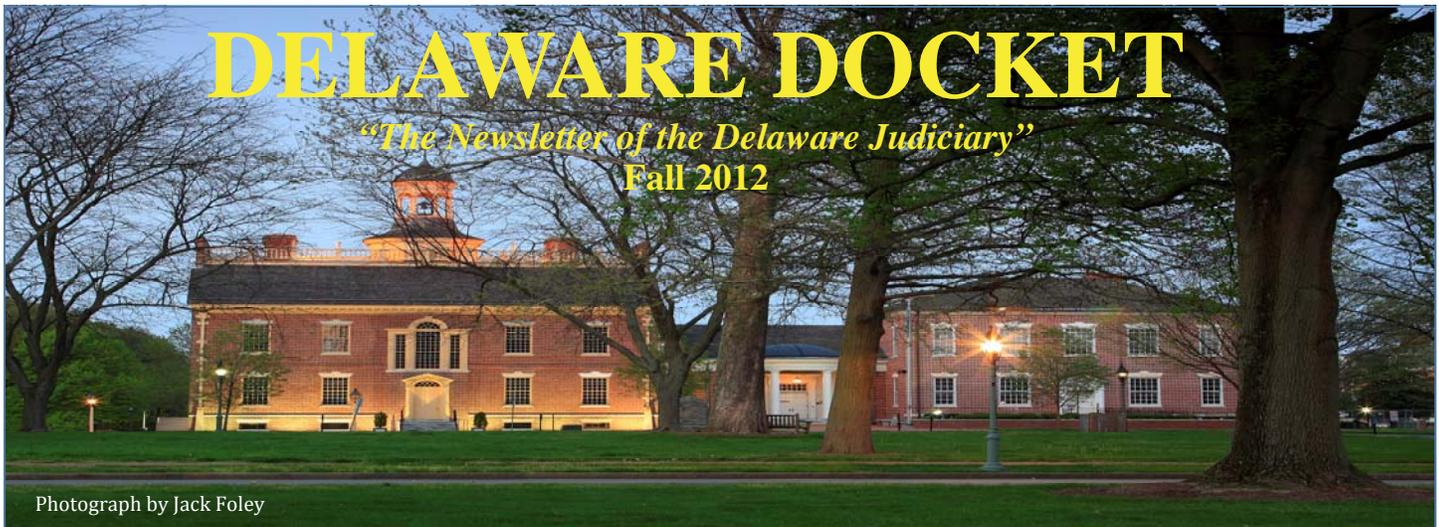


DELAWARE DOCKET

"The Newsletter of the Delaware Judiciary"
Fall 2012



Photograph by Jack Foley

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"NO COURTS-NO JUSTICE-NO FREEDOM"

Chief Justice Steele's 2012 State of the Judiciary Remarks Highlighted

When Chief Justice Myron T. Steele delivered his State of the Judiciary Remarks at the Bench and Bar Conference in the summer, he spoke about the "enormous value that our courts bring to our governmental system and society," and focused on the serious challenges the courts face, which have the potential to undermine the Courts' ability to enforce the rule of law. He stated that the risks are even greater when the practical reward of the Delaware courts – the substantial revenue brought to the State of Delaware by business entities, and the related economic activity generated because business leaders choose Delaware Courts for determination of business disputes – is considered. The Chief Justice referred to the \$1.5 billion in State revenue, from income and franchise taxes and fees from business entities, UCC filings, and abandoned property, representing 40% of the State's operating budget, which can be attributed to the Delaware Judiciary. The Delaware Judiciary brought in an additional \$15.9 million in state revenue in FY 2011 from court filing fees and costs.

He applauded the work of Delaware's fifteen problem-solving courts, including drug courts, gun courts, mental health courts, reentry courts, truancy courts, a trauma-informed probation court and a veterans' treatment court, and their success in reducing recidivism rates and saving criminal justice resources. He praised the completion of the new Kent County Court complex last summer, which offers a well designed and secure courthouse to judges, court staff, and members of the public in Kent County.

The Chief Justice spoke about the courts' projects to achieve system efficiencies, such as CCP's SPEED docket for expediting civil litigation, the Justice of the Peace Court's Prosecution Project, which has reduced transfer of traffic cases to the Court of Common Pleas by 43%, as well as Family Court's distinction as the first court to collect statewide information on national dependency and neglect performance measures. Delaware Courts continue to be recognized on a national and international level. For example, the Delaware Supreme Court and Court of Chancery retain positions on the list of the *Directorship's* top 100 most influential players in corporate governance. As the *Directorship* stated, "For other states looking longingly at Delaware's dominance in business law, there appears to be no catching up."



“Courts have continued to use their limited resources as effectively as possible. There is a point, however, no matter how creative we are, that the well runs dry. There have been a number of times since the State’s serious fiscal challenges began in February of 2008 when I thought we had reached that point, and miraculously, the judges and court staff found ways to keep the courts moving forward. It is through their true ‘grit’ that the Delaware court system maintains its reputation and effectiveness, despite deepening adversity.”

Chief Justice Myron T. Steele

The biggest challenge to our courts, the Chief Justice concluded, was the “false illusion . . . that our courts can continue to manage their growing caseloads — up 17% overall for Delaware Courts in the last ten years — without additional resources to address unmet needs. . . . Although we are proud of what we have been able to accomplish with stagnant funding, we cannot maintain our ‘bargain basement’ status indefinitely.”

Acknowledging his relief that the two new Superior Court judges and staff will finally be available in January 2013, he expressed his appreciation of the Bar’s strong support of efforts to obtain these critically needed resources, and the commitment of the Joint Finance Committee and Representative Melanie Smith, in particular, to funding the new judges.

The Chief Justice also spoke of the beneficial impact of the 2% increase to Judicial Branch employees in January 2012 – the first pay increase since 2007 – and the additional 1% received in July 2012. However, he lamented that, “even with those increases, compensation rates for state employees fall further and further behind inflation and benefit cost increases.”

He commented on the fact that Delaware judges’ national standing, based upon judicial compensation comparisons with other states that compete with us as a center for business disputes resolution, has fallen – as a result of minimal pay increases for Delaware judges since 2005, when the last Delaware Compensation Commission issued a report. When inflation during that period is factored in, judges’ pay has eroded substantially, or close to \$25,000 per judge. Compensation has been further eroded by rising benefit costs, with health care contributions paid by individual employees increasing around 60%, on average, between FY 2007 and FY 2012. “With the Delaware Compensation Commission scheduled to issue its next report this fall,” Chief Justice Steele said, “it will be difficult for the Commission to address fairly both past pay inadequacies and future financial growth implications, unless the Commission refocuses on an objective assessment of salaries rather than gauging the political winds at the time.”

