



Full Court Press



Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

August 2012

Open To All, Trusted By All, Justice For All

Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield reappointed to a second term



Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield

Chief Judge Lee Satterfield has been reappointed to a second four-year term as Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Under his leadership, the Superior Court has dramatically expanded its community court initiative and services for juveniles and unrepresented parties.

stration of justice and the services and programs we offer the residents of my hometown.”

Known by his openness to all employees and stakeholders of the Superior Court, he looks forward to his second term and being able to expand further the Court’s programs.

According to the Chief Judge: “With the incredibly talented judiciary and court staff at the Superior Court, I am confident that we can continue to make improvements to a court that is already one of the best in the country.”

A native Washingtonian, Chief Judge Satterfield has served on the Superior Court bench since 1992. He served in a number of divisions, presiding over the Domestic Violence Unit and the Family Division, and then becoming the first presiding judge of the Family Court after it was created in 2002.

Commenting on his reappointment as Chief Judge, he expressed gratitude for being able to serve another term. “This job is not an easy one, but it is incredibly rewarding to be able to improve the admini-

“With the incredibly talented judiciary and court staff at the Superior Court, I am confident that we can continue to make improvements to a court that is already one of the best in the country.”

Chief Judge Satterfield

DC Courts’ High School Community Service Learning program exceeds expectations

The DC Courts’ Administrative Services Division successfully completed the first full Community Service Learning (CSL) program during the 2012 summer. The program leaders were Nicole Farrar and Michael Harrison. Participating students represented several high schools in the Washington metropolitan area.

The CSL program is a product of the 2011 Management Training Program, developed by Team Two graduates: Patrice Brady, Charmaine Koo, Jeremie Johnson, Milind Panwalker, and Nicole Stevens. The idea was to create a venue for high school students to participate in community service at the DC Courts and also learn about the functions of the judicial system.



DC Courts Executive Officer Anne Wicks with interns and CSL staff Shawn Wilkins, Nicole Farrar and Michael Harrison

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The community service aspect of the program calls for students to participate in safe and constructive activities, primarily assisting residents so that they can fully utilize court services. The educational aspect of the program provides students with a deeper understanding of the courts through seminars and projects, dispels common misunderstandings about the courts and promotes civic awareness.

During the six-week program, the students earned up to 116 community service hours toward their graduation requirements by working in the Information Center. They served the public by providing court-related information and directions and assisted the Customer Service Greeters Program by greeting the public coming into the main entrance of the Moultrie Courthouse.

The students also received presentations from various court divisions including Criminal, Crime Victims, Domestic Violence, Family, Probate, Social Services and Special Operations, as well as Court Security. Student Alex Li commented: "I now realize that the court system is very intriguing and this program helped me to better understand our government."

The program would not have been successful without the support of Judge Zoe Bush, Presiding Judge of the Family Court, who is the judicial sponsor of CSL and Louis Parker, Director of the Administrative Services

Division and mentor for Team Two of the 2011 Management Training Program. Shawn Wilkins, Acting Supervisor of the Information Center, and Louis Kelly from the Center for Education and Training both played an instrumental role in the program, training the students to provide pertinent information to the members of the public who required significant assistance.

The implementation of the CSL Program was a rewarding achievement and the program is expected to continue next summer. CSL provides an invaluable opportunity for high school students to learn and develop through active participation in service that meets the needs of the community while learning about the judicial system.



2012 CSL interns

*The District of Columbia Courts Management Training Committee
Cordially invites you to attend the Graduation Ceremony for*

*The Management Training Program
Class of 2012*

*Friday, September 28, 2012
2:00pm to 5:00pm*

*District of Columbia Court of Appeals
Historic Courthouse
Ceremonial Courtroom, Lower Level
430 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001*

*Please RSVP by September 14, 2012 to:
Mrs. Olive Woodson (Center for Education and Training)*

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Inquiries should be submitted to
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Kenia Seoane Lopez sworn in as Magistrate Judge



*Magistrate Judge
Kenia Seoane Lopez*

The latest addition to the DC Superior Court bench is Kenia Seoane Lopez, who was sworn in as a Magistrate Judge in July. Formerly a Bilingual Attorney Negotiator in the Domestic Violence Unit, Judge Seoane Lopez has been part of the Superior Court since 2009.

Born in Cuba and emigrating at the age of 8, she arrived in the US after a long journey that transformed her early life. Judge Seoane Lopez left Cuba with her mother and siblings, first for the Canary Islands, Spain and then to Boston two years later, where she attended middle and high school. She was reunited with her father when she was 21.

Judge Seoane Lopez's path to the legal world and ultimately to the bench started with a program in high school called the Judicial Youth Corps. Exposing inner city public school students to the courts, the program made a profound impact and instilled in her the desire to become a lawyer.

