

District of Columbia Courts

State of the Judiciary



2009

Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All

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District of Columbia Courts
500 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 879-1700
www.dccourts.gov

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The State of the Judiciary 2009 recounts the numerous achievements and accomplishments made by the District of Columbia Courts during the year. Upon completing the second year of implementing our five-year strategic plan, *Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008-2012*, I am delighted to report on the significant gains the Courts have made in administering justice for the citizens of the District of Columbia.

As the judicial branch of the District of Columbia, the Courts are expected to resolve disputes timely and fairly and to treat all court participants with courtesy and respect. In fulfilling our mission, the District of Columbia Courts have addressed these needs by implementing new programs and streamlining procedures. I invite you to read about our many accomplishments in this report and to visit our website, www.dccourts.gov, to learn more about the activities and achievements of the District of Columbia Courts.

The Courts take special pride in working on behalf of the citizens in our community. We extend our appreciation to the dedicated and highly skilled judicial officers, court managers and staff who ensure that the District of Columbia Courts are able to meet our vision: *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 Citizens of the District of Columbia,

At the District of Columbia Courts, *Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All* is not only our vision, but what we strive to achieve every day. During 2009, we made significant gains to streamline court filings, provide criminal justice agencies and the public with remote access to court documents, and enhance services to unrepresented litigants. In addition, we addressed one of our strategic goals to “inform the community about the role of the judicial branch, promote confidence in the Courts and foster the sharing of information among justice system agencies and the community,” by expanding our partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders in criminal justice administration, and reaching out to the community by hosting special events to inform, educate and engage the public. The Courts held events like outreach forums, town hall meetings in Ward 8, neighborhood-based Outreach Information Exchanges targeted at immigrant and limited English-speaking communities, and a Community Open House to communicate, display and distribute information about the Courts. The Community Open House featured a Judicial Town Hall meeting that served as another opportunity for the Courts and the public to dialogue on a wide range of issues.

In June 2009, the Historic Courthouse was rededicated as the new home for the District’s highest court, the D.C. Court of Appeals. The Historic Courthouse is a national historic landmark, and is one of the oldest public buildings in the District of Columbia. Restoration of the Lincoln statue, which has stood at the base of the south façade steps since 1868, was a key feature of the renovation project. With the addition of a new ceremonial courtroom, chambers for all Court of Appeals’ judges, a contemporary entrance pavilion and the renovation of original courtrooms, the restoration of the Historic Courthouse has become an integral part of the Courts’ Facilities Master Plan and the District of Columbia’s Judiciary Square Master Plan.

In addition, major renovations and improvements to enhance court access were made to the Moultrie Courthouse. The main entrance to the courthouse was expanded to provide a glass enclosure for individuals waiting to enter the building, extensive renovations were made to the U.S. Marshals Service quarters, and security upgrades were made throughout the courthouse.

Finally, we thank and extend our appreciation to the entire staff of the D.C. Courts for its dedication to justice and public service. We are honored to work with court personnel and agency partners who, year after year, show a commitment to meeting the legal needs of our community in the Nation’s Capital.



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



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

STATE OF THE JUDICIARY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS, 2009

In 2009, the District of Columbia Courts made significant progress towards achieving goals and objectives in the six strategic areas of the five-year plan *Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts: 2008-2012*.

Fair and timely case resolution is at the heart of the Courts' mandate to administer justice. From electronic filings to digital case processing and best practices mediation services, the Courts actively sought ways to expedite the judicial process while ensuring fairness. To expand *access to justice*, the Courts reached out to the community with improved services for court users with special needs, such as victims of domestic violence, individuals with mental disabilities and indigent families and children in the child welfare system. The Courts also delivered justice on-site, with services at several community-based centers.

Having a *strong judiciary and workforce* means that the judiciary and court staff are fully engaged, involved in the community, and well prepared to perform their duties. The Courts' judges hosted a number of outreach forums to inform and educate residents about the legal process and court services, and participated in special activities targeted at youth. The Courts also mounted several training collaborations with external partners to ensure that court staff delivered high quality services to all court participants, and made improvements to the staff recruitment process to promote the selection of highly skilled employees.

To support the judiciary and staff, the Courts undertook several steps towards promoting a *sound infrastructure*, especially in the areas of capital improvements and technology upgrades. Each project enhanced service to and accessibility for the public. In the same manner, the Courts made major enhancements in *security and disaster preparedness*, with public safety, preservation of records, and continuity of operations as key priorities.

The Courts increased *public trust and confidence* by communicating more openly and by enlisting, as partners, the public, the justice system and other stakeholders. The Courts also continued to establish performance measures as a major factor in promoting public accountability.

The Courts take special pride in reaching out to inform the public about the responsibilities and challenges in delivering justice. The Courts remain dedicated to meeting the needs of the residents of the District of Columbia who entrust the Courts with resolving disputes fairly, justly and in a timely manner.



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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.

IMPROVING TIMELINESS TO RESOLVE CASES

D.C. Court of Appeals. Timely resolution of cases is one of the cornerstones of effective justice administration. In 2009, there were nearly 1,700 new cases filed in the Court of Appeals. The overwhelming majority (95%) of these cases were Mandatory Appeal and Bar Cases, including criminal, civil and agency appeals. The court disposed of nearly 1,900 cases, for an over-

all clearance rate, a measure of case processing efficiency, of 109%. Moreover, the Court of Appeals continued to strive to reduce the overall time on appeal and reduce the backlog of cases. In 2009, the median overall time on appeal was the lowest in five years at an average of 404 days from notice of appeal to court decision.