Chief Justice Steele closed his remarks with a reference to the ABA’s theme for this year’s Law Day — **“No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom”** — because it captures the risks the courts face with “absolute clarity.” He concluded that Delaware has been more fortunate than other states, in some respects, but the “failure to fund state courts, including Delaware courts, properly over the long term degrades public safety by delaying resolution of criminal cases, and damages our system of government by weakening the judiciary and its ability to protect the rule of law.”

Chief Justice Steele provided opening remarks for the Iraqi Chief Justice Madhat Al Mahmood’s presentation to the media and legal community on June 25, 2012 in Washington, D.C. Chief Justice Steele referred to Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.’s remarks to the Conference of Chief Justices in Wilmington, Delaware on January 30, 2012, when he acknowledged the critical role of the courts in upholding citizens’ basic liberties and in supporting American exceptionalism in its deep commitment to the rule of law. Chief Justice Steele recognized Chief Justice Al Mahmood’s many contributions in establishing an independent judiciary, and the building of commitment to the rule of law, in Iraq. Chief Justice Al Mahmood spoke on the Iraqi Judiciary: Successes and Challenges since the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime in 2003 and spoke of his country’s pioneering experiences to build a judiciary based on the rule of law after 40 years of totalitarianism.



Chief Justice Steele pictured with Iraqi Chief Justice Madhat Al Mahmood and Mary McQueen, National Center for State Courts President.

DELAWARE COURTS PARTICIPATE IN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOPS



Through a partnership with the University of Delaware, managers and administrators from Delaware Courts and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) participated in a series of process improvement workshops this summer, with the goal of learning new approaches to streamline and improve systems in their courts. Coordinated by Tom Mraz of the AOC, the training consisted of four workshops covering how the tools and techniques of process improvement can improve efficiencies in the courts.

Ongoing process improvement serves as an integral part of the Delaware Courts Automation Project (DCAP), the courts' case management modernization project, which will feature improvements such as the expansion of e-filing options and consolidated access to electronic documents and case data used by the courts. A national leader in this area, Delaware was one of the first states to use e-filing and electronic docketing systems for civil court cases.

As Functional Lead for DCAP, Mraz works with the courts to help define their needs and document the desired processes and results of the Automation Project. He stated, "The court administrators and managers involved in the process improvement training are operations experts and responsible for ensuring their courts' operations are running as efficiently as possible. Many of them develop the procedures in their courts, so this offered a good opportunity to enhance their skills in doing that."

Participating courts included the Court of Chancery, Superior Court, Court of Common Pleas, Family Court, and Justice of the Peace Court, plus the AOC, including the Judicial Information Center and the Office of State Court Collections Enforcement.

The workshops covered key process improvement areas such as documenting existing work systems, identifying inefficiencies and their root causes, and using solution identification techniques to improve those systems. Each participant came to the workshop prepared to document and analyze an existing work process in their court.

The workshops were extremely well received by participants, many of whom commented enthusiastically about the value of the tools and techniques covered to promote on-going process improvement in court operations. One workshop participant, Charlotte Walsh, Justice of the Peace Court Management Analyst, selected that Court's video arraignment process for her hands-on case study, and focused on streamlining the process, and eventually expanding its use. Walsh said: "The Justice of the Peace Court is interested in making improvements within our Court to benefit both the court staff and the public we serve. We are taking a hard look at how we do business today and how we can do business tomorrow because we don't want to automate a bad process or bad data going forward."



Workshop participants, from left to right, Kim Butler, Judicial Case Processor, Justice of the Peace Court; Lisa Robinson, Deputy Court Administrator, Kent County Superior Court; and Michael Ferry, Management Analyst, Superior Court.

The University of Delaware course was customized for the Delaware Courts by the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies and taught by Steve Horah, an Adjunct Faculty member. Horah elaborated on the benefits of this approach: "The primary benefit of a targeted training approach is the focus on improving real processes during the course of the training program. Delaware Courts' participants were fully engaged from the outset of the program and, much to their credit, eagerly worked on achieving actual court system process improvements."

"The Courts and the AOC hope to expand process improvement initiatives on a global level, looking at our processes critically, and identifying and eliminating, impediments to providing our services as efficiently and effectively as we can."

Tom Mraz, AOC

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Delaware Judiciary Recognized

A new national survey released by the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform ranks the **Delaware State Courts** as the best in the country. The survey gives Delaware its first place overall ranking for the ninth consecutive time since its inception in 2002. Delaware judges were ranked first in the country in their impartiality and competency, among other key elements reviewed by the survey. The significance of a state's legal climate on business expansion decisions has steadily increased over the last five years. Seven out of ten respondents say a state's lawsuit environment is likely to impact important business decisions at their company, such as where to locate or expand their businesses. This represents a 13 percent increase from the survey results just five years ago.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Myron T. Steele began his one-year term as President of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Chair of the National Center for State Courts Board of Directors in August 2012. CCJ is comprised of the top judicial officers of each state, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. CCJ's mission is to promote the interests and effectiveness of state judicial systems by developing policies and educational programs designed to improve court operation. The CCJ also acts as the primary representative of the state courts before Congress and federal executive agencies.

Chief Justice Steele recently accompanied the President of the American Bar Association on a visit to Australia. During the visit the Chief Justice gave an address on some of the 'hot topics' in corporate law and governance in the United States at a seminar presented by the Law Institute of Victoria (Law Institute), in association with the Law Council of Australia (Council), among other presentations. The invitation from the Law Institute and Council noted the Supreme Court of Delaware's worldwide reputation as a respected source of corporate law decisions, particularly in the area of mergers and acquisitions.

Chief Justice Steele received the 2012 U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform Judicial Leadership Award in October 2012. The annual Legal Reform Awards honor individuals and organizations whose outstanding work has contributed to making America's civil justice system simpler, fairer, and faster for everyone. Chief Justice Steele was recognized for his leadership, outstanding and progressive reputation, continuing efforts "to accomplish great things for the Delaware Supreme Court and [to] provide an example to which other judiciaries may aspire," and his support of adequate court funding. The highly regarded Delaware Supreme Court, under Justice Steele's guidance, is "recognized for its business ethics and as one of the top 100 most influential players in corporate governance," and has "solidified its reputation as the exemplar for direction and sound management."

Chief Justice Myron T. Steele and **other members of the Delaware Supreme Court** and the **Court of Chancery** were again named to the National Association of Corporate Directors 100 most influential leaders in the corporate governance community. These honorees were recognized for their influential leadership and commitment to upholding the highest standards and best practices in corporate governance. This is the sixth year that Chief Justice Steele and other members of the Delaware Judiciary have been named on the list of 100 most influential leaders in corporate governance.