In a testament to how early experiences can have such a long-lasting effect, Judge Seoane Lopez explains how the program changed her life. "From that moment on, I knew I wanted to be a lawyer as a way of helping others."

She now mentors youth and attorneys and sits on the committee of the DC Court's and DC Bar's annual Youth Law Fair, always mindful of how those early experiences have the potential to shape young people.

The desire to be a lawyer compelled her to pursue a law and a master's degree at the University of Wisconsin Law School, after graduating from Northeastern University in Boston, and a public policy fellowship eventually brought her to Washington DC.

Judge Seoane Lopez joined the DC bar in 2006, clerked at the DC Superior Court and served as an Assistant Attorney General for the District, representing the District in child support cases before joining the Superior Court's Domestic Violence Unit in 2009. In 2010, she served as the president of the DC Hispanic Bar Association.

eOPF is here!

Your personnel records available at your convenience

Imagine that you need very specific job information to fill out forms for an application, or you want to double check insurance information for retirement planning. Once you had to make an appointment with a Human Resource Specialist to access your records, but now it's as easy as a click on your computer!

The DC Courts have deployed the electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) system for all employees, bringing your Official Personnel Folder (OPF) to your desktop.

Using eOPF to manage your personnel records is like using online banking for money management. With an online bank account you don't have to receive paper copies of bank statements or go to a physical bank location to review your account information. With eOPF, you now have comparable, secured ease of access to your official personnel records.

For more information contact Mercedes Johnson, Benefits Officer, HR Division.



SAVE THE DATE!

31st Annual Employee Recognition & Awards Ceremony
Thursday, September 27, 2012
2:30pm

Family Court employee and cancer survivor inspires others to press on



Edith Clipper

Edith Clipper is truly an inspiration to others. The longtime DC Superior Court's employee was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010 and what came next was a journey of deep struggles, perseverance and hope.

It's a journey that ultimately led Edith to reach out to others going through similar struggles. "It really does take a toll on you and your loved ones," says Edith. "But it makes all the difference in the world if you have people who understand surrounding you."

Having gone through several surgeries, radiation and chemotherapy, Edith is now on a quest to make a difference. She found that after being away from work for over

a year, opening up and sharing her experience at the office really touched those around her.

"It makes all the difference in the world if you have people who understand surrounding you."

"I was amazed at how many people were going through the same thing," explains Ms. Clipper. "It's not only the people going through it directly, it's also the loved ones. Many people have someone they know and care about wrestling with cancer."

Motivated by the desire to make a difference, she found herself sharing her experience with members of the Working on Wellness (WOW) committee, who then encouraged her to initiate a cancer support group. And that's exactly what she did.

The purpose of the group is to bring encouragement to those struggling with cancer and those who have survived, and also those affected by cancer through someone else in their lives. "When WOW asked me to facilitate the group I just felt so honored," said Edith.

The experience of surviving cancer has transformed her outlook. "I sometimes wondered about my purpose in life. Now I want to share my experience and if that helps to empower others, I may have just found my true calling."



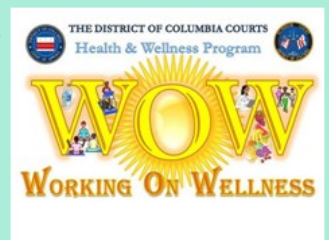
DC Courts' Cancer Support Group

The DC Courts' Cancer Support Group was launched earlier this year with the purpose of reaching those touched by cancer, whether personally or through a close friend or family member.

Group members share coping methods and have an opportunity to develop new relationships.

All participants are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. The group meets every month and is sponsored by the Working on Wellness (WOW) committee.

For more information contact:
CancerSupportGroup@dcsc.gov



Record Turnout for Second Annual Family Celebration Day

By Anita Jarman, Communications Assistant, Executive Office

Over 30 families participated in the second annual Family Celebration Day on June 16th. Located outside of the Town Hall Education Arts and Recreation Center (ARC) in Southeast DC, the event was a celebration of families that have worked hard to reunite, getting their children back from the foster care system.



The Honorable S. Pamela Gray (left) chats with Family Court managers

Complemented by activities for children, such as face painting and a moon bounce, various organizations exhibited their services and hosted training sessions to provide ample resources for celebrating families. One of the exhibits by the DC Central Kitchen included a food demonstration on healthy eating with samples and recipes. Also, a pair of freelance photographers provided free family portraits for the reunified families.



