

District of Columbia Courts

State of the Judiciary

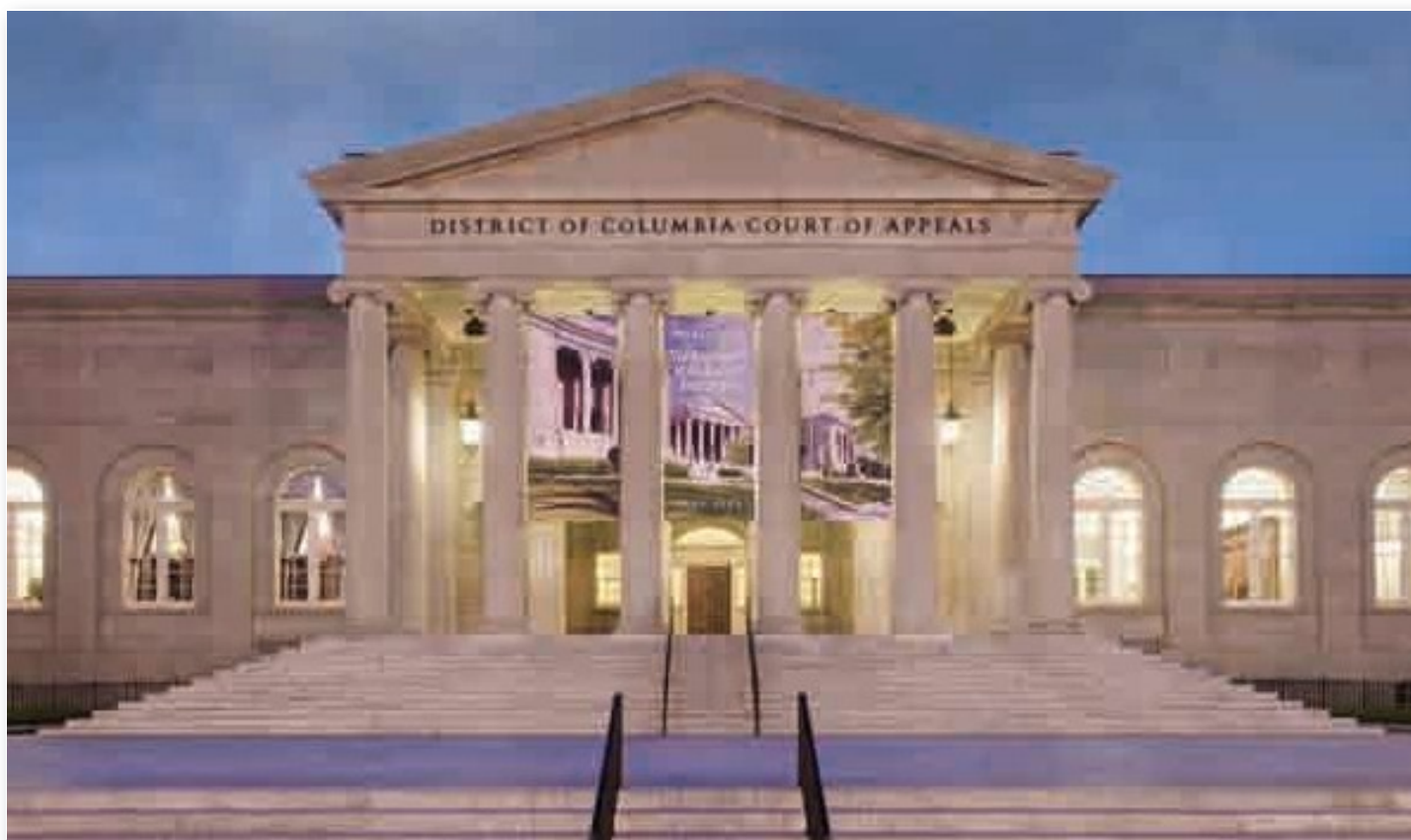
2011



Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

On behalf of the District of Columbia Courts, I am pleased to transmit *The State of the Judiciary 2011*. This annual report highlights the achievements of the District of Columbia Courts as we strive to attain our strategic goals for serving the public in the District of Columbia. In 2011 the Courts mark the fourth year of implementation of our five-year (2008 – 2012) strategic plan: *Delivering Justice*, which informs the initiatives undertaken to enhance the administration of justice for our community.

As the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia government, the D.C. Courts are entrusted by the public with protecting rights and liberties, upholding and interpreting the law, and resolving disputes peacefully, fairly, and effectively. To carry out this mission, this year the Courts implemented new practices, changed business processes, and increased technology, among other things. I invite you to read about our many innovations and activities in this report and to visit our website, www.dccourts.gov, to learn more about the District of Columbia Courts and the services we provide to the community.

The D.C. Courts take great pride in serving the people of the District of Columbia. We appreciate the dedicated and highly professional judicial officers and court staff who work every day to realize 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 People of the District of Columbia,

The District of Columbia Courts are here to serve you. The Courts work hard to stay abreast of the changing legal needs of our community, and this report outlines many initiatives and programs developed to address those needs. Particularly in these difficult economic times, the Courts strive to find innovative, efficient, and cost-effective ways to administer justice for the public in the District. We have enhanced our ability to serve you through technology.

We hold ourselves accountable to you, and this report is part of our work in that regard. The D.C. Courts continue to refine performance measures to inform the public about court activities. We invite you to visit our website at www.dccourts.gov to learn more about your judicial branch of government.

Finally, we thank our colleagues in the judiciary and the entire staff of the D.C. Courts for their leadership, innovation, and tireless work to administer justice. It is a privilege to work with these dedicated public servants, as well as with our agency partners, who show strong commitment to meeting the legal needs of our community.



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



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

STATE OF THE JUDICIARY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS, 2011

The District of Columbia Courts make up the Judicial Branch of the District of Columbia Government. The Courts serve the public in the District of Columbia, its residents and the many visitors to the Nation's Capital.

Delivering Justice: Strategic Plan of the District of Columbia Courts, 2008 – 2012, guides the work of the District of Columbia Courts by identifying six issues that give direction to the D.C. Courts' activities as we serve the people and strive to achieve our vision: "Open to All, Trusted by All, Justice for All." This report discusses activities that the D.C. Courts have undertaken this year to enhance service to the public in each of the areas below.

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

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

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

Strategic Issue 4: A Sound Infrastructure requires the Courts' facilities and technology to be modern and up to date to ensure that they support efficiency and make it easy for the public to access court buildings, information, and services.

Strategic Issue 5: Security and Disaster Preparedness commands a safe and secure environment for the administration of justice and continued service to the public in the event of an emergency. The Courts must not only address day-to-day security risks, but also plan with other criminal justice agencies for potential crises.

Strategic Issue 6: Public Trust and Confidence is the foundation of the administration of justice in a democratic society. Through transparency, communication, and accountability to the public, the Courts strive to ensure that the community trusts the Courts to resolve its disputes in an unbiased 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

To live up to the first strategic issue, fair and timely case resolution, the D.C. Courts must balance fairness in decision-making and the speed or timeliness of case resolution, utilizing best practices in case management. Each case that comes before the court must be decided based on its facts and the law, recognizing each party’s right to due process and equal protection under the law.

Each case must also be decided in a timely manner without unnecessary delay.