Supreme Court Justice Randy J. Holland was presented with the 2012 First State Distinguished Service Award -- the highest award conferred by the Delaware State Bar Association. James McGiffin, President of the Bar, stated that the award honors a person "who, by exemplary leadership and service dedicated to the cause of good citizenship in civic and humanitarian service over a period of many years has maintained the integrity and honored recognition of the legal profession in community affairs and who, as an outstanding Delawarean, unceasingly advances the ideals of citizen participation and community accomplishment, thus reflecting High Honor on both country and profession." The presentation was made to Justice Holland at a dinner during the Delaware Bench and Bar Conference. Over 400 judges and lawyers were in attendance.

Supreme Court Justice Henry duPont Ridgely was a plenary speaker on "Recent Developments in Delaware Corporate Law" at the Asia-Pacific Forum in Vladivostok, Russia on September 14, 2012. Judges, lawyers and legal scholars from Australia, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Russia, Singapore, Thailand and the United States traditionally take part in this judicial forum which has been conducted annually since 2007 under the sponsorship of the Supreme Commercial Court of the Russian Federation. The forum has become an international venue to share experience, to study the legal and economic systems of the countries of the region, and to discuss



Pictured above: Anton Ivanov, Chief Justice of the Supreme Commercial Court of the Russian Federation; Bektas Beknazarov, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan; Nikolay Mamontov, Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan; and Justice Henry duPont Ridgely of the Delaware Supreme Court.

vital issues involving the judicial protection of rights. The title of the event was "Corporate Law: Best Practices for Regulation and Resolution of Disputes."

Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter Jr. was elected Chair of the National Conference of State Trial Judges. He is the first Delaware judge to hold this leadership position. NCSTJ is the oldest and largest organization of general jurisdiction state trial judges in the nation and is an advocate for nationwide issues affecting trial judges. Judge Carpenter related that "this is a critical time for many courts throughout the country with reduction in funding and attacks by groups who believe a court is ruling inconsistent with their political, religious or social beliefs. As such, the mission of the conference will be to not only improve the administration of justice but to promote the public's understanding of our judicial system to ensure that the third branch of our government remains independent and is free to rule fairly and impartially."

On June 2, 2012, **Judge Carpenter** was inducted into the University of Delaware Wall of Fame. This award recognizes outstanding professional and public service achievements by UD graduates. Since the award's inception in 1984, only 239 University of Delaware alumni have received this honor.

Superior Court Judge Jan R. Jurden has been selected by the Judges' Criminal Justice/Mental Health Leadership Initiative (JLI) to participate in the October 2012 Train-the-Trainer session at the American Psychiatric Association's Institute on Psychiatric Services. JLI's invitation recognizes Judge Jurden's leadership ability and dedication to mental health issues. The training provides judges with knowledge on how mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders and criminogenic risk factors are likely to impact an individual's interactions with the criminal justice system. Additionally, relevant procedural options, ethical considerations, and effective collaborative treatment and supervision strategies will be discussed. The goal of the train-the-trainer session is for the selected trainers to deliver training to future judicial audiences.

Court of Common Pleas Judge Andrea Rocanelli has been selected as one of twenty-five attendees at the upcoming National Judicial College's Symposium which will focus on drug addiction. Judge Rocanelli, who was nominated by Chief Justice Steele to attend this symposium, stated: "I am looking forward to this opportunity to further improve the Court of Common Pleas' Drug Diversion program."

Justice of the Peace Court Judge Stanley Petraschuk has accepted an appointment as a United States Administrative Law Judge. After nearly 24 years of service with the Justice of the Peace Court in New Castle County, Judge Petraschuk left the Court on September 21, 2012 to take his new position in Charleston, West Virginia.

Justice of the Peace Court Develops Speaker's Bureau

The Justice of the Peace court recently initiated a Speaker's Bureau. This effort is being undertaken in an effort to help the community better understand the process and procedures of the Court. The Speaker's Bureau also provides a tool to educate community members on the Court's initiatives and projects. The court expects efforts will provide a significant benefit to the community and to the court where many of the litigants are self-represented.

The Justice of the Peace Court has reached out to many community groups regarding the availability of the Speaker's Bureau including Rotary Clubs, Elks Lodges and the American Legion. The Court also has a request form located on the Justice of the Peace Court webpage, <http://courts.delaware.gov/JPCourt/speaker.stm>. This link allows any member of the community to request a speaker on specific topics from the court's perspective, such as landlord/tenant issues, self-representation, becoming a Justice of the Peace, collections practices, the DUI process and search warrants.

Judges who have participated in the Bureau have received highly favorable reviews and have enjoyed the experience immensely. "Too often, the perception of the community is that the judges' only involvement with the community is from the bench," said Jody Huber, Staff Attorney for the Justice of the Peace Court. "This is only one of the steps that we are taking to change that perception and become involved with the community in a very positive way outside of the courtroom."





Democracy Project Teachers Visit with the Chief Justice and the Judiciary

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) facilitated a visit of 13 Delaware civic teachers enrolled in the University of Delaware's Democracy Project Institute for Teachers to the Delaware Supreme Court in Dover and the New Castle County Courthouse in Wilmington. The Democracy Project mission is to promote "civic engagement and a better understanding of citizen responsibilities in a democratic society among young people," by providing civic teachers with resources and education-based services and programs. The nine-day Institute for Teachers program includes field trips to civic institutions, visits with civic leaders, and developing lesson plans based on the Democracy Project's core values aligned with the Delaware Civics Standards.

Chief Justice Myron T. Steele met with the teachers on June 19, 2012 when the group visited the Supreme Court in Dover. The Chief Justice explained his role as the head of the Judicial Branch, provided a general overview of the judiciary and a specific explanation of the kinds of cases heard by the Supreme Court, and answered questions. On June 21, 2012, the group visited the New Castle County Courthouse in Wilmington

and sat down for a brown bag lunch with Superior Court Judge Mary M. Johnston and Family Court Judge William L. Chapman. Each judge provided an overview of their court and answered the group's questions. "For many teachers, this is the first time that they have had the opportunity to meet and talk with a judge, find out

"A visit to the Judiciary is an important part of our program and we always try and include it," commented Ed Freel, Delaware's former Secretary of State and current chair of the Democracy Project. "Teachers are so pleased to meet and discuss important issues with judges. We are very appreciative of the fact that the judges give generously of their time to talk to the teachers and provide them with a unique insight into the workings of the Judiciary."

what judges do, and realize that judges are people," noted Ed Freel. "The teachers always have numerous questions regarding the legal process and, being teachers, what the legal process means when one of their students is affected by it. The judges explain to them the whole process from beginning to end, how cases are handled, and the process they go through. The teach-

ers really enjoy having the judges talk to them and learn about that side of government."