Court of Appeals Caseload Activity, 2009							
Type of Appeals	New Cases Filed		Cases Disposed		Cases Pending December 31, 2009		Clearance Rate
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
Mandatory Appeal & Bar Cases	1,613	95.3	1,802	95.5	2,172	99.8	109
Original Jurisdiction Matters	47	2.8	47	2.5	3	0.1	100
Discretionary Jurisdiction Matters	32	1.9	37	2.0	1	0.0	116
Total	1,692	100.0	1,886	100.0	2,176	100.0	109

* Clearance rate, a measure of court efficiency, is the total number of cases disposed divided by the total number of cases added to the caseload (i.e., new filings and reinstatements) during a given time period. Rates of over 100% indicate that the court disposed of more cases than were added, thereby reducing the pending caseload.

D.C. Superior Court. Over 110,000 new cases were filed in Superior Court in 2009. Over half (56%) of these cases were civil matters, over one-fifth (22%) were criminal cases, and approximately 12% were family cases, including child support, divorce and juvenile matters. Through the Court's efforts on improving timeliness of case resolution, Superior Court disposed of as many cases as were filed or reopened, for an efficient clearance rate of 100%.

Superior Court Caseload Activity, 2009						
Type of Case	New Cases Filed		Cases Disposed		Case Pending December 31, 2009	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Civil	62,032	56.1	67,530	55.7	16,435	34.4
Criminal	25,136	22.7	28,148	23.2	8,320	17.4
Domestic Violence	7,576	6.8	8,388	6.9	749	1.6
Family Court	12,887	11.7	13,926	11.5	14,927	31.2
Probate	2,542	2.3	3,073	2.5	6,680	14.0
Tax	441	0.4	214	0.2	700	1.5
Total	110,614	100.0	121,279	100.0	47,811	100.0

INNOVATIONS IN CASE PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

Enabling attorneys and litigants to file cases online (electronic filing) and faster processing of case filings were priorities in 2009. The Superior Court instituted electronic filing in Landlord and Tenant and Small Claims cases. With federal grant funds, and in collaboration with the District's Child and Family Services Agency, Superior Court estab-

lished the Electronic Data Exchange Project that allows electronic filings in abuse and neglect cases. The Court plans to expand this initiative in 2010 to include the electronic receipt of filings from the District's Office of the Attorney General.

In 2009, a paper on demand system was implemented in the Criminal Division. As a result of the new system, the official court record is now completely digital. Dockets are available on-line and images can be viewed at courthouse workstations that are accessible to the public. By converting to paper on demand, court records can be available from any site with an Internet location.

The Court also began using a sophisticated new evidence presentation system. The new system permits on-screen display, annotation, and printing of case documents and exhibits. Utilizing the new presentation system enhances courtroom proceedings, reduces reliance on paper documents, and increases efficiency, accuracy, security and protection of the Superior Court's document management.

Overall, Internet connectivity and digital processing have revolutionized how the public can access court case information. With the Superior Court's Remote Access to the Court Docket capability, the public has access to civil, criminal, probate and tax case information from any Internet location.

In the Appellate Mediation Program, timely resolution of cases was achieved by clearing the Court of Appeals' docket of potentially complex and time-consuming appeals and by assisting parties to narrow issues on appeal. With the process improvement resulting from this program, judges have been able to focus on the more substantive issues before the Court.

In Superior Court, alternative dispute resolution continued to prove an effective and increasingly popular alternative to traditional litigation. For example, the Community Information and Referral Program, which includes resolving issues over the telephone, assisted more than 2,600 clients, representing nearly a 13% increase above activity in calendar year 2008. In addition, as a special service to families involved in custody disputes, the Program for Agreement and Cooperation in Contested Custody Disputes (PAC) offered seminars specifically designed to improve communication between parents and enhance the coping skills of their children to deal with the changes occurring within the family.



Mediators attend a seminar offered by the Courts' Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division.

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.

Open to All is a cornerstone of delivering justice. The citizens of the District of Columbia trust the Courts to resolve cases without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status or mental or physical ability. During 2009, the Courts continued to ensure that all citizens and court users had full access to court services.

Civil legal services for low and moderate income residents. Created by the D.C. Court of Appeals to investigate low and moderate income residents' unmet need for civil legal services, the D.C. Access to Justice Commission worked on multiple fronts raising visibility of the need for equal access to justice for lower-income District residents. In the fall, the Commission, together with the D.C. Consortium of Legal Services Providers, released a report entitled *Rationing Justice: The Effect of the Recession on Access to Justice in the District of Columbia*. This report described an untimely reduction in the availability of legal services, just as client needs were rising sharply. As an outcome of the Commission's efforts, the District government allocated \$3.56 million for civil legal services in fiscal year 2010 and avoided a proposed reduction in appropriations that would have weakened access to legal services in the most underserved parts of the District.

In addition to ensuring funds for equal access to justice, the Commission began partnering with the D.C. legal services community, local law firm DLA Piper, and Georgetown University Law Center to perform impact litigation, policy work and legislative advocacy on issues vital to low-income residents. This initiative will use the resources of all three partners to address systemic problems that impede justice for D.C.'s most vulnerable residents. Other ongoing Commission projects included encouraging law firms to maintain their free community service commitments as they make economy-based changes to their business models and developing partnerships with social services, health and faith-based organizations to increase knowledge about the availability of legal services.