Historic Courthouse Entrance

D.C. Court of Appeals. Courts hear cases brought before them. In 2011, 1,803 new cases were filed in the D.C. Court of Appeals, and the court disposed of (or completed) 2,029 cases. A common measure of court efficiency is the clearance rate, a comparison of cases completed to cases filed (and reopened). At a clearance rate of 100% a court is keeping pace with its workload by resolving one pending case for each new case. The Court of Appeals achieved a clearance rate of 110% in 2011, an excellent efficiency measure.

The Court of Appeals continued to strive to reduce the time it takes to appeal a case. Significant progress has been made, with the median time on appeal dropping to approximately a year (370 days) in 2011, a 27% reduction since 2007.

Court of Appeals Caseload Activity, 2011

Category	New Cases Filed		Cases Reopened	Cases Disposed		Cases Pending December 31, 2011		Clearance Rate
Mandatory Appeal & Bar Cases	1,723	96%	47	1,953	96%	1,868	100%	110%
Original Jurisdiction Matters	45	3%	0	42	2%	4	0.2%	93%
Discretionary Jurisdiction Matters	35	2%	0	34	2%	1	0.1%	97%
Total	1,803	100%	47	2,029	100%	1,873	100%	110%

Detailed statistics are available at www.dccourts.gov

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D.C. Superior Court. In 2011, 101,535 new cases were filed in the Superior Court. Of these, over half (55% or 56,272 cases) were civil cases, 23,023 (23%) were criminal cases, and 12,003 (12%) were family court cases, including child support, divorce, child welfare, mental health, and juvenile cases. The Superior Court achieved a clearance rate of 97%.

Superior Court Caseload Activity, 2011

Division	New Cases Filed		Cases Reopened	Cases Disposed		Cases Pending December 31, 2011		Clearance Rate
Civil Division	56,272	55%	1,357	57,695	53%	15,937	37%	100%
Criminal Division	23,023	23%	7,313	24,944	23%	8,064	19%	103%
Domestic Violence Unit	7,160	7%	297	7,345	7%	867	2%	98%
Family Court Operations	12,003	12%	416	15,101	14%	9,434	22%	122%
Probate Division	2,557	2%	406	2,952	3%	6,923	16%	100%
Tax Division	520	1%	1	249	0.3%	1,462	3%	48%
Total	101,535	100%	9,790	108,286	100%	42,687	100%	97%

Detailed statistics are available at www.dccourts.gov

Tracking Court Performance. Performance measure reports for all operating divisions for time to disposition, trial date certainty, and age of active pre-disposition caseload allow the Courts' leadership and others to monitor each division's performance (assess how good a job the court is doing) on a monthly or routine basis. Armed with this information, decision-makers can evaluate established business practices, determine where opportunities for improvement exist, and modify goals to encourage enhanced performance. Each operating division provides a status report twice a year on its performance in each of these categories.

ENHANCING FAIR CASE RESOLUTION

Legal Representation for Indigent Defendants. Continuing work to ensure that poor criminal defendants receive quality representation, both the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court approved additional attorneys for court appointment, following a careful review of their qualifications

and skills. In addition, both courts continued to require these attorneys to receive ongoing education to maintain their skills. Attorneys must complete eight hours of continuing legal education each year in subject areas such as criminal law, appellate or trial advocacy, evidence, and ethics.

Fairness in Child Welfare Cases. In March 2011, Family Court judges were trained on the "Courts Catalyzing Change Bench Card" as part of ongoing work to reduce racial disproportionality and disparate treatment of children in foster care. Developed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to transform judicial practice on the bench in child abuse and neglect cases, the bench card contains a series of questions and checklists designed to help judges examine biases that may affect their decisions, consider due process, and ask the participants about specific issues at the initial hearing.

Educating Children in Foster Care. In November, to improve educational outcomes for children in foster care, the Family Court, along with the District's Child and Family Services Agency and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, participated in a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services summit, "Child Welfare, Education, and the Courts: A Collaboration to Strengthen Educational Successes of Children and Youth in Foster Care." An Educational Checklist for Judicial Officers was developed as well as an action plan to address the education of these young people.

Protecting Vulnerable Elders. The Superior Court Probate Division created a bench card to assist in identifying elder abuse and neglect. The bench card contains checklists to help judges recognize and address elder abuse, including a list of available resources.

Skilled Family Court Attorneys. Attorneys who practice in the Superior Court Family Court had several training opportunities this year. In May, a two-day trial skills training program conducted by the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) covered trial preparation topics such as direct examination and exhibits, cross examination and impeachment, and the examination of expert witnesses. Attorneys from the Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN) Panel, Guardian *ad Litem* (GAL) Panel, Children's Law Center, and Office of the Attorney General participated. In addition, the Family Court offered a two-day initial training program for new CCAN and GAL Panel attorneys in February and organized 17 brown bag lunch trainings throughout the year for panel attorneys and other interested persons on Permanency for Older Youth, Psychiatric Medication, Transitioning from Neglect Court to Disability Services, and other topics.

INNOVATIONS IN CASE PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

Child Welfare Legal Clinic. To provide quality legal representation to families and to encourage law students to practice child welfare law, the David A. Clarke School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia operates a child welfare legal clinic in the Family Court. At the close of the Fall 2011 semester, the clinic was representing parents in 16

abuse and neglect cases. Since it began in 2008, a total of 87 students have participated in the clinic, providing free legal representation in 46 cases.

Family Treatment Court. In May, the 12th graduation celebration of the Superior Court's Family Treatment Court recognized nine women who completed a residential substance abuse treatment program for mothers with children in the child welfare system. The program keeps the children with their mothers during treatment, rather than placing the children in foster care. Since its inception in 2003, more than 100 women have gained sobriety, successfully completed the program, and been reunified with their children. The Family Treatment Court not only keeps families together, but also saves money for the District by reducing the number of children in foster care.



Judge Zoe Bush addresses Family Treatment Court graduates.



Judge Milton Lee (right) with a Fathering Court graduate.

Fathering Court. The third graduation of the Superior Court's Fathering Court in January recognized six men for successful completion of one year of employment and meaningful participation in the lives of their children. Started in 2007, the Fathering Court serves fathers with child support cases who are exiting the penal system and aims to equip them with the skills to become emotionally and financially responsible for their children.

Community Court. The Superior Court's community courts continue to apply a problem-solving approach to criminal justice, partnering with local organizations to help offenders give back to the community by performing community service, to hold them accountable, and to address quality-of-life crimes.

Housing Conditions Calendar. In its second year, the Housing Conditions Calendar, which expedites actions to enforce housing code regulations, is expanding rapidly. The judge, assisted by a D.C. Government housing inspector, hears cases filed by tenants against landlords for alleged violations of the housing code; the first hearing is scheduled within one month. Mediators help landlords and tenants reach agreement on repairs.

Parenting Services. To help parents in contested child custody cases improve communication and resolve or settle disagreements in the child's best interest, the Office of Parenting Coordinator (OPC) provided services to 21 families in 2011, with the assistance of graduate students from local universities. After hosting a Japanese delegation late in 2010, the Court was gratified to learn that Japan is implementing a similar program modeled on the OPC.



Judge Robert Rigsby addresses a Community Court Town Hall Meeting.