This is the 6th year that the Courts have hosted visits by the Democracy Project. More information on the Democracy Project can be found at <http://www.ipa.udel.edu/democracy/>.

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PATRICIA GRIFFIN, Delaware State Court Administrator, received the National Center for State Court's 2012 Distinguished Service Award on October 2, 2012 during the National Summit for Language Access in the Courts in Houston, Texas. Mary McQueen, NCSC President, presented the award, stating: "Patricia Griffin is considered a national leader in improving language access in the courts for those with limited English proficiency. She has devoted countless hours working with the court community to improve interpreter testing and to ensure that all people with language barriers understand what is taking place in the courtroom." NCSC, which was founded in 1971 by the Conference of Chief Justices and Chief Justice of the United States Warren E. Burger, is a non-profit court reform organization dedicated to improving the administration of justice by providing leadership and service to state courts.



Patricia Griffin receiving the award from Mary McQueen, NCSC President.

NEW CHIEF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL APPOINTED



Members of the public seeking redress for an attorney's misconduct will have a new Chief Disciplinary Counsel to assist them. **Jennifer-Kate Aaronson, Esquire**, was appointed by the Delaware Supreme Court as **Chief Disciplinary Counsel** for the Office of Disciplinary Counsel (ODC). Before joining the ODC, Ms. Aaronson was the founder and managing partner of Aaronson & Collins, LLC where she practiced personal injury and criminal defense work with a focus on death penalty trials and appellate work. She graduated *cum laude* from Widener University School of Law in Wilmington, Delaware.

The ODC assists the Delaware Supreme Court in regulating the practice of law and addresses hundreds of complaints filed against lawyers admitted to the practice of law in Delaware. Complaints are confidential. The complaints are evaluated to determine whether the ODC has jurisdiction and whether the complaint on its face raises a reasonable inference of misconduct or incapacity. If a reasonable inference is raised, the ODC will gather more information to determine whether to proceed with a formal investigation. The ODC has jurisdiction over former and current attorneys admitted to practice in Delaware, as well as attorneys admitted in other jurisdictions, who practice or offer legal advice in Delaware. Some of the grounds on

which an attorney can be sanctioned include the failure to abide by Delaware's Rules of Professional Conduct, judicial or attorney discipline in another jurisdiction, and failing to appear before the ODC when required. The ODC has a variety of disciplinary sanctions that it can request be imposed, including limitation on practice, restitution, probation, public reprimand, suspension and, in the most severe of cases, disbarment. Further information on the ODC's role and function can be found in The Delaware Lawyers' Rules of Disciplinary Procedure available online at the ODC's website <http://courts.delaware.gov/odc/>.

"It is an honor to serve as Chief Disciplinary Counsel," Ms. Aaronson stated about her new position. "I hope to earn the public's trust and confidence in addressing concerns about lawyers' professional conduct. While I am committed to the public interest and cognizant of the importance of public confidence in the Bar, I am also sensitive to the tremendous impact prosecution by the ODC has on the personal and professional lives of individual members of the Bar. I hope to be a resource for the Bench and Bar to prevent professional misconduct, while I will also strive to address misconduct fairly and effectively to protect the public interest and integrity of the profession."

FAMILY COURT REINSTITUTES CALL CENTER

On June 1, 2012, the Family Court reinstated the New Castle County Call Center. Its original Call Center was disbanded several years ago due to budgetary constraints. Family Court recognized a need to better serve the public in an efficient manner, and to provide a dedicated resource for litigants seeking court information via telephone without transferring calls to specific units within the Court.

The New Castle County Call Center was staffed by reallocating existing resources and with no additional cost to the Family Court. Four Judicial Case Processors, representing different areas of civil and criminal case processing, and one Social Service Specialist, representing the Court's intake unit, came together to staff the call center. Led by Ken Kelemen, the former Director of Pro Se Services, and supervised by Kean Williams, a Judicial Case Processor Supervisor, the Call Center team participated in two full weeks of training relating to customer service, legal advice, and all areas of the Family Court's jurisdiction. Ken Kelemen noted, "the Call Center not only provides quality service to the public but also optimizes the work environment for Court staff. We understand that for many, their interactions with the Court come at a difficult time in their

lives. The goal of the Call Center is to provide information clearly and professionally. The Call Center accomplishes this goal each day, and does so with a smile. I am extremely proud to have been part of this initiative."

The Call Center has benefitted all areas of the Court and the public, largely by diverting phone calls from the overburdened Court's case processing staff and providing a dedicated staff whose sole purpose is to provide pertinent information to better prepare litigants for filing and court hearings. The focus of the Call Center has been on customer service and on continued improvement of Family Court's ability to alleviate problems arising from misinformation and a lack of awareness of court procedures. The Call Center responded to 4,726 calls during June 2012, its first month of operation. Since then, the number of calls has continued to increase, with the Center answering over 5,340 calls in August. Staff responds to calls on average within 31 seconds. Supervisor Kean Williams stated, "the Call Center is a way of showing the public that every call matters as we offer consistent and accurate information."

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New Training Opportunity Coming to a Computer Near You

A new concept in educational training tools has surfaced in the quest to provide Judicial Branch employees with the highest quality education and training programs. The Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Judicial Information Center, recently introduced Lynda.com — a new cutting-edge web-based training tool. Lynda.com is an online subscription library that teaches the latest software tools and skills (including Microsoft products such as Outlook, Excel, and Word) through high-quality instructional videos taught by recognized industry experts.

Following JIC Training Manager Ken Kelemen's presentation to the Council of Court Administrators, the Courts came onboard with enthusiastic support for an initial pilot program. Access to Lynda.com was given to nearly 300 court employees between August and November 2012 as part of the pilot. Users have access to more than 1,400 training videos covering a broad range of subjects. The videos are broken into small sections so users can learn at their own pace. Lynda.com keeps track of the user's progress so that the user can continue the session at another time, if necessary, without having to repeat steps. Each training program has been developed to accommodate multiple learning styles. Many of the courses that are offered by Lynda.com include short exercises to engage users and accommodate hands-on learning. During the pilot, the AOC and JIC will assess the effectiveness of the program as a training tool for a broad judicial staff audience with diverse needs. If successful, Lynda.com could provide a way of introducing employees to training on demand without a significant interruption in their daily responsibilities.

