

Judiciary Times

Spring 2008

The newsletter of the New Jersey Judiciary

Winner of Society of Professional Journalists-New Jersey Chapter Awards for Newsletter Writing

Capping Three Decades of Service to the Judiciary

By Mike Mathis
Judiciary Times Editor

Supreme Court Justice Virginia A. Long and Joan Noonan are more than just boss and secretary.

They consider themselves family.

"We've been together a long time," Long said recently. "We finish each other's sentences."

"Joan and I never had a cross exchange in 30 years," she said.

So it's no surprise that Long is having difficulty facing the reality that Noonan will retire later this year, capping a three decade journey that has taken them from the Union County Courthouse in Elizabeth to the Supreme Court in Trenton.

"I can't even imagine what it will be like to come in without Joan being here," Long said. "Obviously, I've got to grapple with it, but I won't until it's thrust upon me."

Noonan said she never dreaded going to work, despite daily journeys by train or by car that often lasted an hour or more.

"There isn't a day I haven't enjoyed coming to work," said Noonan, 76, who lives in Lakewood, Ocean County. "I never minded the commute. It never bothered me."

"It's been such a rewarding experience," she said of working with Long.

Noonan became Long's secretary in 1978, when Long was appointed to the Superior Court bench in Union County.

Noonan was working the Union County Clerk's Office when she heard Long, who would eventually preside over cases in the civil, criminal and family divisions, needed a secretary.

"She called me two weeks later and asked me if I

Continued on page 5



Joan Noonan has been secretary to Supreme Court Justice Virginia A. Long since 1978. She plans to retire later this year.

Remembering segregation and a friendship with Dr. Martin Luther King

By Cheryl Cohen
Human Resources
Bergen Vicinage

Although we're all familiar with Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, many of us have little idea what it was like to be an African-American living in the south in the 1940s and 1950s.

Theodora Lacey, a retired educator from Teaneck who visited the Bergen Vicinage Feb. 1 to mark Black History Month, knew King and Parks. She grew up in Montgomery, Ala. during that tempestuous time.

"I want to share who I am and where I'm from," Lacey said.

Born in Montgomery in 1932, Lacey learned first-hand about segregation and prejudice. She remembers waiting at bus stops as buses drove past.

She also described how African-Americans would board the front of the bus to pay and then had to step back

Continued on page 10

Inside...

Passaic Leadership Awards	2
Essex Courthouse Dedication	2
Minority Concerns Conference	3
Hudson Mock Trial Competition	4
Burlington and Camden Hear Speaker	5
Monmouth Marks Black History Month	6
Atlantic/Cape May Celebrate Cultures	8
Monmouth Vicinage Adoption Day	9
Essex TASC Program	10

Passaic Vicinage Hosts Seminar, Gives Leadership Awards

By **Lubomira DeGroat**
Administrative Specialist 3
Passaic Vicinage

“Charting the Course for the Future... With You as the Essential Piece” was the focus of last year’s first leadership seminar in the Passaic Vicinage.

During this event, divisions set goals and objectives for the 2008 court year.

Divisions that met these goals were recognized by Trial Court Administrator Kirk L. Nixon during the

leadership seminar on Sept. 27 and Oct. 10.

There were three awards given out for reducing backlog and improving clearance.

The municipal division was given an achievement award for obtaining a 32 percent backlog reduction, or a reduction of more than 12,000 cases.

The civil division achieved a significant reduction in its backlog.

For the last three court years, it attained a state ranking of fourth or better.

The chancery division placed first in the state with a 126 percent clearance rate and finished in fifth place with a 99.2 percent clearance rate in probate cases.

Another well-deserved achievement award went to the operations division.

A newly-developed report for jury utilization resulted in a more efficient use of jurors.

This not only improved the

statewide ranking in juror measures to number one, but also considerably reduced expenses for jurors.

The probation division also was recognized for improving customer service by increasing juvenile rehabilitation efforts through the reformatting the Village Initiative Program and for the expansion of Project Safe Neighborhood.

A “girl’s group” was formed to address special issues that impact female offenders.

A basketball league was established to provide recreational outlets for probationers, and two successful vo-tech programs and graduations were held.

In addition to the awards, honorable mentions went to the human resources, criminal and civil divisions for significant progress made toward their goals.

The civil and criminal divisions were recognized for working collaboratively with the operations division

Judiciary Times is prepared by the Office of Communications, the Administrative Office of the Courts, for employees of the Judiciary and volunteers who work with the court system.

The chief justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court is Stuart Rabner. The acting administrative director of the courts is Judge Philip S. Carchman.