The Program for Agreement and Cooperation in Contested Custody Cases (PAC) educates parents in contested custody cases so as to reduce conflict, thereby reducing the adverse effects of their disagreements on their children. PAC helps prepare parents for mediation, which is scheduled following participation in the classes. Twenty-four education seminars, in English and Spanish, throughout the year helped parents understand the impact of custody disputes on their children.

Safe and Sound Children. The new Safe and Sound Project seeks to reduce the number of children in the child welfare system whose cases move from in-home, where families exhibiting early signs of child neglect receive resources and services, to court-involved, where more serious issues require court intervention to ensure the safety of the child. The project is also gathering data about what causes in-home cases to convert to court-involved cases in order to facilitate development of best practices to work with this vulnerable population. Safe and Sound is a collaborative effort with the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency, the D.C. Office of the Attorney General, and other stakeholders. To date, the program has served 14 families.



Family Court Entrance to the Moultrie Courthouse

Handling Domestic Violence in Mediation. A new Domestic Violence protocol guides mediators on what to do if allegations of abuse arise during mediation or if an incident of domestic violence occurs in or outside the mediation process. This protocol incorporates a step-by-step approach to safely terminate mediation sessions and provides suggested language to use with the participants.

Staggered Calendars. The Superior Court is exploring staggered schedules, in which litigants are scheduled at different times during the day, rather than all being told to report first thing in the morning, to reduce wait times for litigants and enhance efficiency. Staggered schedules have been piloted in some domestic violence, paternity and support, civil, and criminal misdemeanor cases.

Moving Toward Paperless. A Court goal is to move away from heavy reliance on paper. This year, in a “paper-on-demand” pilot project in Landlord Tenant Court, case filings are docketed and scanned into the Court’s case management system, and then the hard copy is returned to the individual filing the case. The “filer” must keep the originals (without alternation) and may be required to produce them “on demand.” In addition, the Court went paperless in Mental Health and Habilitation cases. These steps build on earlier measures to expedite case processing and strengthen the integrity of court records as we convert from paper to electronic case records.

Juror Enhancements. New access to the Superior Court case management system helps the Jurors’ Office staff serve jurors more efficiently. Staff can track trial activity, which facilitates management of jurors’ time (or juror utilization), and expedite determination of the potential jurors’ eligibility to serve, as staff can now look up any criminal cases that might be disqualifying. A new online chat capability, initiated in October, provides an additional way for the Court to communicate with jurors by providing real time online responses to questions regarding jury service.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Ensuring that all District residents have access to justice is an increasing challenge for the D.C.



Main Entrance to Moultrie Courthouse

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 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.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR COURT PARTICIPANTS

Language Access. As part of ongoing efforts to make the D.C. Courts open to those who speak languages other than English, this year manuals for contract interpreters were updated to include changes in procedures. Courtwide

Spanish translation of critical documents was completed, and other documents were identified for translation into Amharic, Vietnamese, French, and Korean. The Courts general information brochure, which was translated into the nine most-requested foreign languages, was distributed to the community. These steps build on existing resources, such as courtwide interpreter services—in person and by telephone, bilingual staff, signage in both English and Spanish, and forms and brochures in multiple languages.

Increasing Real-Time Court Reporting. In 2011 real-time court reporting expanded to four additional civil and felony courtrooms. Real-time reporting instantaneously translates the reporter's stenographic notes during court proceedings to English. The real-time transcript facilitates participation in court proceedings by hearing-impaired litigants and is made available on the judge's and attorney's computer screens. Enhanced access to court proceedings, the immediate transcript for the judge, the ability to research rulings and testimony, and the expedited production of transcripts continue to enhance the administration of justice.

Technology in Mediation. The Court began using WebEx videoconferencing technology to include out-of-state persons in mediations and to conduct mediator in-service training. A web-based agreement writing system, launched in February, 2011, will enhance agreements in family cases.

Award-winning Crime Victims Compensation Program. The Seventh Annual Violet Collins “Strengthening Families” Award from the Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative honored the Superior Court’s Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVCP) for its support and community outreach for victims of crime. The CVCP compensates innocent victims for financial losses related to a crime. Numerous collaborative efforts with community groups provide temporary emergency shelter to domestic violence victims when the Court is closed, case management and counseling to domestic violence victims placed in temporary emergency housing in local hotels, and community-based satellite offices. In 2011, crime victims in the District received nearly \$9 million in compensation, including funds from a \$3.7 million federal grant.



Court employees ready to distribute surveys to court users.

Protecting Incapacitated Persons who are Wards of the Court. As the population ages, more incapacitated adults require court supervision to ensure their safety and the quality of the care they receive. New filings in these cases increased by 7% in 2011. The Court expanded the Guardianship Assistance Program, in which social work students at local universities meet with and review the needs of and services provided to wards under court supervision. Through the program, 195 adult guardianship cases were selected for in-depth visitor reports, 328 cases received some assistance, and 3,124 semiannual reports were reviewed.

HELP FOR LITIGANTS WITHOUT LAWYERS

Domestic Violence Legal Assistance. In June, students from George Washington University and several attorneys began offering assistance to indigent parties, both petitioners and respondents, who have questions regarding domestic violence proceedings. Assistance is offered twice a week through this pilot project.

Serving Elderly Domestic Violence Victims. In May, the Court established an agreement with Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment (SAFE) and AARP under which AARP provides representation in civil protection order proceedings and other services, as required, to elderly low-income individuals filing for a protection order.

Family Law Help. Demand for assistance at the Family Court Self Help Center, a free walk-in service that provides legal information in a variety of family law matters, remained high. In 2011, the Center assisted 7,538 people, a 2% increase over the previous year. For comparison, the Center served approximately 6,000 people in 2009.

Legal Assistance in Civil Matters. Four centers in the courthouse provide legal and procedural information to litigants without lawyers in civil cases. These self-help centers are open part-time in collaboration with the D.C. Bar and volunteer attorneys.

The Consumer Law Resource Center, with the assistance of Williams & Connolly LLP, assisted 920 individuals (July 2010 to June 2011) with debt collection, contractor disputes, automotive repair disputes, utility disputes, and issues involving violations of the Consumer Protection Procedures Act.

The Landlord Tenant Resource Center, which assists both landlords and tenants, served 5,818 individuals from July 2010 to June 2011. The Law Students in Court program also assists tenants.

The Small Claims Resource Center, 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, assisted 440 individuals, both petitioners and respondents, in 2011. The Tax Sale Resource Center, with support from Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP, served 140 litigants in 2011.



Superior Court Library

Probate Assistance. The Probate Division continued live chats on the D.C. Courts' website to provide the public realtime online responses to questions regarding probate matters. In December, the Probate Resource Center, which assisted about 50 individuals from July 2010 – June 2011, expanded its services to include adult guardianship cases. The Center, operated with the D.C. Bar and the law firm Bryan Cave, assists unrepresented parties with estate administration, helps parties gather information needed to proceed with the probate process, prepares documents, and helps parties understand how property should be distributed and transferred to beneficiaries. For the self-represented public filing small estates, the Court provides Small Estates Specialists who walk litigants through the process.

Role of the Judge. In November the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration approved new ethics rules for judges. While the new rules are based on national standards (the 2007 American Bar Association Model Code of Judicial Conduct), the Courts' new Code of Judicial Conduct includes a provision on the judge's role in facilitating self-represented litigants' right to be heard. Under the new rules, "judges should make reasonable accommodations" to help these litigants understand court proceedings and be heard. For example, the judge in a case may consider providing information about the proceedings, asking neutral questions, or explaining the basis for a ruling.