Survey results collected to date suggest that users have had a generally positive experience with Lynda.com. Some of the comments received from users include the following:

- "I have learned much more than I had anticipated. The great thing about watching on the computer as opposed to being in a classroom is that I can pause and rewind. I can't wait to see what else I learn from this!"
- "I started with Microsoft Outlook and was amazed by all the features I never used."
- "I enjoyed the convenience of learning at my leisure. I would highly recommend this site."
- "The training is actually at a pace that is good for someone who has some knowledge with using the programs, but not an expert with the wonderful tools available in each. It is a great expansion on what I knew and a great way to realize all that can be done in them."

"The potential upside to providing court staff with needed training right from their desktop is promising since time and limited resources often prevent us from effectively meeting training needs." Leann Summa, Court Administrator for Family Court.

Focus groups occurred in October 2012 to obtain additional feedback. The AOC and JIC training team will be looking for input from the Courts to determine how to assist users to get the most benefit from the tool, as well as the most effective means to distribute licenses and monitor future use.

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Chinese Delegation Visits the New Castle County Courthouse

On June 15, 2012, the Delaware Courts hosted a delegation of eight judges and lawyers from China, two members of the DuPont Company's legal team, and two members of Temple University James E. Beasley School of Law at the New Castle County Courthouse. Members of the delegation were all LLM candidates of the Temple-Tsinghua University School of Law LLM program. They came from different regions of China and represented a cross-section of the legal profession as the delegation included members of the State Administration of Foreign Expert Affairs, judges, and procuratorates. (A procuratorate has the power to investigate and prosecute cases.) The tour was organized by the DuPont Company Legal Department.

Prior to meeting with Judge Jan R. Jurden of Superior Court, the delegation watched a demonstration by the Judicial Information Center of the high-tech capabilities of a Superior Court courtroom. Judge Jurden provided an overview of Superior Court and the Judiciary which was followed by a question and answer session. The delegation was particularly interested to learn about Superior Court's mediation program and mediation practices and procedures. The delegation returned to the DuPont Company after the tour for further discussions.

DELAWARE PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL SUMMIT ON LANGUAGE ACCESS IN THE COURTS



A team from Delaware joined nearly 300 court leaders from 48 other states, three territories, and the District of Columbia to participate in the National Summit on Language Access in the Courts in Houston, Texas from October 1 - 3, 2012. The Summit, sponsored by the Conference of Chief Justices, Conference of State Court Administrators, National Center for State Courts, and the State Justice Institute, focused on devising solutions to improve access to justice for litigants with Limited English Proficiency. It allowed state court leaders the opportunity to share successful strategies and evidence-based practices, plan system improvements, and discuss approaches to pursue greater consistency in interpreter policies across states. Major themes of the conference included: training for judges and court personnel, translation best practices, use of technology to increase efficiency in interpreter programs, collaboration models to increase available resources, and community outreach efforts. State teams consisted of judges, court administrators, state legislators, and interpreter program staff designated by the Chief Justice. Delaware's team included Superior Court Judge Jan Jurden, Court of Common Pleas Chief Judge Alex Smalls, and Family Court Judge Aida Waserstein (members and chair of Delaware's Court Interpreter Advisory Committee), and Administrative Office of the Courts staff.

Superior Court Judge Jan Jurden stated:

"I am grateful to the Conference of Chief Justices, the Conference of State Court Administrator, the National Center for State Courts and the State Justice Institute for providing the opportunity to meet with representatives from other states to discuss strategies for ensuring access to justice for people with limited English proficiency."

Family Court Judge Aida Waserstein stated:

"The national perspective is important. It is very helpful to share experiences and learn the procedures used in other jurisdictions as we all work to meet this important mandate in a fiscally responsible manner. The quality of the presentations was also high. This added to the benefit received from attending."



Delaware's Summit Team (seated left to right): Maria Perez-Chambers, Franny Haney, Judge Aida Waserstein, (standing left to right): Pat Griffin, Amy Quinlan, Chief Judge Alex Smalls, Judge Jan Jurden.

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Family Court Administrator Guy Sapp to Retire After 42-Year Career Serving Delaware's Criminal Justice System

Guy Sapp, Court Administrator for the Family Court since 2006, turned in his New Castle County Courthouse security badge on October 31, 2012 after 42 years of combined service in Delaware's Criminal Justice System. Guy first joined the Court in 2000 as the Director of Special Court Services. In 2005 he joined the New Castle County Government but returned in 2006 to the Court Administrator's position. Prior to working with the Judicial Branch, Guy served in the Wilmington Police Department from 1970 through 1989 when he became Chief of Police until his retirement from the Department in 1993. After a brief stint as an administrative assistant at the Public Defender's Office, he became the Director of Youth Rehabilitative Services until 1998 and served as Executive Director of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council before joining the Court in 2000. Guy looks forward to spending more time with his wife of 41 years, Patricia, and their two sons and three grandchildren and may do some consulting work in the future.

"The impact of Guy's service to the citizens of the State is immeasurable. I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with, and learn from, Guy during his tenure at Family Court. He will be missed greatly by the entire Family Court."

Leann Summa, Court Administrator for Family Court



Interactive Forms are a Hit with Self-Represented Litigants in the Justice of the Peace Court

JP Court's interactive online tool, which was first made available to the public free of charge about two years ago, has made a big difference for self-represented litigants in the Justice of the Peace Court. Developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Justice of the Peace Court, in partnership with Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, and with programming support from Ohio DR Software, LLC, the interactive forms for summary possession, return of security deposit, debt, replevin, and trespass actions complete the planned series of five online tools. Feedback has been positive since the first form went live and continues to build as more forms are added. Hands-on demonstrations were completed last spring by AOC staff for JP Court personnel so that they can confidently refer litigants to these readily accessible resources.

So what's the buzz about this new tool? Here's what litigants have been saying:

"This site was extremely helpful, and I will be spreading the word."

"I saw the form before I decided to do this, it was very intimidating. Then I saw this and gave it a try. It was very helpful."

"Yes, very helpful. Thank you very much, for me it is better doing this online, less embarrassing, and for people who speak other languages, this system provides confidence and peace of mind."

"The interview format for filing the complaints is extremely helpful and very user friendly."

Quotable Quotes

On June 21, 2012, a potential disaster loomed over the New Castle County Courthouse -- a water main break in downtown Wilmington had damaged some of the waterlines throughout the City and the Courthouse was not spared. The thought of long restroom lines and foul drinking water was causing serious concern -- that is until the cavalry came to the rescue! Facilities Management took care of the problem in short order. An email transcript of the events as they occurred, provided courtesy of the Honorable John E. Babiarz Jr., brings perspective to this particular moment.

From: Babiarz John (Courts)
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 2:23 PM
To: Lubin Sarah (Courts); NCCCH Contacts
Subject: RE: Water

Sarah, this is a court house. We specialize in hot water.