Enhancing fairness and access. The Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and Access improves community access to the D.C. Courts, monitors compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and improves the quality of service provided to court participants. In 2009, the Standing Committee coordinated several Outreach Information Exchanges targeted at organizations and individuals who provide services to immigrant communities, people with limited English proficiency and self-represented litigants. As a result of the community-based exchanges, targeted groups gained greater information about the court process and services.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

Assisting domestic violence victims. Beginning in January 2009, the Superior Court streamlined the Emergency Temporary Protection Order (ETPO) process for domestic violence victims. ETPOs are now valid longer, for 5 days, and include a Notice of Hearing and Order to Appear. As a result, petitioners do not need to come to

court the day after the granting of the ETPO and service of the ETPO gives respondents immediate formal notice of the Protective Order hearing date that takes place 5 days later.

In late March 2009, a significant change was made to the District of Columbia's *Intrafamily Offenses Act of 2008* to explicitly grant minors the right to file for a Civil Protection Order. Within one week of the enactment of the statute, Court staff were trained and procedures established to ensure that minors filing Civil Protection Orders understood the procedures and could file orders without delay.



Skyline view from the 6th floor of the Moultrie Courthouse.

Assistance for victims of crime. In 2009, the Crime Victims Compensation Program processed more than 3,200 claims for assistance and awarded more than \$9.2 million to crime victims. These funds 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. When criminal defendants are diagnosed with mental illness or dually-diagnosed with mental illness and substance abuse, the Courts administer justice through the Mental Health Diversion Court. In collaboration with the United States Attorney's Office and the Pretrial Services Agency, the Mental Health Diversion Court aims to reduce the overall criminal involvement of those with mental illness, provide treatment options and protect public safety. In 2009, 300 non-violent defendants were certified to participate in the program, in which 150 participants complied with all conditions of their deferred prosecution agreements (including mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment) and were able to have their criminal charges dropped and avoid incarceration.

In collaboration with the District's Department of Mental Health and the Psychiatric Institute of Washington, the Urgent Care Clinic operates at the Moultrie Courthouse to assist individuals who may need mental health services. It provides easy access to services primarily for individuals appearing in misdemeanor and traffic court who show signs of mental illness, have been diagnosed as mentally ill, or show signs of both mental illness and substance abuse disorders. In 2009, the Courts referred nearly 700 individuals to the Urgent Care Clinic.

Enhancing service to persons with intellectual disabilities. The Courts provide volunteer advocates to individuals with disabilities who are under court supervision. Advocates ensure that the constitutional rights of these individuals are protected and that they receive the best service available from the District of Columbia. In 2009, advocates were providing services to the court in approximately 130 cases.



Guardianship Assistance volunteers. Back Row left to right: Program Manager Nana Perry, Student Visitors Janis Rowberry (Catholic University), Sunny Chen (Catholic University), and Herandy Pastrana (Howard University). Front Row left to right: Student Visitors Aileen Hayes (Catholic University), Stephanie DeCarlo-Wilson (University of Maryland), and Tracie Mines (University of Maryland).

Guardianship assistance program. In collaboration with local universities, the Courts implemented the Guardianship Assistance Program, in which students seeking advanced degrees in social work provide volunteer services to incapacitated adults in exchange for field instructor supervision by the Probate Division Program Manager. The student volunteers, appointed as Court Visitors, assess the care provided to wards of the Court, identify unmet service needs and make recommendations to the Court regarding the care of and services to incapacitated individuals. During 2009, student volunteers were appointed to 67 cases and provided 3,240 hours of service.

“We make sure that the defendants are connected with the right services to treat their specific illness. The same for those that have drug adictions -- we make sure the participant enters appropriate inpatient or outpatient treatment.” Magistrate Judge Goldfrank

Accessibility for people with hearing impairments.

To enhance accessibility for persons with hearing impairments and limited English proficiency, the Courts successfully completed the installation of an Assistive Listening/Interpreter System in all courtrooms. The system not only boosts the audio volume level for people with hearing impairments, but also broadcasts the translation of proceedings in requested languages.

Legal assistance for indigent families and children.

The Family Court continued its partnership with the David A. Clarke School of Law Legal Clinic at the University of the District of Columbia to provide legal representation for indigent families involved in child welfare cases. Students from the Legal Clinic gained hands-on experience representing families with child welfare cases.

Probate Resource Center.

Now in its third year of operations, the Probate Resource Center serves approximately 50 low-income residents annually with estate administration. Volunteer probate attorneys recruited by the D.C. Bar help people prepare petitions for probate and answer questions about the process.

Services for women with substance abuse problems.

The Family Treatment Court, a residential program specially designed for women with substance abuse problems who have been perpetrators of child abuse and neglect, held its 10th Graduation Celebration in May, recognizing nine women who completed a year-long, judicially supervised residential and outpatient rehabilitation program. Since the program began in 2003, over 500 women have been referred to the program and approximately one-fifth, or 100 women, have graduated.

Fathers reentering the community.

The Fathering Reentry Court helps ex-offenders with active child support cases who are returning to the District of Columbia. Under the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative and with grant funding from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Labor, the Fathering Reentry Court provides parenting education, job skills analysis, employment counseling, job training and job placement services for approximately 50 participants annually. The goal of the program is to help fathers meet their child support obligations and reconnect with their children.

"Assistive Listening Devices help to further the Courts' vision of being 'Open to All'. The new system addresses the needs of individuals with English as a second language and those with hearing impairments." Executive Officer Anne Wicks



Participants receive certificates from Magistrate Judge Milton Lee (far left) after successfully completing the Fathering Reentry Court program.