Historic Courthouse Foyer

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.

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



Employee annual health fair

AN ENGAGED AND INVOLVED JUDICIARY

Courts participated in the Employee Viewpoint Survey, administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in October. With 72% of employees responding (compared to 49% of Federal employees), the survey results reflected significant improvements, particularly in areas where the Courts focused following the previous survey in 2009. The survey results will inform future court initiatives to “build a great place to work.”

Two initiatives arising from the 2009 survey, the Courts' Health and Wellness Program, “Working on Wellness (WOW),” and the Work Life Balance Program, rolled out new offerings for court employees. In October, the WOW kick-off

Building a Great Place to Work. Continuing a multi-year initiative to enhance employee engagement and public service by making the D.C. Courts “A Great Place to Work,” the



Working on Wellness class



Court employees attend a work life balance seminar.

offered biometrics screenings; fitness classes and lunch and learn seminars on various health topics followed. To help employees balance personal and professional responsibilities, back up dependent care services are now available as well as a referral and information service for various needs. Efforts were also underway to enhance internal communications, including the new intranet with collaborative features. The Courts gave a very well-received presentation on the “Great Place to Work” initiative to the Urban Court

Managers Network, an association of major metropolitan courts. The enthusiasm of the Network members for the initiative led the Justice Management Institute to produce a training video to share Building a Great Place to Work as well as the Courts' Management Training Program with courts nationwide.

Training and Professional Development. “A Great Place to Work” requires skilled workers and leadership. Court of Appeals and Superior Court judges and magistrate judges participated in training programs and conferences to remain current on case law, societal trends, technological changes and numerous complicated issues they must understand in order to make good judicial decisions. In 2011, judicial officers completed 3,300 hours of continuing judicial education. Court staff participated in over 15,000 hours of professional development, on topics including technology, effective oral and written communication, and customer service. About 600 employees attended the biennial Courtwide Employee Conference on the topic of *“Managing Your Energy.”* The Spring Judicial/Management Conference examined *“When Justice Fails: Law, Justice, and the Holocaust.”*



Employee Training Conference 2011

The Annual Judicial Conference looked at *“Implicit Bias: Recognizing It and Dismantling It.”* Senior managers took part in several training sessions on employee engagement and performance management.

The Courts continued ongoing efforts to offer educational opportunities to our partners in the District's justice system. In March, the Third Annual Guardianship Conference was held by the Courts' Probate Division, focusing on protecting wards from financial exploitation and improving their quality of life. It included an information fair for attorneys and family member guardians. The second annual Criminal Justice Conference focused on Criminal Justice in the Digital Age. The ninth annual Family Court Multidisciplinary Training examined Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation: Educating, Empowering, & Transforming Lives. In October, a conference “Teen Dating Violence: Developing Legal and Community Response” included panels on resources, strategies, and legal processes to address teen domestic violence.

Management Training Program. Development of court staff is another key ingredient in “A Great Place to Work.” The fifth Management Training Program class graduated this year, following 24 days of informative classes throughout the year taught by national experts and senior court officials, and completion of a group project designed to strengthen and develop their professional and personal skills. Projects focused on community service, informing the community about the Courts, and video interpretation. The Management Training Program was highlighted at the 2011 Joint Conference of the National Association for Court Management and the National Association of State Judicial Educators.

Strategic Human Resources. A major Strategic Human Resources effort was initiated to expand the role of the Human Resources Division from a transaction-based function to a strategic partner in establishing court goals, determining the future workforce, and assuring mission delivery. To assist in this effort the Courts are in the process of developing and implementing a new comprehensive human resources information system. As part of this process, a five-year Human Resources Strategic Plan was developed.

Managing Court Personnel. Human Resources policies and practices help build “A Great Place to Work” by promoting employee access through technology, employee engagement now and in the future, and openness and accountability. New “Staffing Procedures for Filling Vacancies” and “Staffing Operations” manuals promote understanding, transparency, and accountability in the employee recruiting, testing and selection processes. The October conversion of Official Personnel Files (OPF) from paper to electronic provides visibility in a complete audit trail, provides email notification to the employee when a document is added to the OPF, and assures continuity of operations and disaster recovery. A new Succession Plan addresses a high probability of shortages in senior executive and managerial positions, in both the technical and professional fields, as a result of identified retirement eligibility status.

Celebrating Diversity. The D.C. Courts honor the traditions and contributions of various cultures to our society and the local community. Black History Month highlighted the tradition of stomping and chanting, remembered Buffalo Soldiers, examined the role of African American inventors, featured Frederick Douglass, presented a local artist, and celebrated the talents of the D.C. Courts’ own staff. The Hispanic Heritage Month Community Outreach Recognition Opportunity, or CORO, Awards, recognized individuals and organizations that provide invaluable services to the local Latino community.

In an October awards ceremony, Fernando Rivero, Assistant Attorney General for the District of Columbia received the Legal Community Award; Maria Tukeva, Principal of the Columbia Heights Educational Campus/Bell Multicultural High School, won the Community Agency Award; and Roxana Olivas, representing the Executive Office of the Mayor, Office of Latino Affairs, took the Allan Klein Award.



Black History Month observances culminated in an employee talent show.



A presentation on Buffalo Soldiers marked Black History Month.



Executive Officer Anne B. Wicks addresses court employees.

Recognizing Excellence. At the 30th Annual Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony, the D.C. Courts recognized employees for exceptional job performance. Employees were honored for improving health and wellness, enhancing technology, innovations in case-processing, community service and outreach, and implementing new legislation.

National Leadership. The chief judge of the D.C. Court of Appeals and Chair of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration, Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, was elected president of the Conference of Chief Justices, the professional association of the highest judicial officer of the fifty states, the District, and U.S. Territories. Chief Judge Washington also assumed the chair of the Board of Directors of the National Center for State Courts.



At the Annual Employee Awards Ceremony, the Marriage Bureau was recognized for smoothly implementing new legislation.

A Sound Infrastructure

The D.C. Courts must maintain functional and accessible physical facilities in order to operate efficiently. The Courts occupy several historic buildings in the Judiciary Square complex which must be preserved and protected for the public and future generations. A major effort to restore, renovate, and upgrade the Courts' physical facilities has been underway since 2002 to ensure that court facilities and services meet the public's needs and effectively support court operations. Additionally, the Courts are making a substantial investment in technology to enhance operations.



Aerial View of D.C.'s Judiciary Square

COURTHOUSE RESTORATION

The D.C. Courts' physical and technological infrastructure is the foundation for the administration of justice and efforts to foster strong employee engagement. Court buildings not only must facilitate efficient operations and make it easier for the public to

access the court but also must lend dignity to the important public business conducted within their walls. Court technology supports staff productivity and provides new avenues to share information with judges and the public.

The D.C. Courts occupy and maintain 1.2 million square feet of space for the administration of justice in the District. Maintenance and modernization of these facilities to support public access, safety, sustainability, and efficient operations are guided by a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan as well as an urban design plan for Judiciary Square. During 2011, more than 20 projects were underway to implement these plans.