Please send short news articles saved as Word documents in plain text without formatting, as well as photos and/or suggestions to the Office of Communications, or mail disk, photos and paper copy to: Editor, *Judiciary Times*, Office of Communications, PO Box 037, Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex, Trenton NJ 08625-0037. Submissions are subject to editing, and not all can be published.

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Essex Commemorates Dedication of Historic Courthouse in Newark

By **Kimberly Cicala**
Community Relations Liaison
Essex Vicinage

Assignment Judge Patricia K. Costello and Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. commemorated the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Essex County Historic Courthouse Oct. 17.

The celebration included events in the courthouse rotunda and in jury management.

The rotunda celebration featured remarks, a presentation showcasing the courthouse’s architectural and artistic features, a gallery of black and white photographs by court interpreter Robert Zemser and festive songs and refreshments.

In attendance at the celebration, along with Costello and DiVincenzo, were Chief Justice Stuart Rabner, Essex County Bar Association Presi-

dent Marc Gross, Essex County Prosecutor Paula Dow and Essex County Sheriff Armando Fontoura.

The program also featured Helen Post Curry, the great-granddaughter of courthouse architect Cass Gilbert, and architectural historian and Gilbert expert Barbara Christen.

The speakers highlighted the recent renovation project, which restored the courthouse to its original grandeur, and spoke of the significance of its presence in Essex County.

Jurors also participated.

Earlier in the day, they were treated to cupcakes prepared by local students and a presentation on the history of the courthouse.

Since completion of its restoration in 2005, the Historic Courthouse has existed as a source of pride and a shining symbol of justice for Essex County residents.

Minority Concerns Program Members Participate in Conference

**By Yolande P. Marlow,
Aime Alonzo-Serrano,
Lisa R. Burke,
Pauline D. Daniels,
Carmen Flores
and Leslie Santora**

Public education and community outreach are essential components of the New Jersey Judiciary's Minority Concerns Program.

The basis for these efforts is found in the Supreme Court Action Plan on Minority Concerns (1993) and the New Jersey Judiciary's Strategic Plan (1996), both of which include mandates for the court to familiarize the community about the Judiciary to foster public confidence and trust.

In September, Judiciary representatives presented a workshop at the American Bar Association's National LRE Leadership Conference in New Orleans.

During the session, "Collaborative Delivery of Law-Related Education to Youth: Sample Programming and Promising Practices," Minority Concerns staff liaisons from the Administrative Office of the Courts and several vicinages illustrated promising practices for law-related educational programming drawn from selected sample educational outreach initiatives.

It also enabled attendees to consider which practices would work best in their own jurisdictions and to explore strategies for maximizing their own programmatic efforts.

Yolande Marlow, serving as facilitator, presented an overview of the conceptual framework on which Minority Concerns educational outreach programs are developed. She also discussed the program's role in educating youth about court processes, services, and programs.

Drawing on staff experiences in producing LRE programs at the local level, panelists presented snapshots of selected programs that characterize the promising practices in law-related educational programming for youth.

Aime Alonzo-Serrano discussed the court tour program for youth in Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage. She explained how the program promotes prevention through education, since in today's youth often believe court proceedings resemble those presented on television and may take lightly the consequences of unlawful behavior.

With many participants in the program emerging with a renewed sense of pride in their roles as stakeholders in the rule of law, Alonzo-Serrano said the tour program provides a valuable opportunity for the public to learn about the courts from judges and staff and for judges and staff to learn about the public's concerns and interests in a non-adversarial setting.

Lisa Burke, speaking on behalf of Hudson Vicinage staff liaison Pauline Daniels, highlighted the Law Day 2007 Youth Summit on empowerment and leadership.

Burke highlighted key elements of the program and underscored aspects that demonstrate the benefits of an effective court-community partnership.

An overview of lessons learned provided insights into producing an event of this scope.

The discussion of the court-community partnerships demonstrated how community partners can provide services that are essential in delivering a program to more than 200 middle school students from throughout the county.

Carmen Flores discussed the courts-in-the-schools program that Monmouth Vicinage has designed to foster young people's understanding of their roles as stakeholders in the rule of law and to make them aware of the legal career options available to them.

Relating the vicinage's view of the program as an opportunity to inform young people about the state court system and to create a long-range recruitment tool by exposing minority youth in particular to role models in the judicial and legal field, Flores

described how each program component relates to the goals of informing the community about the Judiciary and nurturing public confidence in the courts.

Leslie Santora demonstrated how the court-community partnership model serves as a way to disseminate information and exchange insights and results in programs and services to an underserved and often invisible segment of the population: youth who are aging out of the child welfare system.

An innovative inter-agency program developed by Union Vicinage, "Teen Star," enables youth to see the court as a place to obtain information and services.