"If I wasn't in the fathering program, who knows where I'd be? I might be back incarcerated or worse—it's really helped me out a lot. I'm really grateful." Graduate of the Fathering Court

Youth under court supervision. Gender-specific programming is an important strategy used by Court Social Services to serve youth under court supervision. Supported by specially trained probation officers and managers, Leaders of Today in Solidarity (LOTS) is the District's female probation initiative that delivers a variety of court-supervised activities specifically tailored to address the needs of girls and young women involved in the juvenile justice system. Targeted services include social justice activities, anger management, gang mediation, health education, drug use/abuse prevention strategies and community service.

For juvenile males, the Ultimate Transitions Ultimate Responsibilities (UTURN) program addresses the complex needs of the most seriously court-involved boys and young men. UTURN is an alternative to post-dispositional commitment. It provides increased community supervision in a highly prescriptive, culturally sound, comprehensive model specially designed for high-risk juveniles.

To help court-supervised youth meet the challenge of transitioning from foster care to independent living, the Family Court developed a handbook for teens expected to age out of the child welfare system entitled *Pathway to the Future: Your Journey from Adolescence to Adulthood*. By addressing most frequently asked questions and providing information about accessing programs and services available in the community, *Pathway to the Future* helps ease the transition to independence for these vulnerable youth.

Serving residents who live in Wards 7 and 8. The community court hears all U.S. misdemeanor cases (e.g., prostitution, minor drug offenses) that do not involve domestic violence which occur in the sixth and seventh police districts (Wards 7 and 8) of the District. One judge presides over the East of the River Community Court (ERCC) and hears all phases of a case from arraignment until final disposition. The ERCC involves the partnership and collaboration of several agencies and organizations including the United States Attorney's Office, the Pretrial Services Agency and the D.C. Superior Court Trial Lawyers Association. ERCC works to identify the social service needs of offenders that may contribute to their criminal behavior and fashions diversion programs, where appropriate, to address these needs. The ERCC judge is visible in the community, hosting meetings and other neighborhood events to inform the community of ERCC activities and to keep abreast of community issues and concerns. The ERCC Advisory Board, comprised of members of the community, met quarterly in 2009 to consider ERCC operations and to observe the ERCC in session. In 2009, there were more than 2,600 criminal cases filed in ERCC.

Mentoring and employment. In 2009 the East of the River Community Court embarked on a collaborative program with the Anacostia Mentoring and Employment Program (AMEN). This program helps defendants without a high school diploma prepare for the GED test and provides job readiness training to defendants who are unemployed or underemployed.

HELP FOR PERSONS WITHOUT LAWYERS

Consumer law help. The Consumer Law Resource Center provides substantive legal and court processing information to *pro se* individuals with consumer law matters in the District of Columbia. Staffed by volunteer attorneys and legal assistants from Williams & Connolly LLP, individuals are provided assistance on debt collection, independent contractor disputes, automotive repair disputes, utility disputes and issues involving violations of the Consumer Protection Procedures Act. In its first eight months of operations the Consumer Law Resource Center assisted 365 people.

Landlord and tenant assistance. In 2009, the Courts launched a new Landlord and Tenant question and answer e-mail address, L&TQ&A@dcsc.gov, so that the public can obtain information about rental housing issues. To more expeditiously process the large volume of landlord and tenant cases, a second Landlord and Tenant courtroom was opened. The D.C. Bar's Landlord Tenant Resource Center continued to provide an increasing number of *pro se* litigants (both landlords and tenants) with legal information and assistance. According to the Bar, in its fifth full year of operations the Resource Center assisted nearly 5,300 litigants, which represents a 13% increase over the previous year. Three-quarters of those assisted were tenants.

Small claims resources. The Small Claims Resource Center provides legal and court processing information to petitioners and respondents regarding small claims law and procedures in the District of Columbia. Coordinated by the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Program, the Resource 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.

Tax sale services. The Tax Sale Resource Center is a court-based *pro se* assistance office operated by the Bar in collaboration with Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP. The Center provides legal information and advice and assists unrepresented litigants with completing pleadings and other court documents after a tax sale. Over 200 litigants were helped in the Center's second year of operations.



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Family law help. The Family Court Self Help Center is a free walk-in service that provides unrepresented litigants with information and assistance in a variety of family law matters. In 2009, the Center, located in the Moultrie Courthouse, experienced its busiest year by assisting more than 6,000 members of the public, an increase of nearly 28% over 2008.

Filing appeals. In 2009 the *Pro Se Self-Help Guide* was updated by the Court of Appeals. The *Guide* tells litigants how to file an appeal to a judicial decision and is available on-line at www.dccourts.gov.

Probate assistance. The Probate Division developed a series of informative brochures for the public about probate matters and estate administration. The most recent publication, entitled *After Death*, explains the probate process. In addition to the publications, on-line access to docket information in cases involving decedents' estates and major litigation is available through the Courts' Remote Public Access link. For the *pro se* public filing small estates (approximately 400 people annually), the Court provides Small Estates Specialists who walk litigants through the process.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN COMMUNITY- BASED SETTINGS

Access to justice often means taking justice and court-related services to where they are needed most. The Courts operate several community-based sites to facilitate access to court services.

Assisting domestic violence victims. The Courts' Domestic Violence Intake Center maintains a satellite location in Southeast Washington D.C. so that domestic violence victims can receive services in their community. Through collaboration with public and private partners, such as Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment, D.C. Legal Aid Society, the Office of the Attorney General and the Metropolitan Police Department, the satellite Domestic Violence Intake Center handles initial filings for temporary protection orders and motions related to ongoing domestic violence cases and provides counseling and social service assistance to victims. Fourteen-day temporary protection orders are processed by teleconferencing from the satellite location to the courthouse.