Building C Renovation. Construction neared completion to modernize Building C, which was built in the late 1930's and formerly



Building C at 410 E Street

housed the juvenile court. The restoration will provide modern office space that complies with current building codes while preserving key historic elements of the building. The public visiting the Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division will have the opportunity to enjoy the new space that will also house the Information Technology Division and a new data center in early 2012. To ensure energy efficiency, emissions reduction, and indoor environmental quality, the building is

designed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) “Gold” standards, and the design was submitted to the U.S. Green Building Council for certification.



New Family Court Clerk's Office

Family Court Consolidation. In February, the Juvenile and Neglect, Paternity and Support and Domestic Relations Branches of the Family Court were moved from the 4th floor of the Moultrie Courthouse to the JM Level of the courthouse. This move marked a further consolidation of Family Court activities on the JM and First Floors of the main

court building as anticipated by the Family Court Act of 2001. In future years, the Mental Health and Habilitation Branch, Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN) Office, Marriage Bureau, and Social Services Division will move, completing the consolidation of all Family Court functions.

Moultrie Courthouse Renovation and Reorganization. In January, renovation of the 6th Floor of the Moultrie Courthouse was completed. Judicial chambers and dining room, judges' meeting rooms, the Superior Court library, the Telecommunications Office, the General Counsel's Office, the Executive Office, and several conference rooms now occupy the 6th Floor. This space was completely transformed to meet current safety and usage requirements after the Court of Appeals moved out in 2009.

Safety Improvements. In the 1970's era Moultrie Courthouse, safety improvement projects this year include upgrades to the electrical system; pressurizing emergency exit stairwells to improve fire safety; and clearing egress corridors to facilitate emergency evacuation.

Criminal Court Facilities. In February, Arraignment Court functions moved back into the newly renovated Courtroom C-10 in the Moultrie Courthouse. The new arraignment courtroom includes enhanced safety features and provides better services to the public, with video monitors so the public can better see the well of the courtroom and new audio systems so they can hear proceedings. Electronic signage enhances communication and access to proceedings for the public. In addition, work continued in phases to renovate the main adult holding area (or cellblock) and individual cellblocks adjacent to criminal courtrooms throughout the Moultrie Courthouse.



The new Arraignment Courtroom



Moultrie Courthouse Exterior

Exterior Improvements. The exterior of the Moultrie Courthouse was cleaned after much research on the best method to clean and preserve the building. New lighting shines from Buildings A and B, highlighting the beautiful architecture of the structures and illuminating a green urban oasis in Judiciary Square.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

Appellate Case Management System. In July, the D.C. Court of Appeals implemented a new case management system, C-Track. The new system is user-friendly and browser-based, designed specifically for appellate

courts to capture, track, process, and report on court information.

E-Filing Expansion. Through collaboration with other agencies, e-filing expanded to two new case types. Electronic case filing went live for criminal cases through a bi-directional interface with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council designed to reduce the time to initiate cases and decrease data entry errors. Initial analysis indicates a 70% decrease in the time to process a new criminal case (decrease from 3 - 5 minutes to 1 - 1.5 minutes). Now 90% of all criminal cases are filed electronically. Judges have noted the increased speed during arraignments because all of the required data and documents are now available immediately in the courtroom. In addition, new abuse and neglect cases can be filed electronically through an interface with the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) case system, reducing manual processes, increasing efficiency and improving the quality of court data. In the future the Court plans to design a mechanism for electronic receipt of subsequent CFSA filings and transmission of court orders.

Videoconferencing Warrants. In August, the Superior Court, in conjunction with several partner agencies, created the Web-Ex Warrant Process, which allows warrants to be scanned into the computer system directly from the Police District and forwarded to the judge for processing, thereby increasing efficiency and decreasing travel costs and overtime pay for the Metropolitan Police Department. A police officer electronically submits the complaint to the U.S. Attorney's Office and files the warrant with the Court. The judge reviews the warrant with a web conference with the officer. Once approved, the Court sends the warrant electronically to the officer, who makes an arrest or executes a search.

Digital Wills. In June, the Court completed the Digital Wills Project, a digital database containing all wills and codicils filed in the District of Columbia since 1802. The public can easily search and retrieve copies of all wills and codicils that have been filed with the court for the past 200 years through a web-based system. This project also provides the extra insurance of safely storing and preserving these historical records in the event of a disaster.

Enhanced Access to Court Information.

Online Access to Court Cases. Beginning in January 2011, an upgraded system provides the public access to Superior Court case information through the Internet in a user-friendly format.

Digital Messaging Pilot. New message boards provide case information in near real-time, in addition to directional information to assist in locating offices and pertinent information regarding Court operations. Messaging systems to assist the public, attorneys, and court personnel have been deployed in the Moultrie Courthouse near the high-volume Arraignment Courtroom.

Case Number	Case Name	Case Type	Case Status	Case Date	Case Time	Case Location
11-11111	John Doe	Criminal	Open	04/18/11	09:00 AM	Room 101
11-11112	Jane Smith	Civil	Closed	04/17/11	04:00 PM	Room 102
11-11113	Robert Johnson	Traffic	Open	04/18/11	10:30 AM	Room 103
11-11114	Emily White	Family	Open	04/18/11	11:00 AM	Room 104
11-11115	Michael Brown	Probation	Open	04/18/11	12:00 PM	Room 105
11-11116	Sarah Green	Bankruptcy	Open	04/18/11	01:00 PM	Room 106
11-11117	David Lee	Real Estate	Open	04/18/11	02:00 PM	Room 107
11-11118	Lisa King	Insurance	Open	04/18/11	03:00 PM	Room 108
11-11119	James Hall	Contract	Open	04/18/11	04:00 PM	Room 109
11-11120	Anna Scott	Employment	Open	04/18/11	05:00 PM	Room 110

Digital message boards provide case information.

New Internal Website. In February, the Courts launched a new intranet for court personnel with a collaborative and customizable application that includes wikis, blogs, and forums. It facilitates the sharing of documents in various formats among personnel. The new intranet improves communication, builds the Courts' knowledge base, and directly contributes to Courts' goals and objectives by including new capabilities.

Enhanced Financial Management Technology. An interface between the Courts' case management system (CourtView) and their financial system was successfully implemented in April. The bi-directional interface eliminates dual data entry and provides a secure solution for processing Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable transactions, which are linked to cases when appropriate. The interface also facilitates compliance with accounting standards.

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.

Heightened concern for security at courthouses and public buildings nationally is magnified in the Nation's Capital. Here, with approximately 10,000 people coming to the court complex each day, the D.C. Courts must provide a safe and secure environment not only for judges and court staff, but also for the public. This secure environment is critical to the fair and unbiased administration of justice for the community. The public relies on the Courts to continue to provide judicial branch services in the event of an emergency; in turn, the Courts must be prepared.

Security Enhancements. To strengthen control over what persons enter secure areas, a new access control manager oversees the electronic security access control system, a key component of the Courts' security infrastructure that determines who has physical access to areas of court buildings. Security equipment enhancements this year included installation of new X-ray machines and magnetometers. Modifications to the screening process were made to expedite entry into the main courthouse while security was maintained.

Continuity of Operations. The Courtwide Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) was updated to ensure that the D.C. Courts can function effectively in an emergency. As a member of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the D.C. Courts collaborated with the District and Federal Governments to ensure that criminal justice agencies can continue to serve the public during an emergency.

