and convenience of court services, fairness and equality in the treatment of court participants, responsible fiscal management, and satisfaction and performance of court staff.

*Regulation of the Bar.* In carrying out its responsibilities, the D.C. Court of Appeals is supported by attorneys and the public who generously give their time to assist in the admission of attorneys to the District of Columbia Bar, monitor attorney discipline and unauthorized practice matters as well as administer the Clients' Security Trust Fund, which reimburses clients whose lawyers have dishonestly retained money, property or other items of value that belong to the client. During the year, over 4,450 applicants filed for admission to the Bar, and more than 80% of the applicants (3,700) were certified for admission and administered the oath of admission in formal ceremonies before the Court of Appeals. The Board of Professional Responsibility, which manages the attorney disciplinary system, disposed of 58 cases, including recommendations in 55 cases filed with the Court of Appeals. The Office of Bar Counsel instituted formal disciplinary proceedings in 41 complaints. The Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law received 40 new complaints and monitored 490 motions of attorneys from other jurisdictions seeking appearances in the District of Columbia Courts. The Clients' Security Fund approved 37 claims and reimbursed individuals for losses totaling over \$150,000.

*Financing the administration of justice for today and tomorrow.* In fiscal year 2008, Congress provided \$161.3 million for court operations, \$62.6 million for capital projects, and \$48.0 million for defender services (court-appointed counsel for criminal and some family proceedings). The operating budget increased 18% from the previous year and included funds to address a staffing shortage that had resulted in a 15% vacancy rate. As a result of this funding, the Courts were able to decrease the vacancy rate to 10% by December 2008. The 2008 appropriation also financed the first hourly rate increase in six years for court-appointed attorneys for the indigent, who now earn \$80/hour.

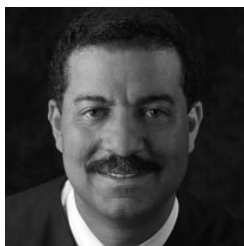
At the beginning of fiscal year 2009 (October-December 2008), the Courts were under a continuing resolution that financed operations, capital improvements, and defender services at the same budgetary level as in fiscal year 2008. With careful stewardship of these resources, the Courts will continue to serve the community in the District of Columbia as we strive to realize our vision: “Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All.”



## GOVERNANCE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

Governance of the District of Columbia Courts is provided by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, 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; general personnel policies; information management; and performance monitoring and statistical reporting. 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.

### Members of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration



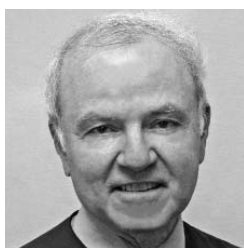
Chair  
Chief Judge Eric T. Washington  
*District of Columbia  
Court of Appeals*



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



Judge Stephen H. Glickman <sup>a</sup>  
*District of Columbia  
Court of Appeals*



Judge Geoffrey M. Alprin  
*Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia*



Judge Kaye K. Christian <sup>a</sup>  
*Superior Court of the  
District of Columbia*



Secretary to Joint Committee  
Anne B. Wicks  
*Executive Officer  
District of Columbia Courts*

<sup>a</sup> Appointed in November 2008.

# JUDGES OF THE COURT OF APPEALS

## ASSOCIATE JUDGES



Seated (l to r): Inez Smith Reid, Michael W. Farrell, Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, Vanessa Ruiz, and Stephen H. Glickman.  
Standing (l to r): Anna Blackburne-Rigsby, Noël Anketell Kramer, John R. Fisher, and Phyllis D. Thompson.

## SENIOR JUDGES



Theodore R. Newman, Jr.



William C. Pryor



Annice M. Wagner



John W. Kern, III



Frank Q. Nebeker



John M. Ferren



James A. Belson



John A. Terry



John M. Steadman



Frank E. Schwelb



Warren R. King

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## ASSOCIATE



Frederick H. Weisberg



Geoffrey M. Alprin



A. Franklin Burgess, Jr.



Robert I. Richter



Herbert B. Dixon, Jr.



Michael L. Rankin



Kaye K. Christian



Wendell P. Gardner, Jr.