The Honorable Zoe Bush, Presiding Family Court judge

Family Celebration Day is jointly hosted by the DC Superior Court's Family Court and the DC Child and Family Service Agency as a part of National Reunification Month. Welcomed and praised by the Family Court Presiding Judge Zoe Bush and Family Court Director Dianne King, the families felt their accomplishments were truly celebrated.



Judge Bush said that this event was a celebration of success because "when you look at these little kids, you see what it's all about. They just know they're here with folks who care about them and they are having fun. You can't beat that."

DC Mayor Vincent Gray also shared celebratory words of encouragement while he spoke with the reunited families. In his proclamation of June 16, 2012 as Family Celebration Day, Mayor Gray stated: "All children need the love, care, security and stability of family unity to provide a solid foundation... [Thus] the District of Columbia is working to raise awareness about the importance of family reunification to children in foster care..." Closing remarks were given by Deputy Presiding Judge of Family Court, Hiram Puig-Lugo.



DC Child and Family Services Agency Director Brenda Donald along with DC Mayor Vincent Gray

Other participating organizations included: Advocates for Justice in Education; The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy; Department of Employment Services/DC Works! Career Center; East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, Inc.; Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of DC; Adoptions Together, Inc.; and Early States, DC.

Family Celebration Day Spotlight:

As an incentive for reunified families' participation in Family Celebration Day, CASA for Children of DC supported photographers Melissa Brooks and Holly Panter's "Portrait Project" as they provided free family portraits. Founder of the Project, Brooks works with various non-profit organizations around the country to provide free portrait sessions to the disadvantaged and underprivileged. CASA provided black and white and color portraits to 24 families at this year's Celebration.

Chief Judge Eric T. Washington completes successful term as president of the Conference of Chief Justices

Elected in August 2011 to serve as president of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ), Chief Judge Washington recently finished his one-year term, satisfied with the results of initiatives carried out under his tenure. CCJ is a national organization that represents state courts and promotes the interests of state judicial systems through programs and policies designed to improve court operations.

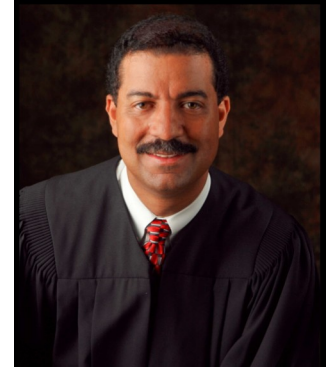
Upon election, Chief Judge Washington made it a point to focus on the areas of funding, language access, and pre-trial justice reform. On court funding, the Chief Judge spoke at a number of events

"It's the duty for us who work on the Third Branch to help citizens understand the judiciary's role in society and how the rule of law is at risk when courts no longer have the resources to remain accessible to the public."

Chief Judge Washington

with the purpose of elevating the debate on the fiscal challenges facing many state courts. Full and fair funding is an absolute necessity to ensure that courts are effective and embody our democratic ideals. Particularly noteworthy were his remarks during the National Law Day celebration at the Newseum in Washington DC. According to the Chief Judge, "it's the duty for us who work in the Third Branch to help citizens understand the judiciary's role in society and how the rule of law is at risk when courts no longer have the resources to remain accessible to the public."

In his role as CCJ president, Chief Judge Washington helped play a pivotal role in the development of language access standards for courts designed to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are able to have their cases resolved fairly and effectively, while recognizing the considerable fiscal constraints currently facing state courts. As a consequence, the standards adopted by the American Bar Association (ABA) garnered unanimous support in the ABA's House of Delegates.



Chief Judge Eric Washington

Chief Justice Washington is a strong advocate for national pretrial justice reform. As President of the CCJ, he used his platform to promote increased focus on the need to reform the system of pretrial release that relies on money bonds because it is discriminatory and does nothing to ensure the safety of the community – or does little to guarantee the return of the defendant to court. In his remarks at the National Symposium on Pretrial Justice, he extolled the virtues of the DC Bail Reform Act and the innovative work of the DC Pretrial Services Agency in calling upon the Symposium participants to take action now to ensure that "the number of individuals unnecessarily detained pretrial, particularly, non-violent and low risk persons, is significantly reduced."

Congratulations to Dr. Michael Barnes for distinguished professional award

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Michael Barnes who was selected by the American Psychological Association (APA) as the recipient of the 2012 APA Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to Institutional Practice. Dr. Barnes, Chief Clinical Psychologist and head of the Family Court Social Services Division's Child Guidance Clinic, was recently at the 2012 APA Convention in Orlando, FL to receive the award.

"Dr. Barnes is incredibly deserving of this award; he is one of DC's unsung heroes. He and his staff work hard every day to help troubled youth overcome their challenges and build a brighter future. His unwavering dedication to the juveniles who he sees and to the community is an invaluable asset to the District," said Superior Court's Chief Judge Lee Satterfield.