Court Security Month. In April, the Fourth Annual Court Security Month Featured a presentation by Metropolitan Police Department Chief Cathy Lanier and a preparedness fair that included information from, among others, the U.S. Marshals Service, the local fire department, the American Red Cross, and the Emergency Management Agency. Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes doubled the number of people at the courthouse who are certified in AED/CPR.



Metropolitan Police Department Chief Cathy Lanier discusses crime-solving during her Court Security Month keynote address.

Recognizing Security Officers. In June, the Courts recognized the Special Security Officers who staff court entrances and provide security in court buildings. In special ceremonies, the Courts' leadership honored individual officers for achievements such as responding to a simulated bomb attempt, securing probation offices, and detaining persons who attempted to bring illegal drugs into the courthouse.

Keeping Court Data Secure. The Courts conducted a vulnerability assessment and developed a System Security Plan to safeguard the vast information in the Courts' databases. Following a vulnerability assessment conducted by a third party last year, the majority of the deficiencies on a prioritized list of vulnerabilities were addressed. In July the D.C. Courts' System Security Plan was developed, according to best practices, to provide an overview of security requirements and mechanisms for court technology systems. In addition, an upgraded email server accommodates replication at the Courts' back-up information technology facility, enhancing existing capacity to secure court case information in case of emergency.



Special Security Officer Supervisor Lois Epps (second from left) is recognized by (left to right) Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield and Executive Officer Anne B. Wicks.

PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

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

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

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This program, a collaborative effort with numerous D.C. criminal justice agencies and the U.S. Marshals Service, was initiated to enhance public safety and encourage individuals to surrender voluntarily, avoiding arrest at home in front of their families or during a traffic stop. The program officially ran during three consecutive Saturdays, and the Court also accepted people who turned themselves in during the week. In total, 856 individuals with 912 cases were processed. Of these cases, 65% were closed without further action.

Community Court Outreach. The criminal Community Court continued meeting with the public to stay abreast of local issues and concerns. The Community Court held two town hall meetings, where co-sponsors included councilmembers, the Metropolitan Police Department, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, and community groups. Themes for the meetings included “Community Issues, Crime, and Juvenile and Criminal Justice” and “A Ward 8 Community Conversation on Crime and Criminal Justice.” In addition, judges and court staff attended a community meeting to discuss plans to expand the community court model to the Superior Court’s remaining misdemeanor cases in 2012. During Mental Illness Awareness Week in October, the Community Court coordinated a Mental Health Fair with presentations by mental health professionals.

Safe Surrender. More than 800 criminals with outstanding arrest warrants for non-violent felony or misdemeanor crimes voluntarily surrendered at the courthouse in August through D.C. Safe Surrender.



Hundreds turned themselves in during Operation Safe Surrender.



Court and other criminal justice agency employees prepare for Operation Safe Surrender.

Reaching Out to ANC Members. Superior Court Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield continued to host meetings with ANC Commissioners from various wards of the City. These small, informal gatherings offer an important opportunity for an open dialogue. The Commissioners share comments and concerns from the community, and judges and court officials listen and also offer information on court services.

Celebrating Family Reunification. The D.C. Courts' first celebration of National Reunification Day paid tribute

to families once divided by foster care and helped to raise awareness about the importance of family reunification to children in foster care. The Superior Court and the District's Child and Family Services Agency brought together families, judges, and other officials to honor the accomplishments of local families who overcame numerous challenges to reunify safely and successfully with their children.

Adoption Day. In November, the Superior Court co-hosted the 25th Annual Adoption Day with the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency, celebrating adoptions in the District and educating the community about the need for adoptive parents. Twenty-eight children were adopted into 20 families. The ceremony included talented young singers and performers, with local newswoman Barbara Harrison serving as mistress of ceremonies. A video of past Adoption Day ceremonies was shown to commemorate the 25-year anniversary of the event.



A new family at the 25th Annual Adoption Day

iCivics. iCivics teaches students about government and the responsibilities of citizenship. This national educational program, founded by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, includes interesting teaching materials and numerous video games to help young people understand and respect government and to inspire them to become knowledgeable and participating citizens. Chief Judge Eric T. Washington, of the Court of Appeals, is the D.C. state chair for iCivics, and the Courts are working with local schools to engage District schoolchildren in iCivics.

Reaching Out to Teens. More than 400 young people participated in the 2011 Youth Law Fair in D. C. Superior Court, focused on cyber bullying. Youth, assisted by judges and attorneys, played all the roles—judge, defense attorney, prosecutor, witnesses—in a mock trial over a hypothetical threat on Facebook. They discussed cyber bullying, learning about good decision-making on social media.



Young people participate in a mock trial at the Youth Law Fair.

PUBLIC TRUST

Tracking Court Performance. The Superior Court continued to implement and refine the courtwide performance measures approved by Joint Committee. This year, the focus was on procedures and reports to track post-disposition workload, which is the judicial monitoring of cases after initial disposition. Examples of this varied work include post-trial motions, such as the ineffective assistance of counsel; hearings to determine whether probation should be revoked, child support should be modified, or Civil Protection Orders should be extended; and the long-term supervision of cases such as guardianships or interventions, which last many years.

Independent Program Evaluation. In addition to performance measures for each division, formal program evaluations are conducted on an ongoing basis to insure effective services for the public. In 2011, an evaluation found that the Family Treatment Court was implemented as designed and served its target population. Evaluations of the East of the River Community Court, juvenile recidivism, and the Supervised Visitation Center were also underway in 2011.



Judge Herbert Dixon addresses a group of foreign visitors.

Performance Data Reporting. The Courts continued phased implementation of a multi-year Business Intelligence initiative designed to analyze and integrate court data from various systems (e.g., case management, human resources, budget and finance) to enhance performance analysis, reporting, and public accountability. New soft-

ware will capture data and create public score card reports on how the Courts are performing, as well as internal reports to guide management decisions. Benefits of the new system include faster and easier analysis of information through reports that can be generated by senior court officials, faster and more frequent data updates, and customized dashboards that display near real-time information.

Strategic Management. To keep strategic management integrated in core business processes, new employees participate in orientation classes that give the big picture view of how their jobs enhance the administration of justice. In January, the Courts hosted the Urban Court Managers Network, with presentations and discussion on how to accurately assess and measure performance in urban courts and ways to encourage staff engagement, training, and satisfaction.

Planning for the Future. In 2011 the Courts began outreach to inform the next Strategic Plan (2013 – 2017). In May, employees and judicial officers greeted court users, asking them to participate in the one-day “You Be the Judge” survey of all persons conducting business at the courthouse. Approximately 1,300 court participants provided their views on fairness, timeliness, access, treatment by judges and employees, security, and other issues. Nearly 80% were satisfied with their overall court experience. In June, almost 1,200 attorneys who recently appeared in the Courts responded to a separate survey on how well the D.C. Courts are delivering justice. In June and July D.C. Courts’ judges provided input through a survey, and in October, the Courts reached out to employees through the Federal Employee Viewpoint survey.



Clerk of the Court of Appeals, Julio Castillo, left, and Chief Judge Eric T. Washington help a court user fill out a survey on Law Day.