Community-based services for juveniles. Court Social Services operates two Balanced and Restorative Justice Centers for court-involved youth in need of supervision and services. Located in the Northeast and Southeast quadrants of the District, these Centers provided court-supervised youth with community-based drop-in probation and recreation services. At the Centers, youth benefit from evening programming, an alternative day suspension program (for youth suspended from school for three or more days) and community service on Saturdays. In 2009, the Courts' Northwest Satellite Office expanded its services to include a variety of pro-social and therapeutic programs such as anger management classes, drug abuse prevention and a life-skills program designed specifically for Spanish speaking youth and families.

Truancy reduction. In collaboration with the Browne Education Center and the community-based Edgewood Brooklyn Family Collaborative, the Courts' Truancy Diversion Program graduated seven students in May 2009 with congratulatory remarks by Superior Court Chief Judge Satterfield and encouragement from former National Football League player Stephen Fitzhugh. Presided over by a judicial officer, Truancy Court met weekly for 10 weeks at the Browne Educational Center to work with youth and their parents to assess student and family needs, develop individual progress plans and monitor student attendance and compliance with the program in an effort to reduce truancy from school. As a result, parents and students took more responsibility for school attendance, truancy decreased, referrals for student discipline were reduced and student academic performance improved.

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.

AN ENGAGED AND INVOLVED JUDICIARY

Annual judicial conference. "The CSI Effect: Computers, Science and the Internet-Impact on the Administration of Justice" was the theme at the Courts' annual judicial conference. The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Attorney General of the United

States and a former Associate Judge of the Superior Court, gave the keynote address that focused on the influence of technology, especially DNA, on criminal prosecutions. Attended by judges, court managers and lawyers, the conference included three sessions: "How the Media Shapes Public Perception of 21st Century Justice," "The Tangled Web (www.) That Has Been Weaved" and "Are Our Courts and Juries Equipped to Handle 21st Century Issues?"



Panel members discuss one of the many topics at the judicial conference.



The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Attorney General of the United States, addresses the Courts' Annual Judicial Conference.

Judicial honors. In 2009, national and local voluntary bar associations acknowledged the achievements of judges at the Court of Appeals and Superior Court for special honors. Among the national achievements: D.C. Court of Appeals Senior Judge, the Honorable Frank Schwelb, a Holocaust survivor, was honored with the Olender Foundation's Hero in Law Award for his dedication to justice, equality and the underserved. The Honorable Judge Inez Smith Reid received the prestigious 2009 Ollie Mae Cooper Award from the Washington Bar Association recognizing her commitment not only to the law but the greater community.

The Honorable Vanessa Ruiz received the 2009 Margaret Brent Award from the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession. Judge Ruiz was among the first women to argue a case in the Supreme Court during the term of Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and was honored for being a trailblazer. The Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia honored Superior Court Judge Laura A. Cordero with its Ricardo M. Urbina Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2009 Equal Justice Awards Reception held in Washington D.C.



2009 Margaret Brent award winners with Roberta Liebenberg, chair ABA Commission on Women in the Profession (far left), and the ABA President H. Thomas Wells Jr. (center). The winners were (from left to right) Linda Addison, Fulbright & Jaworski, Judge Vanessa Ruiz, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Helaine Barnett, President, Legal Services Corporation, and Lovetta Tuell, Anderson Tuell.

Judges in the community. The Honorable Eric T. Washington, Chief Judge of the D.C. Court of Appeals, delivered the 41st Annual Pope John XXIII Lecture in September at Catholic University's Columbus School of Law. Concerned about the rising number of unrepresented litigants, Chief Judge Washington challenged the student audience to consider pro bono work during their careers as a way to ensure that justice is available to all.

In 2009, the Courts' Improving the Treatment of Court Participants Subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Fairness and Access held several Outreach Initiative Forums with representatives of the immigrant, Latino and Asian and Pacific Island communities. Several judges participated in engaging groups of residents across the District in learning more about the Courts.

Chief Judge Lee Satterfield undertook an outreach effort with Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) members (commissioners) in 2009, meeting with commissioners from Wards 1, 4, 5 and 6. The meetings began with a very brief introduction by the Chief Judge and then the presiding and/or deputy presiding judges and division directors from Criminal, Domestic Violence and Family Court Divisions gave a brief overview of the Court's role in the criminal justice process. Commissioners were asked to speak about their concerns, their communities, and their general impression of the Court. The discussions were all very productive. The judges and court staff gained a greater understanding of the community they serve and the challenges faced. ANC Commissioners expressed great appreciation of the Court leadership extending a hand, inviting them to the courthouse, and listening to their concerns.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Continuing education opportunities.
The Second Annual Courtwide Employee Conference, “Great People Make a Great

Place to Work,” was held in early spring. The Conference provided motivational speakers and workshops that instilled employees with a renewed sense of the importance of public service. Focused on the practice of mutual respect and the negative affects of prejudice and discrimination in everyday life and at the workplace, conference sessions emphasized public service and becoming a “...customer service warrior—someone that doesn’t let small things go”.

Addressing a growing community need, the Courts’ Probate Division held its first Guardianship Conference to assist guardians in providing services to incapacitated adults who are under court supervision. Approximately 125 family members and attorney guardians attended the conference and participated in 13 seminars on subjects like “*Making Health Care Decisions: Using the “New” Substituted Consent Standard*” and “*Creating Pre-paid Funeral Accounts*”.

The Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN) Office worked with the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law to pilot a training series on representing non-custodial fathers in child abuse and neglect cases. The CCAN Office organized 20 brown bag lunch trainings during the year for attorneys and others on a variety of child welfare issues.