From: Lubin Sarah (Courts)
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2012 12:53 PM
To: NCCCH Contacts
Subject: Water

I have just received a call from Facilities Management telling me that there should be cold water on all floors. They will be bleeding the lines over the next couple of hours and therefore you may see some dirty water or air from time to time for a little while. The hot water should be restored tomorrow.

Thank you for your patience.
 Sarah



That was Then, This is Now: A 40 Year Retrospective of Life as a Judicial Branch Employee



Reflecting on 42 years of dedicated service to the Court of Common Pleas, Carole Kirshner spoke fondly about her recent retirement party thrown in her honor. "The party meant a lot to me. It made me proud of what I had achieved when I saw everyone there who wanted to be there," said Carole who retired from her position as Court Administrator on July 1, 2012. Reminiscing about her years with the Court, she noted that the most important part of her job was the help that she was able to provide to people over the years. Carole recently sat down with the Administrative Office of the Courts to talk about her career and changes in the Judicial Branch and share her thoughts on the challenges for the next decade.

AOC: When did you begin working for the Court of Common Pleas?

Carole: *I started with the Court in 1970. I graduated from the University of Delaware with a history degree and my first job was in social work. The job was very intense with long hours. So I took the summer off, but by August ran out of money. The position as a typist for the Court Reporter in the Court of Common Pleas was available – there were few jobs at the time – and I only intended to stay six months. Work was slow. So I would ask others if I could assist with different tasks and ended up learning just about everything there was to know about the Court. When I started in 1970, the Court of Common Pleas was still a County court – it became a statewide court in 1973. I was appointed Deputy Clerk for New Castle County in 1972 when the prior Deputy Clerk retired, appointed Chief Clerk for New Castle County in 1974, and became Chief Clerk of the Statewide court in 1976. The position of Chief Clerk of the Statewide court is unique among all the other court administrators as it gives me authority to issue process and other powers which the other administrators don't have. There has been some talk about changing the statute, but it's still in there.*



Former Daniel L. Herrmann Courthouse in
Wilmington, Delaware

AOC: What are some of the differences in the Courts now as compared to when you first started?

Carole: *Location for one. I worked out of the old courthouse. In my early years with the Court, the courthouse was really more like a community center – the city and county had offices in the building. People came to do lots of things at the courthouse – not just court business. People got married at the courthouse and they paid taxes and applied for licenses at the courthouse. Going to court was just another thing that the public did in the building. All of that contributed to a greater sense of community and, I believe, lessened concern for the extensive security we see today.*

Getting through security now can take time. People have to give up their cell phones and take off their belts, for example. All of this focus on security, while important, tends to separate the people coming to do business at the courthouse from those who work here. I think it's important for court employees to bridge the divide and to connect with our visitors in order to overcome the barriers. Staff should always be reminded that this is more than just a place to come to work. For many, contact with the court will change their lives in some significant way and we need to be cognizant of that. For years, I've encouraged my staff to reach out to our visitors. It really makes a difference. Treating all court visitors with respect is, in my view, the most important part of the job.

AOC: To what do you attribute the increased need for security? Do you think there is a greater threat of violence now than when you first started with the Courts?

Carole: *I don't know if the threat is greater or if news about violent incidents is just more readily available. Now you can find out about something that happened in some small town on the other side of the world within minutes. It's all out there and staring us in the face through our computers, social media, and cable television.*

The City of Wilmington has also changed over the years, but there was violence in the City 40 years ago as well. In the late 60's, there were riots in downtown Wilmington and the National Guard occupied the city for 1 ½ years. And yet, we really didn't worry too much about courthouse security in those days. I remember one incident in Judge Wahl's courtroom when a defendant pulled a gun out in open court. "I have a gun. Here it is," said the litigant pulling it (just a starter gun, but who knew at the time?) out of his coat pocket and pointing it at the Judge in response to the Judge's question about carrying a concealed weapon. The courtroom let out a collective gasp. Calmly directing the litigant to approach the bench and place the weapon

Continued on next page



into his hand, Judge Wahl commanded “put it right here, right on my desk.” And the litigant did just that. Court went on without missing a beat. That would never happen today.

Since 9/11, security concerns have been brought into the public’s consciousness in a very real way. But increased security efforts were well underway in the 90’s. It’s always a balancing act as the court is wary about creating too much of a police presence inside the courtroom out of concern that it might have a chilling effect on the way we conduct business. We’re not the police. Our job is to ensure that the court is always a neutral party and that cases are fairly adjudicated. The court has resisted putting bailiffs into police style uniforms for that reason.



AOC: We know that technology has led to sweeping changes in almost every aspect of daily life. What are some of the changes you have witnessed as a result of technological advances?

Carole: Many of the speeches at the retirement party mentioned the technological changes that I’ve lived through. While it’s true that I’ve seen many changes in technology, what I notice is the impact that technology has had on the way we do business. Of course, when I started everything was typewritten using carbon copy paper. I can remember the very first Xerox machine we had in our office. Eighty percent of the time the copies it made were fine; 20% of the time the originals (that were pulled into the machine) were burned and you had to retype the document. I also recall the first time someone tried to sell us a fax machine. I recall telling the salesman that I could not, in my wildest imagination, see how we would ever find a use for such a thing. Six months later we were inundated for requests about fax information.

AOC: Do you think that technology has helped productivity?

Carole: Technology has provided access to an incredible amount of information at the touch of a button. For instance, Judges who used to have to rely on a defendant’s recitation of their criminal history (unless a presentence report was ordered) now have that information at their finger tips. Technology has also been a time saver for some. Files that once had to be manually retrieved can be accessed through case management systems. Organization of information has improved. Reports can be generated that help us look at performance measures. However, there’s a downside to all of this technology as well, most notably that there’s an immediate expectation of, and demand for, information.

I believe it’s also a problem to become too reliant on electronic processes. I remember an incident shortly after things became automated. We had a system failure that lasted several days. By the end of the first day we had to start to process things manually. Suddenly, staff was at a loss. I recall one particular individual being flummoxed at how she could get a file to the next person in the chain if she could not send it electronically. I can still see the astonished look on her faced when I suggested that she simply walk it across the hall.

AOC: How would you rate the Courts’ ability to keep up with technology?

Carole: The public is used to being able to access information quickly. They can purchase products online, pay taxes and access their bank account, all from a computer or from their cell phone. But they still can’t access information about their cases online. There are still many things that we must do either manually or in person. This inability to quickly access information leads folks to become anxious because they don’t understand why they can’t immediately access the information they need. The demand for information is extreme. The courts have had a difficult time keeping up. I attribute that, in part, to the natural focus of the Judiciary on precedent and tradition. That focus makes good sense in most of our work. But it also tends to make change occur more slowly than it might otherwise. We are in a transition period and have accomplished much. But we have a long way to go before we figure out how to maximize the use of these technologies to better serve the public.