Because of their participation in the program, young people are likely to emerge with a more positive view of the courts and a deeper appreciation for the Judiciary's role in society.

Burke offered an overview of promising practices in law-related education, practices that are characteristic of programs offered to urban, suburban and rural school districts by the Judiciary and community partners.



Yolande P. Marlow, manager of the Minority Concerns Unit for the New Jersey Judiciary, spoke at a Law-Related Education program in New Orleans in September.

Hudson Vicinage Hosts Mock Trial Competition for High Schools

**By Jane P. Carey, Assistant Criminal Division Manager, Janice Kidney, Ombudsman and Pryia Ramrup, Assistant Hudson County Prosecutor
Hudson Vicinage**

In keeping with this year's law day theme, *Rule of Law, Foundation for Communities of Opportunity and Equity*, 10 Hudson County schools participated in a mock trial competition at the Hudson County Courthouse Feb. 4, 5, 6 and 7.

The competition between Bayonne High School; Dickinson High School; Emerson High School; High Tech High School; The Hudson School; Hudson Catholic Regional High School; Lincoln High School; McNair Academic High School; Union Hill High School and Weehawken High School was hard-fought.

The Hudson County Bar Association sponsored the event in collaboration with the Law Day Activities Committee.

The committee is chaired by Maurice B. Mantineo, presiding family division judge.

Stephen McCurrie, a member of the committee and mock trial coordinator, facilitated the efforts with the

schools, attorneys and the court.

Numerous teachers, attorneys and law clerks worked with the students to prepare them for the competition.

The competition required students to become familiar with all the facts and complex legal procedures of a case.

It also offered students the opportunity to develop and use their analytical, listening and speaking skills in a court setting before a two-judge panel.

The panels included members of the Judiciary and bar who fulfilled the vital role of evaluating the presentations.

The judges for the competition were Peter F. Bariso, Jr.; Mark A. Baber; Mary K. Costello; Barbara A. Curran; John A. McLaughlin (retired); Lourdes I. Santiago; Cataldo F. Fazio and Kathleen A. Walrod.

The attorneys were Gregory G. Diebold; Angela C. Femino; Charles H. Landesman and Joseph S. Sherman.

Volunteers from the civil, criminal, family, operations, and probation divisions were timekeepers.

Judges provided feedback to the students on their opening and closing statements, direct and cross examination and procedural requirements.

"I commend the student attorneys on their preparation and presentation of a complex evidential criminal case," said Bariso, presiding judge of the civil division. "The students' poise and ability to communicate with the court and jury was impressive."

In the first round, which was held Feb. 4 and 5, all 10 schools competed against each other for a spot in the quarterfinals, which were held Feb. 6.

Lincoln High School, McNair Academic High School, Bayonne High School and Union Hill High School made it to the semifinals.

The semifinal winners, McNair Academic High School and Bayonne High School, competed against each other for the county championship.

The winner was Bayonne High School, which represented the county in the state mock trial regional competition Feb. 14 at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick.

Participating schools and the winners of the county competition will be formally recognized at the Law Day ceremony May 1 at the Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. Courthouse in Jersey City.

Passaic County Probationers Complete Vocational-Technical Training

**By Kirk K. Nixon
Trial Court Administrator
Passaic Vicinage**

Twenty-nine students from Passaic County probation's Vo-Tech program were honored Jan. 24 for completing a 15-week job training program as part of their probationary sentences.

The ceremony was held at Passaic County Technical Institute in Wayne.

The class was the eighth to complete the program, which began about four years ago as part of the probation division's Village Initiative Vocational Training and Educational Program.

The program allows probationers between the ages of 17 and 25 to choose between culinary arts, medical

arts, carpentry, plumbing, automotive or business graphics.

The students must also prepare for their GED if they do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.

The program is funded by a grant from the Division of Criminal Justice, an arm of the state Attorney General's Office.

The program has received support from the Center City Project in Paterson.

Nick Tspatsaris, owner of Center City, and Warren Bigos, director of construction, have committed to hiring graduates.

Following the ceremony, Tspatsaris and Bigos hired two students who completed and won top honors in

carpentry and plumbing courses.

Tspatsaris and Bigos have offered jobs to nine graduates from previous classes.

Did you know?

Webcasts of state Supreme Court oral arguments can be found at nj-courtsonline.com.

Webcasts are broadcast live and also are maintained in an online archive for 30 days. Archived Webcasts can be downloaded.

Webcasts that are older than 30 days can be located at the Rutgers Newark Law School Website at njlegallib.rutgers.edu/supct/

Speaker evokes emotion during performance on diversity, inclusion

By Deborah Edwards (Burlington) and Carmelita Vazquez (Camden) EEO/AA Officers

Burlington and Camden vicinages and Burlington County College Feb. 1 sponsored two presentations by Michael “Mykee” Fowlin, a psychologist, actor and poet known for his performances on diversity and inclusion.