Procurement Management. The D.C. Courts took steps in 2011 to improve the procurement process to enhance efficient use and stewardship of public financial resources. In March, the Courts updated the *Procurement Guidelines of the District of Columbia Courts* and posted them on the Courts’ website for easy reference. The Courts’ Acquisition Institute offered 14 classes to improve the procurement knowledge of court staff involved in administering contracts. Classes included specialized courses in ethics in procurement and procurement fraud to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse in the Courts’ procurement operations.



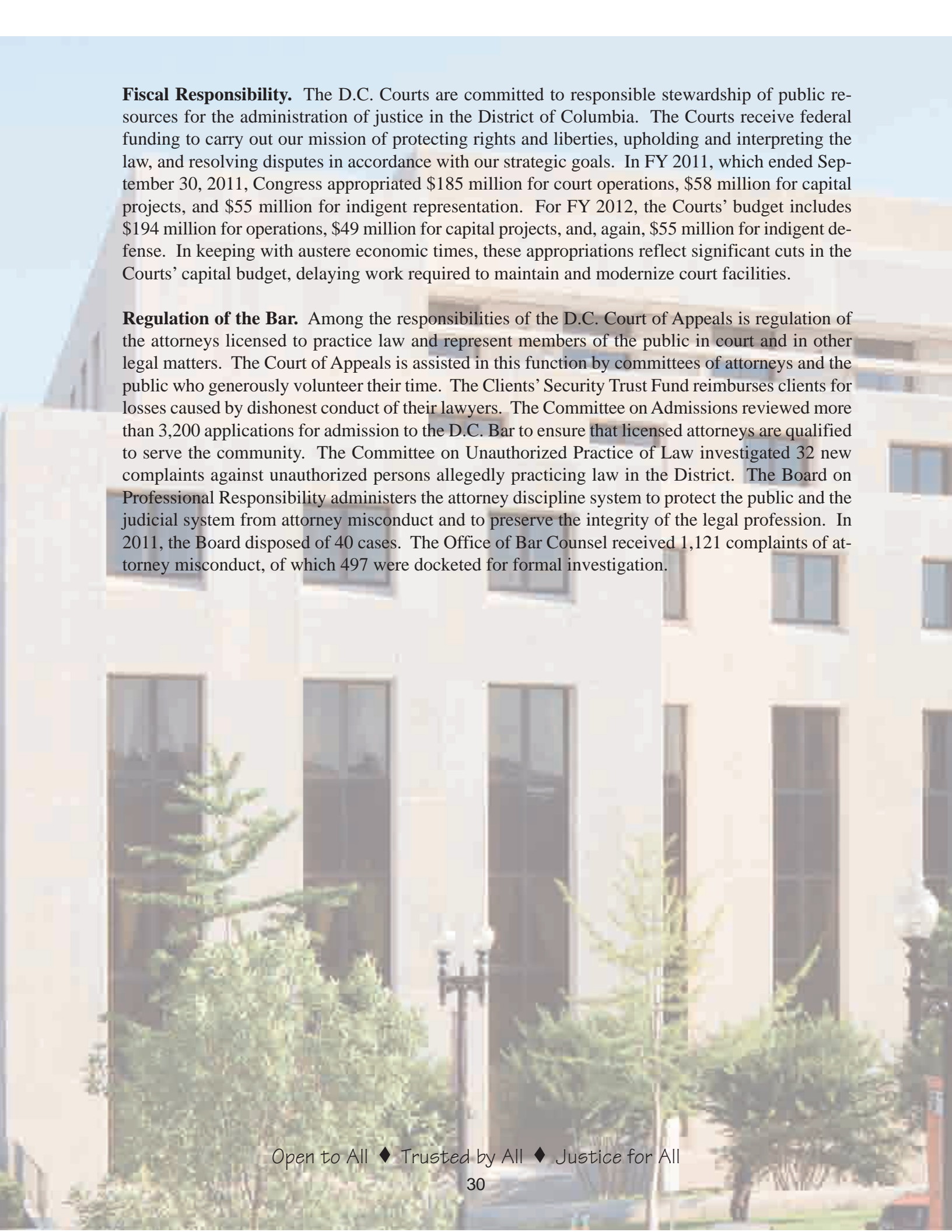
The Drop-In Center provides recreational activities as well as tutoring, counseling, and other services for youth under supervision.

Services for Juveniles. To ensure public safety and address the needs of District young people under probation supervision, the Superior Court’s Social Services Division augmented existing services with new innovations. The Court’s second Balanced and Restorative Justice Drop-in Center opened in Northeast D.C. in October, providing tutoring, mentoring, recreation, and other activities after school and on Saturdays for youth who might otherwise have to be detained. In July, collaborating with other juvenile justice system agencies, the Court sponsored a “Summer Crime Call In” meeting with high-risk youth under supervision to encourage them to comply with

court-ordered conditions of probation and obey the law. The event was considered a success based on data analysis. In January, in collaboration with a number of juvenile justice agencies, the Court launched a major behavioral health services initiative for juveniles. In light of the Court’s innovative programs for juvenile girls and balanced and restorative justice drop-in centers, the American Institutes of Research invited Court staff to participate as panel members at a national forum on improvement in the juvenile justice system. The Superior Court’s juvenile probation division supervised approximately 1,750 young people at any given time during the year.



(left to right) Councilmember Graham, Judge Puig-Lugo, Chief Judge Satterfield, Terri Odom, Judge Bush and Councilmember Thomas cut the ribbon to open the newest Balanced and Restorative Justice Drop-In Center.



Fiscal Responsibility. The D.C. Courts are committed to responsible stewardship of public resources for the administration of justice in the District of Columbia. The Courts receive federal funding to carry out our mission of protecting rights and liberties, upholding and interpreting the law, and resolving disputes in accordance with our strategic goals. In FY 2011, which ended September 30, 2011, Congress appropriated \$185 million for court operations, \$58 million for capital projects, and \$55 million for indigent representation. For FY 2012, the Courts' budget includes \$194 million for operations, \$49 million for capital projects, and, again, \$55 million for indigent defense. In keeping with austere economic times, these appropriations reflect significant cuts in the Courts' capital budget, delaying work required to maintain and modernize court facilities.

Regulation of the Bar. Among the responsibilities of the D.C. Court of Appeals is regulation of the attorneys licensed to practice law and represent members of the public in court and in other legal matters. The Court of Appeals is assisted in this function by committees of attorneys and the public who generously volunteer their time. The Clients' Security Trust Fund reimburses clients for losses caused by dishonest conduct of their lawyers. The Committee on Admissions reviewed more than 3,200 applications for admission to the D.C. Bar to ensure that licensed attorneys are qualified to serve the community. The Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law investigated 32 new complaints against unauthorized persons allegedly practicing law in the District. The Board on Professional Responsibility administers the attorney discipline system to protect the public and the judicial system from attorney misconduct and to preserve the integrity of the legal profession. In 2011, the Board disposed of 40 cases. The Office of Bar Counsel received 1,121 complaints of attorney misconduct, of which 497 were docketed for formal investigation.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

On the Bench

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

Farewell. We would like express our gratitude for their many years of service to the people of the District of Columbia to judges who were elevated, retired, or took senior status in 2011:

Court of Appeals

- Judge Vanessa Ruiz
- Judge Inez Smith Reid
- Judge Noël Anketell Kramer

Superior Court

- Judge Joan Zeldon
- Judge John H. Bayly, Jr.
- Judge Stephanie Duncan-Peters
- Judge James E. Boasberg

