

RASHAD SHABAKA-BURNS
Trial Court Administrator

JANIE RODRIGUEZ, ESQ
Ombudsman

www.njcourts.com

phone: 973 656-3999 fax: 973 656-3949

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For more information contact:
Janie Rodriguez, Ombudsman, at 973-656-3969
or Brenda Soto, AS2, 973-656-3997

Morris/Sussex Vicinage Welcomes First Visiting Japanese Judge

歓迎 Kangei... This is Japanese for "Welcome."

For the first time, the Morris/Sussex Vicinage judges, managers, and staff will welcome a visiting Japanese judge, Takahiro Ogawa.

Judge Ogawa will visit the vicinage from Monday, April 15 to Friday, April 26 as part of the New Jersey Judiciary's Japanese Judge Program.

"We are most pleased to host Judge Ogawa," Assignment Judge Thomas L. Weisenbeck said. "While the Japanese Judge Program has existed for more than 40 years, this is our vicinage's first opportunity to host a Japanese judge. We look forward to providing Judge Ogawa with a most rewarding professional experience."

"We are very excited and honored to participate in this program, and we look forward to the exchange of ideas and cultural perspectives with Judge Ogawa," Trial Court Administrator Rashad Shabaka-Burns said.

The Japanese Judge Program began in 1972 as the result of the efforts of Edward B. McConnell, who was administrative director of the courts at the time, and the Supreme Court of Japan. The program was designed to help Japan's young judges, ages 25 to 30, gain broader insight into the administration of justice through comprehensive research in and exposure to foreign jurisdictions. The Supreme Court of Japan selects each year's participant.

Judge Ogawa is the 43rd judge to participate in the program. He is from the Amagasaki Branch of the Kobe District and Family Court and was appointed to the bench in October 2005. His primary focus is on civil practice and procedures, but he also is interested in learning about juvenile probation.

Judge Ogawa will speak about his experience in the Japanese court system and his cultural traditions at a lunchtime workshop on Friday April 26 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Administration and Records Building in Morristown. For more information, call Janie Rodriguez, ombudsman, at 973-656-3969 or Brenda Soto at 973-656-3997.

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