More than 500 people participated in Fowlin’s program, “Beyond The Nine To Five,” which was held at the BCC Enterprise Center in Mount Laurel.

Fowlin combines his professional expertise and passion by educating his audience through various characters. His programs stimulate awareness of issues dealing with race, discrimination, violence prevention and personal identity.

Fowlin delivered powerful messages that everyone in the audience could relate to through their interactions with people from all walks of life.

Fowlin’s portrayals included an inmate who was a recovering alcoholic; a little girl suffering from depression; an African-American man who was often judged by the color of his skin; a man with cerebral palsy and a man who had trouble accepting that a friend is homosexual.

Through these characters and others, participants were able to reflect on how they view others and handle diversity.

Fowlin’s performance evoked much emotion.

At some points, you could hear a pin drop.

At others, the audience broke into laughter.

A short time later, attendees were reaching for tissues.

The event was chaired by Jude Del Preore and Michael O’Brien, trial court administrators from Burlington and Camden vicinages, respectively.

It was coordinated by the Camden Vicinage Sensitivity Cultural Awareness Now (SCAN) Committee, which is chaired by Judge Charles W. Dortch, Jr., and the Burlington Vicinage EEO/AA Advisory Committee, which is

co-chaired by Deborah Edwards and Donald Rucker.

Both vicinages recognized the efforts of Robert Messina, president of Burlington County College, for his efforts.

The college provided state-of-the-art conference facilities and refreshments.

For more information about Fowlin, go to michaelfowlin.com.

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Michael “Mykee” Fowlin is flanked by Camden Vicinage Trial Court Administrator Michael O’Brien (left) and Burlington Vicinage TCA Jude Del Preore after Fowlin’s program at Burlington County College.

Secretary approaches the end of a 30-year career in the Judiciary Continued from page 1

would work for her,” Noonan recalled.

The pair has been inseparable ever since.

In 1983, Noonan accompanied Long to the Mercer County Courthouse in Trenton, where the future justice sat as general equity judge.

A year later, Long was elevated to the Appellate Division, and in 1999 was named to the Supreme Court.

“Joan made me more friends in any location I could have made on my own,” Long said. “Everyone knew her, and everyone loved her, and I got the spillover from that.”

Over the years, Long and Noonan mentored 55 law clerks and assisted them with everything from finding jobs to finding dates, Noonan said.

“We can tell you where everybody is,” she said.

In her retirement, Noonan said she’d like to travel and spend time with her three daughters and five grandchildren.

She also plans to volunteer at the Center for Hope Hospice & Palliative Care in Scotch Plains.

Meanwhile, Long will have to hire another secretary, something she hasn’t done since Jimmy Carter was president, a stamp cost 13 cents and the Bee Gees topped the music charts.

Long, 66, who said she plans to remain on the bench until she reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70, said she’ll put it off as long as possible.

“I’m totally not dealing with it,” she said.

Monmouth Vicinage Celebrates Black History Month

By Deborah Caffyn
Administrative Specialist 2
Finance Division
Monmouth Vicinage

“A drum beat is like a heart beat. And I am sure that if we were all to trace our roots back to their origin, we would discover that they started in Africa.”

Thus spoke Mark Wood of Wood ‘n Drums, an organization that promotes unity through drumming. Wood and renowned drummer Dena Tauriello, specialists in African hand drumming, along with Krista Wood and Ed Ashton, entertained close to 200 attendees at the Monmouth Vicinage Black History Month celebration in February.

The program, “Promoting Unity through Drumming,” a series of events focusing on the musical traditions of Sub-Saharan Africa, was sponsored by the Monmouth Vicinage EEO/AA Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns. It was held at the Monmouth County Courthouse in Freehold.

Judges and employees, along with children from Camden and the public, took turns with the 30 drums from Guinea, Mali and Senegal.

“The Superior Court is very pleased to celebrate Black History Month by celebrating the musical roots of African-Americans and learning about instruments that have inspired great musicians throughout the world,” Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson said in his opening remarks.

Other speakers included Judge Thomas F. Scully, chairperson of the EEO/AA Advisory Committee, and Judge Honora O’Brien Kilgallen, presiding family division judge and chairperson of the Minority Concerns Committee.

The program included an acappella version of the black national anthem, James Weldon Johnson’s “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” by Tarika Jean-Pierre of the family division.

A stirring dramatization of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech “I Have a Dream” was performed by attorney Joseph Champagne of Toms River. Champagne has served as general

counsel of the Haitian-American Leadership Council and is founder of the Law Student Leadership Collective for Human Rights at the Vermont Law School.