Ann O'Regan Keary



Judith E. Retchin



William McKinley Jackson



Stephanie Duncan-Peters



Linda Kay Davis



Ronna Lee Beck



Robert E. Morin



John M. Campbell



Anita Josey-Herring



Melvin R. Wright



John Ramsey Johnson



Gerald I. Fisher



Erik P. Christian



Maurice A. Ross



Lynn Leibovitz



Odessa F. Vincent



Brian F. Holeman



Jerry S. Byrd



J. Michael F. Ryan, III



Gregory E. Jackson



Laura A. Cordero



Juliet J. McKenna



Lee F. Satterfield  
Chief Judge



## SENIOR



Eugene N. Hamilton



Fred B. Ugast



Rufus G. King, III



Leonard Braman



John R. Hess



Ronald P. Wertheim



Stephen F. Eilperin



Nan R. Shuker



Bruce D. Beaudin



Arthur L. Burnett, Sr.



Frederick D. Dorsey



Patricia A. Wynn



Mary Ellen Abrecht

a Assumed Senior Status December 2008.

# SUPERIOR COURT

## JUDGES



Harold L. Cushenberry, Jr.



Cheryl M. Long



Zinora M. Mitchell-Rankin



Joan Zeldon



John H. Bayly, Jr.



José M. López



Brook Hedge



Russell F. Canan



Rafael Diaz



Judith Bartnoff



Rhonda Reid Winston



Zoe Bush



Patricia A. Broderick



Natalia Combs Greene



Neal E. Kravitz



Hiram E. Puig-Lugo



Thomas John Motley



John McAdam Mott



Jeanette J. Clark



Robert R. Rigsby



James E. Boasberg



Judith N. Macaluso



Fern Flanagan Saddler



Craig S. Iscoe



Jennifer Anderson



Carol Ann Dalton



Anthony C. Epstein



Heidi M. Pasichow

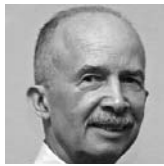


Alfred Irving

## JUDGES



Bruce S. Mencher



Paul R. Webber, III



Peter H. Wolf



Truman A. Morrison, III



Henry F. Greene



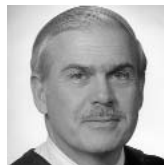
Robert S. Tignor



Susan R. Winfield



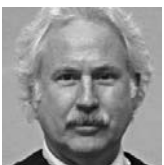
Richard A. Levie



Curtis E. von Kann



Gregory E. Mize



Stephen G. Milliken



Linda Denise Turner<sup>a</sup>

## MAGISTRATE JUDGES



J. Dennis Doyle



Andrea L. Harnett



Aida L. Melendez



Milton C. Lee, Jr.



Richard H. Ringell



William W. Nooter



S. Pamela Gray



Noel T. Johnson



Joan Goldfrank\*



John McCabe



Julie Breslow



Karen Howze



Tara Fentress



Janet Albert



Diane Epps



Michael McCarthy



Diane M. Brennenman



Frederick J. Sullivan



Lori E. Parker



Mary Grace Rook



Elizabeth C. Wingo



Marisa Demeo



Judith A. Smith

\* Chair, Commission on Mental Health.

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## ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The District of Columbia Courts are the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. They include the Court of Appeals, the District's highest court, the Superior Court, which is the trial court, and the Court System. Unlike every other state court system in the country, our judges are appointed 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 completely unified court system, which means that there is one level of trial court in which all cases are filed.

Since 1997, the D.C. Courts are funded directly by the Federal Government. Therefore, 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. Since there is no intermediate appellate court in the District (unlike in many states), 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 over 80,000 members, is the second largest unified bar in the United States. Attorney disciplinary matters are also handled by the Court of Appeals, 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).