Welcome. New judges installed in 2011 will be called upon to continue the tradition of excellence in the administration of justice. We welcome to the District of Columbia Courts:

Court of Appeals

- Judge Corinne Beckwith
- Judge Catherine Friend Easterly

Superior Court

- Judge Jennifer DiToro
- Judge Yvonne Williams
- Judge John McCabe
- Judge Peter Krauthamer
- Judge Danya Ariel Dayson

Administrative Leaders

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

Farewell. We appreciate the dedicated service of a division director and deputy director who retired in 2011:

- Roy Wynn, Jr., Division Director, Special Operations Division
- Jon Peterson, Deputy Director, Civil Division

In Memoriam

In 2011, the D.C. Courts lost former Superior Court Chief Judge Eugene Nolan Hamilton, who passed away on November 19. Judge Hamilton joined the Superior Court in 1970 and served in all court divisions during his 30-year tenure. Judge Hamilton led the Superior Court as Chief Judge from 1993 to 2000 and was a member of the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration from 1991 to 2000. Continuing to serve the community, Judge Hamilton worked as a senior judge, hearing cases until his death.

CONCLUSION

The D.C. Courts are justifiably proud of the actions undertaken in 2011 to further the administration of justice for our community. Continuous self-assessment and measurement of progress, input from the community, and study of best practices in other courts led us to the innovations, reforms, and ongoing practices described in these pages. The Courts are committed to public service and to ensuring that we meet the legal needs of each person who comes to the Courts, whether in person, on the phone, or electronically. We encourage you to visit our website, www.dc-courts.gov, for detailed information on court operations, forms, statistics, and procedural guides.

The D.C. Courts look forward to continued efforts to fulfill our mission, guided by our strategic goals, and to live up to our vision: “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

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

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

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

The **Court of Appeals** is the District of Columbia's highest court. There is no intermediate appellate court in the District, as in many states, so the Court of Appeals hears appeals directly from the Superior Court. The Court of Appeals also reviews decisions and orders of D.C. government administrative agencies. Final judgments of the Court of Appeals are reviewable by the United States Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals also manages the admission of attorneys to the District of Columbia Bar which, at over 95,000 members, is the second largest unified bar in the United States. The Court of Appeals also handles attorney disciplinary matters through the Board on Professional Responsibility.

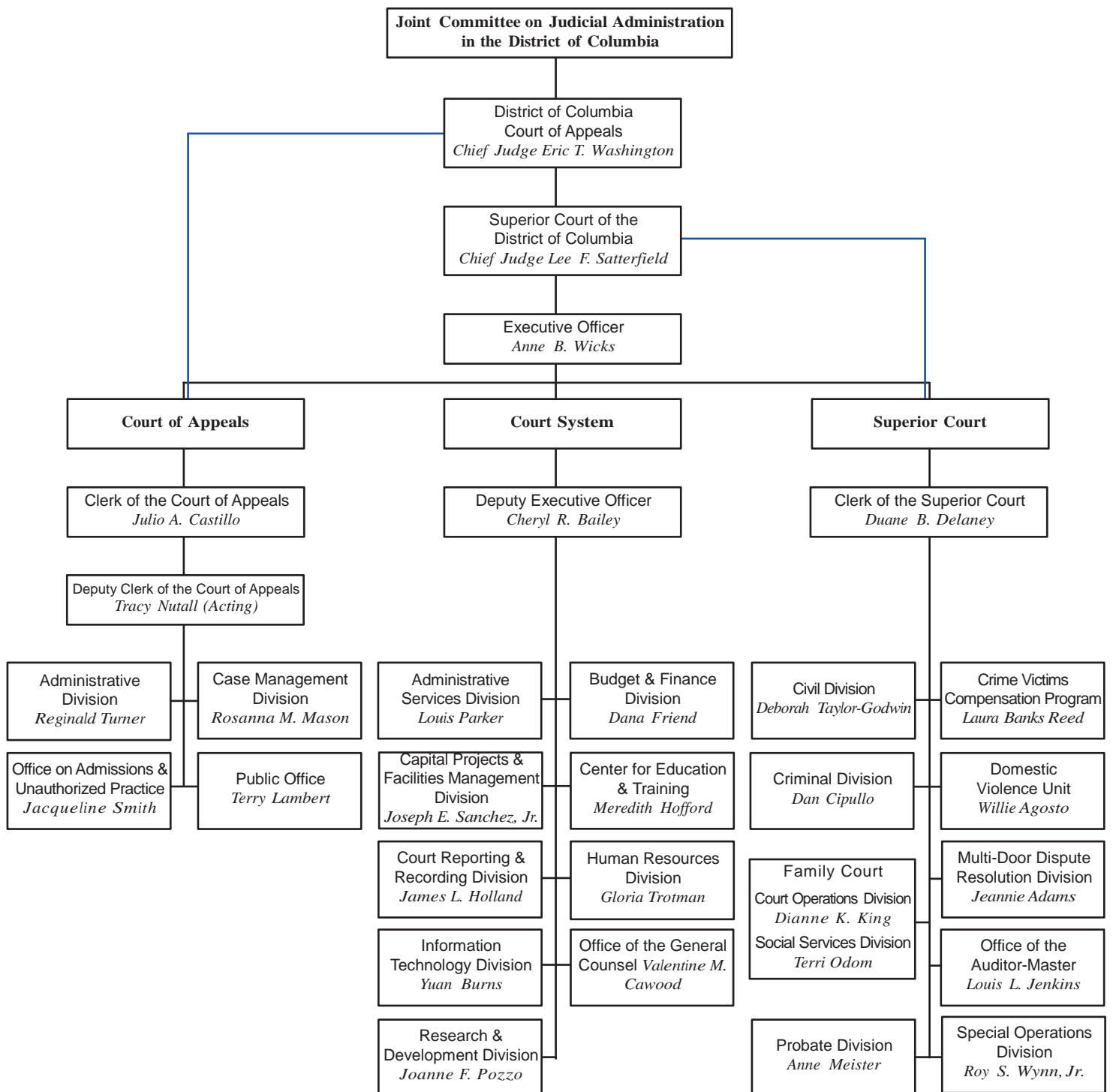
In addition to the Chief Judge, eight Associate Judges serve on the Court of Appeals. Senior Judges, who are retired, also serve the Court on a part-time basis. Most cases are heard in three-judge panels, and on rare occasions the entire court sits to hear a case (called an *en banc* hearing).

The **Superior Court** is the trial court of general jurisdiction, which means that 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 victim's compensation.

In addition to the Chief Judge, 61 Associate Judges serve on the Superior Court. Senior Judges serve on a part-time basis. Twenty-five Magistrate Judges also serve in Superior Court, hearing criminal arraignments and presentments; child welfare, child support, and new juvenile cases; D.C. misdemeanor and traffic cases; small claims, temporary protection order, and other cases. The Associate Judges of the Superior Court rotate assignments in all divisions based on assignments by the Chief Judge.

The **Court System** provides services to both the Court of Appeals and the Superior Court under the direction of the Executive Officer. The Court System consists of a variety of administrative divisions 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



Open to All ♦ Trusted by All ♦ Justice for All