Champagne said the first English he learned when he came to the United States from Haiti was King’s speech. All one had to do was to close their eyes, and they could hear King’s proclamation. “I have a dream, that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” King proclaimed, quoting from the Declaration of Independence.

A selection of African attire from Ghana was presented by Deadra Hubbard of the civil division.

Hubbard and her husband are missionaries to Ghana. The clothing they exhibited was purchased during trips to that country.

Court employees Millicent Garland, Jenifer Rosario, Angela Veney, Teretha Warren and Randal Yorker modeled the attire.

The reception closed with a recitation of Maya Angelou’s “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” by Catherine Heredia from EEO/AA.

Attendees feasted on traditional African refreshments, including Caakiri, a West African couscous pudding, fresh fruits, plantains and a special African drink.

The exhibit, “Musical Traditions of Sub-Saharan Africa” was on display in the courthouse for two weeks.

The exhibit featured a collection of musical instruments that highlighted the diversity and similarities among many countries and cultures in Sub-Saharan Africa, including elaborately carved drums and rattles made from seeds and gourds.

The instruments are important to black history and American history because they have influenced American music, particularly gospel, blues, jazz and rap.



Monmouth employees modeling African attire from Ghana are (from left) Millicent Garland, Administrative Specialist 2, Deadra Hubbard, Court Services Officer, Randal Yorker, team leader, Jennifer Rosario, Administrative Specialist 3, Teretha Warren, Judiciary Clerk 3 and Angela Veney, Judiciary Clerk 3.

Probation Services Marks Black History Month with a Menu Full of Song, Dance, Poetry and Numerous Other Events

By Linda Taylor

Child Support Enforcement Services,
Probation
Administrative Office of the Courts

The Probation Services Division's celebration of Black History Month in February included a program called "The Reach for the Stars" that included presentation such as "Why Black History Month," the history and singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," dance, poetry and an African head wrap demonstration.

Several events took place during the Feb. 28 "Reach for the Stars" program. Rich Narcini led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed guests Bobby Battle, chief Judiciary EEO/AA officer, and Jack McCarthy, director of trial court services.

Beverly Murphy, mistress of ceremonies, recounted the evolution of Black History Month.

"Lift Every Voice and Sing," the

African-American national anthem, was performed by Sarita Mungo and Kevin Brown. Dan Woods said the writer of the song, James Weldon Johnson, was a multi-talented man.

Johnson, the first African-American admitted to the Florida Bar since Reconstruction, served as field secretary and executive secretary of the NAACP. He also started a newspaper, served as a United States ambassador and was a successful song writer.

Johnson wrote "Lift Every Voice and Sing" during his tenure as a high school principal.

Tameka Mason and Brian Goings sang and performed a cultural dance, and Renee Riddle-Davison brought the poem "Phenomenal Woman" to life.

Vernita Bell, Denise Groover, Robin Irvin and Judy Blissett modeled traditional African attire and participated in Amanda Lewis' African head wrap demonstration.

A Powerpoint presentation of historical events and phenomenal women created by Rich Sims and Beverly Murphy was shown.

Staff members showed their star quality in the "Who's Who Among the Stars" contest by bringing in their childhood photos for others to identify. Tom Hudson was the winner.

The day ended with a sumptuous buffet prepared by probation division members and the mellifluous organ sounds of Scott Trent.

Trent is an accomplished musician who, as a child, performed on the renowned John Wanamaker Grand Court organ in Philadelphia.

Throughout the month, Sarita Mungo provided "What Happened on this Day in Black History" facts.

Probation staff members brought in DVDs to create a movie exchange for fellow employees.

A black studies historical facts calendar was distributed.



Among those enjoying the festivities during Probation Services' celebration of Black History Month in February were (at left) Renee Riddle Davison and Beverly Murphy. At right, Beverly Murphy, Vernita Bell, Judy Blissett, Diane Jenkins, Denise Groover, Robin Irvin and Amanda Lewis don traditional African head wraps.

Atlantic/Cape May Celebrates Many Cultures

By Kathleen Obringer
Ombudsman
Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage

The Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage held its annual Multicultural Day festivities at each courthouse.

The Atlantic County Civil Courthouse celebrated Multicultural Day in a big way Jan. 30.

The Human Relations Committee planned the events and lined up contest judges.

Judge Susan Maven, Florine Alexander, family division manager, and Chris Carter, municipal division manager graciously gave their time to decide the contest.

They expressed how impressed they were by everyone's presentations, and they said selecting winners was not easy.