In October, the Family Court and Domestic Violence Unit hosted its Eighth Annual Family Court Interdisciplinary Training entitled “*Domestic Violence in Families: Strengthening the Community Response*”. The training covered an array of topics ranging from legal consequences attendant to domestic violence to cultural issues and treatment strategies. Nearly 300 judges, court managers, probation officers, social workers, attorneys, victim advocates and researchers attended the training.

The Family Court’s Committee on Disproportionate Representation of Minorities developed guidelines to address racial disproportionality and disparate treatment in foster care. The Courts collaborated with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the District’s Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to convene a retreat for court employees and partner agencies who manage juvenile and abuse and neglect cases to collectively develop specific goals to address disproportionality.



Employees listen intently to a presentation about mutual respect and the dangers of discrimination.

Child welfare law specialist certification. Completing a year-process, in June 2009, the Courts received notification that 25 local attorneys had successfully completed all requirements to become certified Child Welfare Law Specialists (CWLS). Attaining certification as Child Welfare Law Specialists demonstrates that these attorneys have the skills and knowledge to provide high quality representation to children, parents and the government in child welfare cases. The newly certified attorneys are practicing in the child abuse and neglect area of the Family Court, in government or as agency attorneys.

Employee recognition. The 28th Annual Employee Recognition and Award Ceremony took place in September 2009. During the ceremony, the Courts recognized employees who attained performance achievements and those who met length-of-service milestones. Mr. Alan Reid, Family Court Operations Division, received the Unsung Hero Award and Ms. Gale Woodland, Information Technology Division, was honored with the Management Achievement Award. The Public Service Award for an Individual went to Nathaniel Speight, while the Civil Division's Information and Records Section garnered the Public Service Award for an Office. The Courts' Enterprise Award recognized the Capital Projects and Facilities Management Division for an impressive list of capital projects.

Celebrating cultural diversity. Washington, D.C. is one of the most culturally diverse metropolitan areas in the country. The Courts embrace that diversity by taking time to recognize and acknowledge how various cultures contributed to our society, both nationally and locally.



Patricia Williams, 40-year court employee, with Chief Judge Eric T. Washington and Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield.



Dr. Ira Berlin with Superior Court Judge Craig Iscoe during the Black History Month's program on the history of slavery.

For Black History Month in February, the Courts sponsored two major events: Reverend Vincent Powell Harris of St. George's Church in the District spoke on the topic of "The Quest for Black Citizenship: The Church's Role in the Quest for Black Voting Rights" and Dr. Ira Berlin, professor at the University of Maryland and an expert on the history of slavery, explored the lives of slaves and freed men.

In March 2009, American Indian Heritage Month was celebrated with a performance of traditional American Indian dances, songs and instrumental music by the Tayac Territory American Indian Singers and Dancers.

In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month in October, the Courts highlighted “El Salvador: A Nation and Its Culture”, with Ms. Wilma Herrera, Counsel for Community Affairs, and Ms. Arena Ortega, Media Counsel, from the Embassy of El Salvador as guest presenters. The Courts celebration included the CORO Awards Ceremony recognizing those individuals and organizations that provided invaluable services to the local Latino community. The 2009 awardees were the Whitman-Walker Clinic for Latino Services (Community Agency Award); Katherine S. Broderick, Dean, David A. Clarke School of Law, University of the District of Columbia (Legal Community Award); Yvonne Martinez-Vega, Deputy Director, Criminal Division (Achievement Recognition Award); Avrom Sickel, Branch Chief, Self-Help Center, Family Court (Community Outreach Award) and Mercedes Lemp, Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs (Allan Kline Award).



During American Indian Heritage Month: “Honoring the First Americans”, musicians and dancers perform.



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, with major milestones completed in 2009 to ensure that court facilities and services met the public needs and effectively supported court operations. Additionally, the Courts are making a substantial investment in technology to enhance operations.

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE RESTORATION

In April 2009, the Courts completed restoration and expansion of the 190-year-old Historic Courthouse, designated one of America's Treasures. This historic and architecturally significant structure became the new location for the D.C. Court of Appeals

and is a key element in the renewal of the District's Judiciary Square. The renovated Historic Courthouse contains state-of-the-art training facilities with distance-learning capacity as well as space for lectures, ceremonial functions and other activities.



Since its official opening on Law Day, the Historic Courthouse has received national and local recognition for its architectural integrity and construction excellence. Acknowledging the work of the Courts' Capital Projects and Facilities Management Division

“We look forward to D.C. residents visiting the courthouse and seeing it as a centerpiece of our city and, more specifically, the heart of the Judiciary Square neighborhood. The renovations will allow the courthouse to once again serve its historic role as a symbol of the proud history of our city and our commitment to equal justice under the law,”

Chief Judge Washington

and project teams, the national awards included the 2009 Associated General Contractors' Mid-Atlantic Construction Project of the Year Award for “best achieved goals of a project team”, and the government/public category winner of the 2009 McGraw-Hill Construction's Best of the Best Award, a national competition that recognizes design and construction excellence. Local awards included the 2009 District of Columbia Award for “exemplary work”; the 2009 Washington Chapter AIA Award of Merit in Historic Resources, and the 2009 Downtown Business Improvement District Momentum Award as a Landmark Development Project for bringing “innovation and excitement to the downtown area of the District of Columbia.”