Dr. Michael Barnes

New Human Resources Performance Manager

Maxine Sharpe joined the DC Courts in July as a member of the Human Resources Division, where she will be involved in a variety of ongoing human capital initiatives.



Maxine Sharpe

She is passionate about performance management and will be focusing on enhancing the DC Courts' current performance management process to ensure continuous performance management improvement. She believes in fostering performance cultures that

focus on results, value performance, reward contributions, and promote excellence.

Maxine has over 26 years of comprehensive work experience in the area of human resources and performance management. She previously served as the Performance Management and Incentive Awards Program Manager for the US Department

of the Treasury.

Prior to her position with the Department of the Treasury, Maxine held positions of increased human capital accountability and responsibility with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and with the DC Office of Personnel (DCOP). She also worked for the St. Petersburg, Florida Police Department for four years as well as in the private sector.

Maxine earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of South Florida and a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from Howard University.

When not working, Maxine practices yoga and loves reading, listening to music and working out in the gym. She is committed to a path of continuous personal growth and improvement as a leader. Maxine makes it a point to help at least one person EVERY day!

Multi-Door goes to the State Department

Jeannie M. Adams, Director of the Superior Court's Multi-Door Dispute Resolution Division, and Darrell Hale, Family and Community Branch Chief, were invited to the State Department to attend an Open House on International Parental Child Abduction.

Multi-Door joined the FBI and Interpol in leading one of the break-out sessions, explaining the benefits of mediation to parents and the services available to the public. Multi-Door had a unique opportunity to speak with parents who have open cases and are seeking custody of their children in other jurisdictions.

The emotional and financial toll experienced by these parents was evident in every conversation. For parents seeking the return of their children, one of the biggest sources of frustration is that courts in many other countries do not take into account the prior decisions made by courts in the United States.

Sadly, many children are living in countries that are not party to The Hague Abduction Convention, the primary civil law mechanism for parents seeking custody of children who are abroad. The State Department is actively working with those governments to change this situation and Multi-Door had the opportunity to meet with some exceptional State Department staff dedicated to the return of children to their parents.

Secretary Hillary Clinton's opening remarks were particularly moving. Secretary Clinton, with great compassion and conviction, expressed her commitment to doing everything possible to return the children to their parents. She has worked on children's issues her entire life and it was evident that the parents hung onto her every word.

Multi-Door was truly honored to participate in this event!

Rave Reviews

Good Afternoon Ms. Hofford,

Just a word/note of thanks to you and your staff for your ongoing and exemplary customer service. **A particular nod of appreciation is due to Dr. Keith Robinson and Ms. Olive Woodson** for helping me navigate a “thorny” training issue I experienced today....

...I’m always encouraged to see when we can, even across Divisions, employ our collective genius to get things done for the good of the Courts. Dr. Robinson and Ms. Woodson are to be commended for their commitment to the same!

Thanks again – and keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Herbert Rouson, Jr., JD



Olive Woodson and Keith Robinson

Office of Register of Wills
District of Columbia Superior Court

Attn: Ann Meister, Esquire

This letter of appreciation is being addressed to your attention to make you aware of the exemplary quality of service provided by **Mrs. Janice Mc Dowell** to this consumer. Within the past four months, this employee assisted me in the filing of two small estate probate matters. With patience, she navigated me through a process that can be described as tedious and overwhelming. As a retired court employee, I am of the opinion that the success experienced by the consumer who has to petition the Court in any matter is most definitely contingent upon the professionalism demonstrated by the primary direct service professional....



Janice McDowell

...Again, please make Mrs. Janice Mc Dowell aware of the fact that employers such as herself place the District of Columbia in an outstanding position of service rendered to this community. Also, I would like to say thank you to the court efforts for streamlining these arduous processes necessary to resolving probate matters in the Office of the Register of Wills.

Courtroom clerks receive rave reviews!

In letters of commendation received from Michael Orton, Assistant Attorney General at the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, seven Superior Court courtroom clerks were commended for their outstanding service to the public.

According to the letters, these public servants make the Superior Court a “better and safer place to conduct business, while improving our reputation within the community as fair, competent and honest civil servants.”

Congratulations and thanks to the following courtroom clerks:

**KEVIN BYNUM
JONATHAN HOPKINS
KAREN GORDON
CYNTHIA MILNER**

**RONNIE MITCHELL
JEREMY NOLAN
ESTHER SCOTT**



The District of Columbia Courts will be hosting their annual **Hispanic Heritage CORO Awards on October 19** during Hispanic Heritage Month. The CORO Awards honor those who have been a positive motivating force in the DC Latino community.