They said that aside from the beautiful presentations and wonderful

food, they were wowed by the extra "oomph" factor presented in three areas: China did a beautiful dance, Italy had a grape stomping and Belgium had a "contest within a contest," a Belgian stew cook-off which was won by George Coan, team leader in law division.

The Criminal Courts Complex in Mays Landing celebrated Multicultural Day Feb. 20. The celebration included an overview of the Japanese court system presented by Takahito Otake, a judge visiting from Japan.

Otake and his wife, who is an attorney, participated in the annual Multicultural Day festivities. Otake is the 38th Japanese judge to take part in the Japanese Visiting Judge Program in New Jersey.

The celebration also included a captivating musical performance by students from the William Davies Middle School music department.

The program, which had "East Meets West" as its theme, included musical selections and dances from Israel, Japan, Scotland, Latin America, France and other countries.

The Cape May County Courthouse celebrated Multicultural Day Mar. 13. The celebration featured information booths on courts in Japan, Norway and the United Kingdom. The theme of one booth was Common Laws vs. Civil Law Systems.

Thanks goes to the Human Relations Committee as well as staff and guests who participated.

Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage held several multicultural activities earlier this year. Below, William Davies Middle School student James Townley plays the trumbone, accompanied by Cole Smith on the trumpet. The festivities included ethnic food, dance and music and information about other judicial systems around the world.



Joy Marks Monmouth County Adoption Day

By **Laurie Moore**, Volunteer/CDR Coordinator and **Janet Slocum**, Administrative Specialist 4
Monmouth Vicinage

Excitement radiated from the jury assembly room at the Monmouth Vicinage Nov. 15 as more than 200 people participated in the vicinage's second annual Adoption Day program.

The audience included parents, children, agency and court staff and members of the media.

Some of those in attendance obtained information on how to adopt a child. Others were recognized for having adopted children.

The highlight of the program was the finalization of 23 adoptions by 18 families.

The event began with remarks from Honora O'Brien Kilgallen, presiding family division judge, Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson and Judge Michael A. Guadagno, who sits in the family division. DYFS representative Mary Beth Field and Monmouth County Surrogate Rosemarie Peters also shared their thoughts.

Peters reported that in the last court year, the Surrogate's Office handled the adoption of 197 children, a 12.5 percent increase from the previous year. Of those children, 104 children were placed through DYFS, twice the number placed in the past year, she said.

The audience was captivated by the remarks of adoptive parent Susan Smith, who spoke about adopting three special needs children.

Nine-year-old Peterson Bellinger brought tears to everyone's eyes as he related events that led to his removal from his birth family's home.

Peterson explained how his life had changed because of his relationship with his adoptive mother.

He also expressed his admiration for Lawson.

"I feel like I have a home," Peterson said. "I feel like I have dreams that will one day come true."

Following the speeches, the children and their families gathered in the back of the jury room to await formal adoption proceedings.

They were offered refreshments provided by court-appointed special advocates. Representatives from the

state Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) decorated the room with gold table linens and centerpieces. The centerpieces were given to the families when they left.

Festive balloon bouquets anchored to Beanie Babies, which were provided by court services supervisor Fern Varasano, adorned the room.

Zach Karper and Eric Sanborn, volunteers from Monmouth Cares, a non-profit care management agency, took pictures of the new families and presented them with 5- by 7-inch framed prints.

Each family also received an Adoption Day calendar that was created by Volunteer/CDR Coordinator Laurie Moore.

Each adopted child was delighted to take home a stuffed teddy bear and pin.

The program drew an impressive media response. The Asbury Park Press featured a lengthy article the next day.

The Monmouth Vicinage is proud that its touching and memorable program helped to accomplish the goal of raising community awareness about the importance of adopting a child.

Criminal Manager Named in Middlesex

Vicki Dzingleski Dicaro was recently appointed criminal division manager of the Middlesex Vicinage.

A graduate of the College of New Jersey, Dzingleski Dicaro began her career in the Judiciary as a juvenile probation officer in Middlesex County. She assisted in the implementation of the Family Crisis Intervention Unit.

In 1993, she was named assistant criminal division manager in Middlesex.

She is a 1996 recipient of a Judiciary AQCES award for her work on a case management computerized report writing program.

Dzingleski Dicaro lives in Monmouth County with her husband and two children.



Nine-year-old Peterson Bellinger addresses the audience on the joys of being adopted during the Monmouth Vicinage Adoption Day program. The highlight of the program was the finalization of 23 adoptions by 18 families.

Essex TASC Program Works to Help Those with Drug and Alcohol Addictions

By Frank Schildiner
Senior Probation Officer
Criminal Division
Essex Vicinage

The Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities (TASC) program is one of the dynamic new units in the Superior Court, an initiative that assists in ensuring the best chance of success for Drug Court clients.