MOULTRIE COURTHOUSE RENOVATIONS

Several renovations with the Moultrie Courthouse occurred in 2009 that permitted consolidation of office operations and improvements to public space. In May, extensive renovation to the fifth floor (former Probate Division space) became the new home of the Civil Division. Juvenile holding facilities were renovated and expanded to provide state-of-the-art secure facilities for juvenile detainees and juveniles at risk. The new facilities safeguard the privacy, safety and security of juveniles and better incorporate electronic surveillance. Other significant capital projects completed at the Moultrie Courthouse included a new secure glass entrance, cellblock interim upgrades, expanded and improved administrative space for the U.S. Marshal's Service, and renovation and security upgrades to internal corridors.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

The Courts successfully implemented a campus-wide wireless access project to provide the public, attorneys and other court participants with Internet accessibility in all court facilities in Judiciary Square. To enhance public access to case information, the Courts expanded remote access via the Internet to information in civil, criminal and probate cases.

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.

In recent years, courthouse security has become a national priority and no more so than in the nation's capital. The Courts acknowledge the need not just for physical safety of judicial officers, staff and court participants, but also for safety measures, contingency planning, courtwide preparedness and reliable communications.

Emergency preparedness activities. In April 2009, the Courts launched Security and Emergency Preparedness Awareness Month. The theme, "*Preparing, Knowing and Minimizing Risks*," was strongly underscored by guest speaker Amanda Ripley, Time magazine contributor and author of *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes and Why*. Ms. Ripley spoke about the myths and realities of what happens to the human mind and body during catastrophic events and how people behave during emergencies.

In a workshop entitled *Personal Security and Safety for Court Interpreters*, interpreters from the D.C. Metropolitan Area learned about the Courts' security and emergency procedures. Training on *Continuity of Operations Planning in the Court Environment* was presented by Caroline Cooper, Associate Director of Justice Programs at American University. The Courts coordinated information fairs for court staff and the general public which offered information on individual and home emergency preparedness, fire prevention, emergency procedures for persons with disabilities, computer identity theft and public safety and security in the mass transit system. Collaborating agencies included D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, the D.C. Office of Disability Rights, D.C. Department of Transportation, Downtown Business Improvement District, Metropolitan Police Department, Serve DC, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, U.S. Marshals Service, ADT Security Services and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

As a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Courts collaborated with District and Federal governments to ensure that all criminal justice agencies in the District of Columbia have the ability to successfully coordinate emergency responses as they serve and protect the public. The Courts developed division-level Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) designed to integrate with existing courtwide emergency procedures.

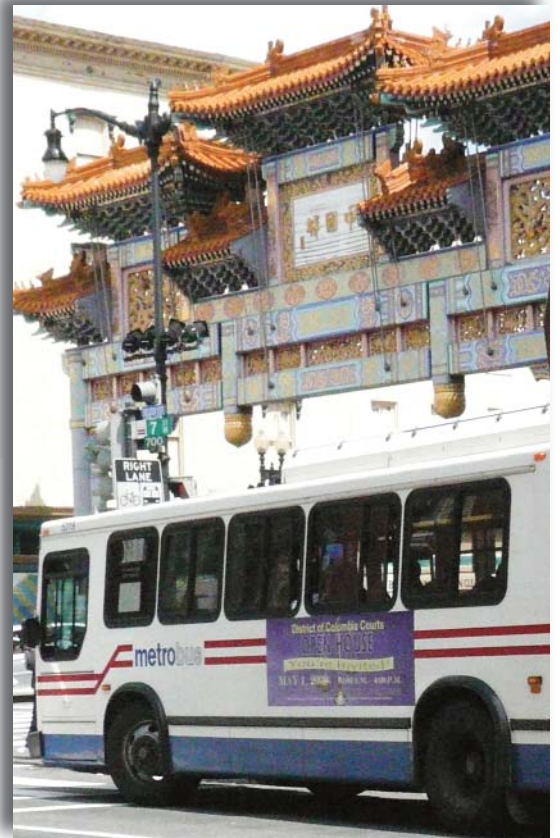
PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

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.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community open house. With widespread advance media promotion on radio, television and Metrobuses, the Courts held a Community Open

House on May 1, 2009, as a way to both celebrate Law Day and meet the strategic goal of openness to the community. Several hundred residents came to Judiciary Square for a program throughout D.C. Courts' buildings that included: a judicial town hall meeting with the two chief judges and the presiding judges; workshops on topics of interest, such as *"I'm Not Rich, Why Do I Need a Will?"*; and more than a dozen D.C. Bar *pro bono* clinics and legal service providers offering free legal assistance. Court employees staffed information booths describing the functions and services of Superior Court divisions and programs. A job fair provided employment information on court positions and application procedures.



D.C. Metrobus advertising the Open House event.



Court staff assisting residents at the Open House.

During the Open House District high school students participated in mock trials by D.C. Street Law. A mock trial program for third grade students entitled *“Stay on the Right Side of the Law”* used the “The Three Little Pigs” classic children’s story to educate young students about the law and the consequences of breaking the law. Mock mediations and information on alternative dispute resolution programs were also presented. The Wills Project, an exhibit of wills of famous Washingtonians, including Frederick Douglass, Dolly Madison and several U.S. presidents, proved popular with attendees, as did real-time observation of courtrooms in session.



Third grade students participating in the mock trial based on “The Three Little Pigs”.



Judge Craig Iscoe hosting a community meeting.

Community forums. The East of the River Community Court (ERCC) sponsored two community forums in 2009. The first forum, conducted in conjunction with Ward 7 Councilmember Yvette Alexander, representatives of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Sixth District, and the MPD Sixth District Citizens Advisory Council was a Town Hall Meeting called *“Community Issues, Crime and Criminal Justice,”* held at the Kelly Miller Middle School. More than 200 community residents attended the session. The second community forum, *“Information is Key to Empowering Citizens,”* was held at Matthews Memorial Baptist Church. More than 100 community members participated in this forum that was co-sponsored with MPD Seventh District, Anacostia Coordinating Council, and the MPD 7D Citizens Advisory Council.