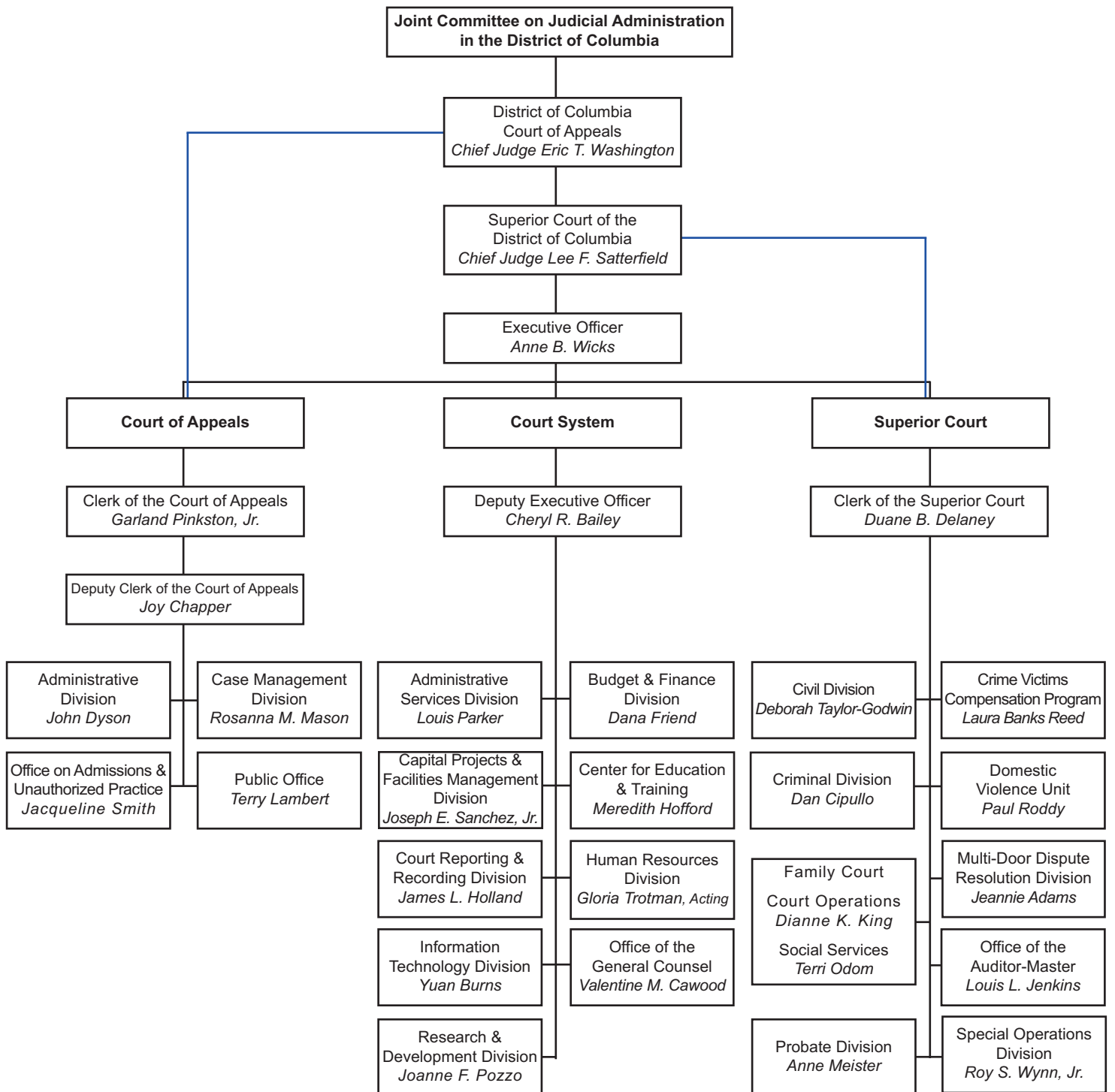
The **Superior Court** is a trial court of general jurisdiction, which means that virtually all local legal matters are first heard in this court. Superior Court is comprised of Civil, Criminal, Probate and Tax Divisions, the Family Court, which includes juvenile probation, a Domestic Violence Unit, the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division (mediation and other dispute resolution services), the Crime Victims Compensation Program, and the Special Operations Division, which includes the Juror's Office, the Office of Court Interpreting Services, the Appeals Coordinator's Office, and the Juror and Witness Child Care Center.

In addition to the Chief Judge, 61 Associate Judges serve on the Superior Court. Senior judges, who are retired, also serve the Court on a part-time basis. Twenty-five Magistrate Judges also serve in Superior Court, hearing criminal arraignments and presentments, some family matters, D.C. misdemeanor and traffic cases, small claims, temporary protection order and other cases. The judges of Superior Court and magistrate judges rotate assignments in all divisions on a scheduled basis, typically one or two years, except Family Court judicial officers who have long-term assignments.

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 the Deputy Executive Officer and a variety of administrative divisions which provide technical and support services, including administration, capital projects, court reporting, training, facilities management, budget, finance, human resources, information technology, legal counsel, and research.



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS



## MISSION STATEMENT

To protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and resolve disputes peacefully, fairly and effectively in the Nation's Capital.



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