This vital and growing program possesses a clinical approach that enables drug- and alcohol-addicted defendants to receive treatment.

TASC is a nationwide program formed within the courts.

According to recent reports, approximately 70% of those in the criminal justice system suffer from some form of substance abuse.

Through the TASC unit's efforts, the courts gain a greater ability to properly place clients in treatment programs that best suit their chances of recovery.

Clients in need of greater supervisory assistance often are placed into

inpatient programs, while others are better suited for outpatient placement.

Within the Superior Court system, there is a TASC unit assigned to each vicinage as a part of the criminal division.

The Essex County unit is managed by team leader Colin D. Lochner, who supervises four officers.

The officers evaluate defendants who can best benefit from Drug Court.

This is accomplished through the use of the American Psychological Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV) and the American Society of Addiction Medicine's Addiction Severity Index (ASI).

For non-Drug Court cases, evaluators screen defendants for addictions and provide referrals to in and outpatient treatment facilities.

Ronald Faines, a licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselor in the TASC unit, said the assessments "... provide the judges with greater insight as to the nature of the client's addiction and their compliance with TASC

treatment referrals."

The TASC unit in Essex County is seeing a greater reliance on assessments and screenings.

Lochner said he hopes to expand statewide TASC units to areas such as mental illness and other areas where treatment services could assist the courts.

According to Lochner, the TASC unit is a "...a supportive service to the court," and they are, "always seeking feedback about our evaluations of clients."

Through the hard work and dedication of TASC units, the courts are gaining a tool to better confront issues in the 21st century.

Drug courts were introduced in Camden and Essex Vicinages in 1996. They were expanded to include all vicinages in 2004.

"(Drug courts) cause people to admit their addiction, which is the root cause of their criminal behavior," said Carol Venditto, statewide Drug Court manager. "They improve both public safety and public health."

Recalling Martin Luther King Jr. and an Era of Racial Segregation and Tension

Continued from page 1

into the street and board the bus from the side door.

After someone had stepped back into the street, the bus often pulled away, she said.

Life could be dangerous, she said.

There were drive-by shootings and bombings of African-American churches. Sometimes people would fill bottles with gasoline, light them and throw them on the lawns of homes occupied by African-American families.

Many people, including Parks, felt the time for change was long overdue.

Lacey knew Parks her entire life. She said her mother shared a desk with Parks at school.

Lacey talked about the day Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus, sparking the bus boycott led by a young King. Lacey described King as "humble and fun-loving," adding that

"He didn't boast about himself."

Lacey said she personally learned a great lesson from King's message of non-violence. She said she harbored deep anger after years of witnessing innocent people pushed off sidewalks, spat upon and mistreated in other ways.

Lacey explained how one night at a bus boycott meeting, word came that King's house had been fire-bombed while his wife and baby were inside.

She said King announced, "No matter what has happened to my family tonight, we will not retaliate. We will continue this movement and it will be non-violent." Lacey said she "learned the true meaning of non-violence that night."

The last time Lacey saw King was in the early 1960s, after she moved to Bergen County with her husband Archie. She said King teased them about

"abandoning him in the south."

Lacey said she told him that "there was plenty to be done right here in New Jersey."

The Laceys were involved in fair housing and integration of the school systems in Bergen County. Lacey was a teacher in Teaneck for 39 years before she retired in June 2007.

After King's assassination, Lacey began to celebrate his life by holding vigils and working to have his birthday recognized as a national holiday.

She also serves on a committee that holds a celebration on King's birthday to honor high school students who are doing well in school and who perform community service.

Lacey concluded her presentation by saying that her experience with King "instilled in (me) the idea that if you reach out and help someone, oh, the riches you will receive. I am a millionaire," she exclaimed.

Monmouth International Celebration Entertains and Educates

By Catherine Heredia
Administrative Specialist 2
EEO/AA Division
Monmouth Vicinage

After Monmouth Vicinage held its first International Celebration in 2006, employees were skeptical that another celebration could match its success.

However, the second celebration, held Nov. 2, proved to be a resounding success, surpassing all expectations and drawing close to 350 participants, 100 more attendees than the prior year's program.

The event, which was co-spon-

sored by the EEO/AA and the Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns, featured ethnic performances, foods and displays.

Judge Honora O'Brien Kilgallen, chair of the committee, said "the event created a spirit of harmony among us as we celebrated the beautiful tapestry of the different cultures represented within our vicinage."

About 140 employees and committee members worked together to recreate their ancestry through nine cultural exhibits and 60 ethnic foods and desserts.