AOC: What about work/life balance? Has that been affected by technology?

Carole: Yes. People rarely go away on vacation anymore without their mobile devices. That has had a significant impact on time spent out of the office. The first time I recognized this was on a trip with my husband to Washington D.C. I had a teleconference scheduled for later that day but decided that I could take it in Washington D.C. just as easily as I could if I were in the office. People from all over the country participated in the call. Several of them were calling while on vacation. And yet, no one commented that it was odd. It was just expected. I’m not sure that is a good thing. Technology has given us the ability to conduct business from almost anywhere. The lines between work and personal time are blurred.



AOC: Have you noticed any impact of technology on work culture?

Carole: *Technology has definitely affected our work culture and not in a good way. Emails replace the face-to-face conversations that contributed to a sense of community. People no longer take lunches together which impacts relationships and the sense of team. Letter writing is fast becoming a lost art. These days, it's a rare occasion to get a handwritten letter. It all comes through email and the expectation for response time is almost immediate. In the past, I would read a letter and let it sit for a day or two while I decided how I would respond. This was particularly helpful if I needed to let something "settle" before formulating my response. Now, response times are expected almost instantaneously and replies are sent, often times, with little to no thought behind them. This can lead to mistakes or even an increased work load. In the past, issues that seemed like an emergency one minute somehow worked themselves out with the passing of time.*

I don't think people have changed that much. They still generally want to do a good job and try their best to avoid making mistakes. But the amount of information that needs to be processed is often just too much to handle for even the most seasoned employee.

AOC: You came to the Judicial Branch at a time when there were not a lot of women in the field of law. What was your experience as a woman working for the Court?

Carole: *I noticed it at the beginning and for many years I was the only woman in the various meetings that were held. Any disadvantages were very subtle, and I ignored them. I was always well treated by my court and colleagues and never felt disadvantaged. I can remember when the first woman attorney came into court. It was a big deal. Folks gathered outside of the courtroom to watch. There were no women judges in the Court of Common Pleas when I started, although Family Court had one, Judge Roxana Arsht. I remember when Judge Rosemary Beauregard was appointed as the first female judge in the Court of Common Pleas twelve years ago and when Superior Court Judge Susan Del Pesco was appointed and became the first woman president of the Delaware Bar Association. These were significant events. I believe that the courts benefits from having a mix of perspectives that is brought by different genders as well as cultures.*

AOC: How did you balance your work and home life?

Carole: *I had my family while working full-time for the Court. During this time, I also went to school at night to earn my Masters Degree in Public Administration at West Chester University. I don't really remember the particulars of the schedule –I just did what I had to do. My husband and I made it work. Recently, my daughter sent me an email thanking me for being a good role model. It was entitled, 'How did you do it?' She hadn't realized how much of a balancing act it is to combine parenting with everything else and was amazed at how I managed.*

AOC: Wow! That was special! I'd record that on my calendar if I were you.

Carole: *Absolutely! I will treasure that moment as an affirmation that all of the hard work paid off.*

AOC: What are some of the challenges that you foresee facing the Judicial Branch over the next decade?

Carole: *We will have to do a better job of harnessing technology if we're going to effectively meet the needs of the public. Advances in technology have, thus far, mostly meant an overload of information. While there are lots of good things that have come from it, we need to figure out a balanced approach to deal with this mountain of information and the heightened expectations about being available 24/7.*

We also need to do a better job of educating the public about our court system and what we can and cannot do. Our processes need to be transparent so that people can understand them better. Over the years I've been involved in various community outreach projects in an attempt to provide education about the judicial process to our young people. That must continue. The public at large used to have a better understanding about the courts. I remember when it was common to have a whole cadre of observers (we called them the "Court Watchers") in the Court of Common Pleas watching various proceedings. They were typically retired folks who would sit in the back in a group and watch the goings on. Sometimes the Judge would even address them about their impressions about the day's events. It was a very positive exchange for all concerned. But you don't see them anymore. I don't know why. Perhaps it's the location of the new building or heightened security that makes it difficult for them to come. Maybe technology has become their substitute source of entertainment. In any event, they are missed.



Pro se litigants will continue to be an issue for our courts. It used to be that about 75% of the people in our court were represented by counsel. Now, my guess would be that only about 25% of the people have an attorney with 75% appearing pro se. I don't see that changing. If anything, the numbers of pro se litigants are likely to go up. And unless we do a better job of handling those cases and getting information about our system out to the unrepresented litigants, we're going to have a difficult time meeting the demand.

AOC: We can't let you get away without asking the obvious question: What's next?

Carole: *I have absolutely no idea. I'd like to do some traveling. And, I am working on a couple of ideas. But one thing I've learned for sure: Life has a way of working out the details.*

Carole may not yet know what she will do in her retirement, but it is unlikely that this dedicated and indefatigable lady will stay idle for long. We wish her the very best in her future pursuits. Thank you, Carole!



Carole Kirshner, former CCP Court Administrator, and CCP Judge Eric Davis

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS HAS REVISED ITS ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE ON CONSUMER DEBT COLLECTION MATTERS

The Court of Common Pleas has issued a revised Administrative Directive on Consumer Debt Collection Actions, effective September 2, 2012. The initial Administrative Directive No. 2011-1 was issued in an effort to improve efficiency and fairness to all litigants and better manage consumer debt collection matters. To further promote access to justice for all litigants in the Court of Common Pleas, The Honorable Alex J. Smalls, Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the State of Delaware, suggested James G. McGiffin, Jr., Esquire, President of the Delaware State Bar Association, establish the Delaware State Bar Association Committee on Access to Justice in Court of Common Pleas Consumer Debt Collection Matters (the Committee). Mr. McGiffin appointed Ian Connor Bifferato, Esquire, and William D. Johnston, Esquire, as Co-Chairs of the Committee.

Other Committee members include Court of Common Pleas Judges Kenneth Clark, Anne Hartnett-Reigle, and Andrea Rocanelli, Court staff, representatives from the Administrative Office of the Courts, Office of Disciplinary Counsel attorneys (Fred Iobst and Joelle Polesky), Harvard Law School Professor James Greiner (at his request, serving as a non-voting advisory member of the Committee), and private attorneys: Doug Canfield, Kevin Carroll, Kevin Collins, Cindy DePue, Janine Howard-O'Rangers, Sidney Howe-Barksdale, Pat Scanlon, Doug Shachtman, Hillary Veldhuis, and Jeffrey Wasserman.