Educational outreach to law schools. To enhance community access, build public trust and further educational outreach, the Court of Appeals held oral arguments at nearly every law school in the District.

Youth and the law. Each spring, in partnership with the District of Columbia Affairs Section of the D.C. Bar, the Courts host Youth Law Fair, inviting area teens to spend a Saturday at the Moultrie Courthouse. This full-day educational event brings high school students, lawyers, judges and educators together to explore issues facing students in the D.C. area. The topic for the 10th annual Youth Law Fair was texting, emails and social media, with a theme of *“OMG!! CAN U SAY THAT??? IDK...”* The event included exhibits, tours of the courthouse and holding cells, speak-out sessions, and mock trials.

National Adoption Day. In November, the entire Court family joined with Family Court and the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency to host the 23rd Annual Adoption Day. This year's theme "Adoption: A Lifetime of Love" provided an appropriate backdrop for the real-time adoption of 40 children into permanent, loving families. Local news anchor Barbara Harrison served as emcee for this very special occasion at which children and families finalized their adoptions. Through the Adoption Day celebration, the Courts share with the community the joy that comes from creating new families.

PUBLIC TRUST

Tracking court performance. Effective administration of justice necessarily

involves monitoring performance in regular, measurable ways. The Courts continued to coordinate implementation of courtwide performance measures which were approved by the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration. Collaborating with the Information Technology and Research and Development Divisions, the Office of Strategic Management worked to define and operationalize measures on access to justice and the treatment of court participants. All the Courts' measures are central to maintaining public trust and confidence in the justice system.

Fiscal responsibility. In 2009 the Courts continued to efficiently manage resources and serve as prudent stewards of public funds. The Courts again received an unqualified opinion on its annual financial audit. The Courts' dedication to strong and responsible control over spending helps ensure adequate funding levels for Court operations.

Financing the administration of justice for today and tomorrow. The Courts must have the financial resources to administer justice fairly, promptly and efficiently. In fiscal year 2009, Congress provided \$172.3 million for court operations, \$76.1 million for capital projects, and \$52.5 million for defender services. The appropriation reflects a 22% increase in the capital budget, focused on improving space utilized by the U.S. Marshals Service and the adult holding facilities in the Moultrie Courthouse cellblock and maintaining the more than 1.1 million square feet of court space in Judiciary Square. The appropriation also finances operational initiatives, including services to persons with intellectual disabilities, additional probation officers to supervise juveniles, and new training programs. In addition, to help ensure continued quality representation for the indigent, the appropriation finances an increase in the hourly rate for court-appointed attorneys.



Magistrate Judge Lori Parker (far right) with an adoptive family at the Adoption Day ceremony. Emcee Barbara Harrison is in the background.

“Metrics help us improve our performance as a court. By setting standards and measuring results, we are accountable to the community we serve.” Chief Judge Satterfield

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 things of value. In 2009, the Clients' Security Trust Fund opened 45 new requests for reimbursement. The Trustees reviewed and approved 37 claims, for a total reimbursement to individuals in the amount of \$257,434.

Members of the Committee on Admissions are responsible for certifying applications from attorneys for admission to the District of Columbia Bar and for licensing foreign applicants to practice as special legal consultants in the District of Columbia. They also certify law students for the limited practice of law in the District of Columbia. In 2009, the Committee certified more than 4,000 attorneys for admission to the D.C. Bar and issued more than 11,000 certificates of good standing to Bar members.

The Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law investigates complaints against persons who engage in the unauthorized practice of law and also monitors motions made by attorneys from other jurisdictions for permission to appear *pro hac vice* in the District of Columbia Courts. During 2009, the Committee investigated 24 new complaints against persons allegedly engaging in the unauthorized practice of law in the District of Columbia and requested guidance in compliance with the law. The Committee monitored approximately 460 motions of attorneys seeking *pro hac vice* appearances in the District of Columbia Courts.

The Board on Professional Responsibility administers the attorney discipline system and enforces the D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct, which were adopted to protect the public and the judicial system from attorney misconduct and to preserve the integrity of the legal profession. During 2009, the Board disposed of over 30 cases. In addition, the Office of the Bar Counsel received more than 1,000 complaints and docketed 44% for formal investigation.

CONCLUSION

The District of Columbia Courts remain focused on delivering justice fairly and efficiently for all who come before the court in a variety of forums including in a formal courtroom, a filing counter, a community-based intake facility or a youth educational center. In the future, the Courts will continue to proceed diligently to resolve disputes fairly, impartially and timely by exploring reforms and innovations that not only expedite the process of justice but also make justice more transparent and accessible to all who seek Court services.



Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All



Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All

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; federal 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

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

The District of Columbia Courts are the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. They are comprised of the Court of Appeals, the highest court, the Superior Court or the trial court, and the Court System, the administrative offices. Unlike every other state-level court in the country, the District of Columbia Courts' 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. Magistrate Judges are selected by a panel of Associate Judges and appointed by the Chief Judge of the Superior Court. The D.C. Courts are funded 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. Since there is no intermediate appellate court in the District, as 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 the trial court of general jurisdiction, which means that virtually all local legal matters are heard in this court. The Superior Court is comprised of divisions and offices that handle: civil, criminal, domestic violence, family, probate and tax cases; juvenile probation supervision; alternative dispute resolution services; and crime victims 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, some family matters, 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 on a scheduled basis.

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 which provide technical and support services, including contracting and procurement, legal counsel, capital projects, facilities management, budget and finance, human resources, training, research, information technology and court reporting.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