The nine exhibits featured a variety of authentic items, including

Asian silks and tapestries; African art, drums, statues and carvings; German and Slavic embroidery and dolls; items from China, Greece, Ireland and Israel; Native American jewelry and musical instruments, garments, wall hangings, shadow boxes, wood carvings, dolls, toys and hats from Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

The program began with remarks by Judge Thomas F. Scully, who is a member of the advisory committee. Joan Kreizman and Marsi L. Perkins, trial court administrator, also spoke.

Ten outstanding cultural performances by employees and members of the public followed the remarks.

There also was a colorful Asian fashion show put together by vicinage employees Taposi Chatterjee and Indrani Das; a Filmi fusion Indian dance performance by Serita Das, a third-grader from Old Bridge and the daughter of Indrani Das; a beautiful Chinese peacock dance performance presented by Jersey Shore Chinese School students Erica Chuang, Frida Chuang and Christine Liu, accompanied by teacher Gloria Liu and a magnificent Flamenco dance performed by Natalia Cordero, a student at Montclair State University.

There also was a spirited country line dance performed by vicinage volunteer Millie Galantucci, instructor Peggy Cosgrove and members of the Country Swingers; a lovely Spanish ballad by vicinage employee Catherine Heredia and a lively salsa dance performed by volunteer Paul Wechsler and partner Barbara Butensky.

Scully expressed his appreciation to the volunteers and performers.

"The cultural performances were spectacular and were enjoyed very much by our judges and staff," he said.

"We appreciate that these community members joined us to promote awareness of world cultures."



Students from the Jersey Shore School (top) perform a Chinese peacock dance during the Monmouth Vicinage's second International Celebration. Laura Colter of the criminal division (bottom) displays Native American jewelry crafted by her late father, a Cherokee.

Middlesex Bestows Perfect Attendance Awards

By **Betty Agin**

Administrative Specialist 4
Middlesex Vicinage

On Jan. 25, Middlesex Vicinage celebrated the exemplary attendance of 21 Judiciary employees who used no sick time for the entire 2007 calendar year.

The employees were honored at a luncheon in the main courthouse at JFK Square.

Assignment Judge Travis L. Francis presided over the ceremony. Also in attendance were presiding judges and division managers.

This year, representatives from the unions also were asked to attend. Alison Perez-Cabret represented AFSCME at the event.

Each honoree was presented with a plaque and treated to lunch prepared by the Perth Amboy Vo-Tech Culinary Department.

Trial Court Administrator Gregory Edwards, himself a member of the perfect attendance club for six years, commended the employees on their diligence in coming to work in all kinds of weather, even enduring challenging days at the office when possibly feeling "under the weather."

Among those honored were senior probation officer Edward Greene, who has not taken a sick day since he started with the Judiciary in November 1985, human resources division manager Natalie H. Myers and judiciary clerk Rhonda Brown.

Myers and Brown have logged nine and 10 years of perfect attendance, respectively.

The perfect attendance employee recognition has been a tradition in Middlesex Vicinage since 2003, when there were 11 honorees.

The vicinage has seen a steady reduction in the use of sick time each year among employees, which has resulted in an increased number of employees recognized for perfect attendance.

The honorees are a diverse group of employees that includes managers, secretaries, clerical staff and probation officers.

Each division is often represented by several employees receiving the honor.

Of this year's 21 honorees, 16 have been honored more than once.

The following Middlesex Vicinage employees were honored:

Trial Court Services

Lawrence Bethea, EEO/AA Officer*
Gregory Edwards, Trial Court Administrator*
Wayne Fiorino, Asst. Trial Court Administrator*
David Gouss, Administrative Specialist 2*
Natalie Myers, Human Resource Division Manager*
Sylvia O'Connor, Ombudsman
Judy Walkes, Judiciary Clerk 2*

Civil

Rhoda Brown, Judiciary Clerk 4*
Man Tim Chan, Judiciary Clerk3*
Joseph Lynch, Civil Division Manager*
Theresa Pranovics, Judiciary Secretary 1
(Confidential)*
John Pushko, Asst. Division Manager*

Special Civil

Amanda Toti, Court Services Supervisor 2
Cheryl Williams, Asst. Division Manager

Family

Donna Drew May, Judiciary Secretary

Probation

Ralph Bianchini, Probation Officer*
Evelyn Carofilis, Asst. Chief Probation Officer
Marcos Gastou, Sr. Probation Officer*
Edward Greene, Sr. Probation Officer*
Jessie McDaniel, Master Probation Officer*
Antoinette Sasso, Probation Officer*

*Employees who received several honors since 2003



Mission Statement of the New Jersey Court System

We are an independent branch of government constitutionally entrusted with the fair and just resolution of disputes in order to preserve the rule of law and to protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and this State.