In addition, the Committee established two subgroups. The first subgroup – the Improvements Working Group (“IWG”), with Doug Canfield and Jeffrey Wasserman serving as Co-Chairs, is working on developing recommendations for the Court as to how best to promote access to justice for all litigants in Court of Common Pleas consumer debt collection matters. The second subgroup, the “AD Subgroup,” focused on possible revisions to the Court’s Administrative Directive on consumer debt collection matters. Through the work of the AD Subgroup, the Committee (with judicial members abstaining) recommended revisions to the Administrative Directive for the Court of Common Pleas’ consideration.

After reviewing the revisions recommended by the Committee, the Court adopted Administrative Directive No. 2012-2 and rescinded Administrative Directive No. 2011-1. The new Administrative Directive requires the Complaint to include affidavits clarifying what is required to be submitted (1) when consumer debt collection cases (to which the Administrative Directive apply) are initiated, and (2) to pursue a default judgment, including actions in which the plaintiff is seeking an award of attorneys’ fees and other expenses. A copy of Administrative Directive No. 2012-2 may be found on the Court’s website at <http://courts.delaware.gov/CommonPleas/docs/AD2012-2.pdf>.

The Committee continues to consider additional means of promoting access to justice for all litigants in Court of Common Pleas consumer debt collection matters.

For further information contact Stephanie.Fitzgerald@state.de.us.

The Summer Youth Volunteer Program Concludes its Fourth Year



The 2012 Summer Youth Volunteer Program successfully concluded its fourth year on Thursday, August 16, 2012. Participants from Kent County and New Castle County participated in a Mock Trial presided by Judge Charles H. Toliver IV of Superior Court and J'Aime Walker of the Department of Justice, which was followed by a luncheon. Sussex County's farewell luncheon was celebrated on Tuesday, August 14, 2012.

"The program has grown beyond my expectations and I look forward to next year" stated AOC's Robin Jenkins. Ms. Jenkins founded the Summer Youth Volunteer Program four years ago. As a first time participant, the Public Defender's Office (PDO) was delighted

by the clerical work provided by its three volunteers. "The three young ladies that came to our office were energetic, task-oriented and demonstrated the ability to work independently," commented Mr. James Lane, investigator and the PDO volunteers' supervisor. "They had positive outlooks and interacted well with our staff. They were fun to have around." Mr. Lane described his experience as an "eye opener": "Until I spoke to some of the participants, I had no idea of the personal adversity they had encountered and overcome. This is a wonderful opportunity to mentor young people and to talk to them about their future and possible careers. I intend to be more involved next year."

*For further information contact
Robin.Jenkins@state.de.us.*

The AOC would like to thank the program monitors – Eleanor Richards, Carolyn Fields, Ann Sowden and Vivian Banks in New Castle County; Christina Harrison and Ugunda Sumner in Sussex County; and Bill DiBartola in Kent County, as well as the Delaware Supreme Court; the Superior Court; the Court of Common Pleas; the Family Court; Sussex County Law Library; the Department of Justice; the Public Defender's Office; Capitol Police; the Child Death, Near Death and Stillbirth Commission; and private law firms – for opening their doors to the youth and making this program possible. Thank you to the following entities and individuals for their support and generous contributions to the Program: Jose Beltran; Colonial Parking; Congo Funeral Home; Dr. Herbert Casalena; Dunkin' Donuts; GA Blanco & Sons, Inc.; ESS - Geiger; Robin Jenkins; Ladies of Dover Lodge # 1903; PepsiCo; Maria Perez-Chambers; Rodney Grille; ShopRite; Season's Pizza; Sandy Snider; and Staples, Inc.

Making Cyber Security Training Work For You

A recent change in focus on tactics deployed in the war against cyber crime places an emphasis on educating users about viruses, malware, SPAM, spear phishing, including cybercriminals' use of financial information. The emails typically come from what looks like a bank or other financial institution asking the recipient to go to a website to enter personal or confidential data. However, the website is bogus, created to match the real site as closely as possible to fool the user into entering personal or confidential data. Once the data is compromised, it can be used for almost any purpose.

Recently, the Judicial Information Center, in conjunction with the Department of Technology and Information (DTI), launched an initiative to educate state computer users about cyber crime and security. The focus is on heightening awareness about the impact and potential of breaches in cyber security in our jobs.

A computer-based training was created for users to familiarize users with these potential pitfalls so that they can recognize and avoid them if encountered. Opening an attachment, entering a link embedded in an email, executing an .exe file or merely opening an email that lures the user with phrases like: **"YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED,"**

"SOMEONE IS LOOKING FOR YOU," "YOU ARE OWED MONEY BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT," and "REGARDING YOUR RECENT COURT APPEARANCE," are all common subject lines that hackers use to disguise their malicious intentions.

Lessons learned through the cyber security training should be applied to home computers as well in order to ensure protection of personal information. This is particularly important since the internet email systems offer far less filtering protection than that which is employed by DTI. Here are some rules to consider:

- Keep your Anti-virus application patched and up-to-date.
- Use good Anti-spyware/Malware application (i.e. ADAWARE, SPYBOT, etc.).
- Investigate the filtering capabilities of your internet mail provider.
- Be aware of your family's email and websurfing habits.

*For further information contact
Robert.Denton@state.de.us.*

LAW LIBRARIES INTRODUCE ONLINE INTERACTIVE RESOURCE



The State of Delaware Judicial Law Libraries are excited to announce the upcoming addition of our new webpage! The new webpage will be located on the Court website and will offer a cutting edge "Ask a Law Librarian" real-time chat option.

The Law Libraries, in conjunction with the Delaware Division of Libraries, have partnered to launch this pilot "Ask a Law Librarian" chat function for the State of Delaware. The chat will provide immediate access to a law librarian by just clicking on the chat icon. Library patrons can (anonymously or otherwise) go online through the Delaware public libraries at <http://lib.de.us/askalibrarian>, or directly through the Judicial Law Libraries webpage, and receive information on where to locate legal information. The project will start with limited access (a few hours of online chat time per week) and expand as the need grows. If the law librarians are not available to respond to the chat, the questions will be sent to them through email and answered within 72 hours.

The law libraries webpage will also offer important research links and information for attorneys and the general public, including online tutorials on topics such as how to research in the Delaware Code and how to do legislative history.

The webpage and chat online are scheduled to be available by November 15, 2012. Check them out!



For further information contact
Leah.Chandler@state.de.us.

We are pleased to present the Fall 2012 issue of the *Delaware Docket*, the Newsletter of the Delaware Judiciary, which is published semi-annually to provide updates on activities and events in the Judicial community. All are welcome to suggest topics, contribute articles for future editions, and provide suggestions on the newsletter. The Delaware Docket is available on line at <http://courts.delaware.gov/AOC/publications.stm>.

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