

# E-SJI NEWS

## SJI Awards FY 2013 4th Quarter Grants

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The Board met on September 9, 2013, to make decisions on quarterly grant applications and awarded a total of 12 grants.

Eight (8) Technical Assistance (TA) Grants were approved, including: an operational improvement initiative for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District Court of Kansas; a review of probate and guardianship procedures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Court of Nevada; a criminal caseflow assessment for the Alameda County Superior Court in California; development of a court facility plan for the Mohave County Superior Court in Arizona; an organizational assessment for the District of Columbia Court of Appeals; a communications reengineering and probation service integration project for the Pierce County District Court in Washington; and, update of the Virginia Court facility guidelines for the Virginia Supreme Court.

Four (4) Curriculum Adaptation & Training (CAT) Grants were approved, including: delivery of the



curriculum, *Improving Access to Justice for Immigrant Crime Victims: The Important Role of Legally Correct Information*, to four additional jurisdictions and via webinar by American University; cultural diversity training in the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida; development and pilot testing of the nationally-recognized curriculum, *Preventing and Addressing Internet-Related Juror Misconduct*, by the National Center for State Courts; and, court facilities training for the Idaho Supreme Court.

### In this Issue

4th Quarter Grant Awards	1
Civil Justice Initiative	1
New Priority Investment Area	2
NCSC Library	2
NACM Conference Content Available Online	3
FY 2014 Grant Deadlines	3

## Civil Justice Initiative

During the September 9, 2013 meeting, the Board awarded a Strategic Initiatives Grant (SIG) to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), in partnership with the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) to support the Civil Justice Initiative. At its 2013 Midyear Meeting, the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) passed a resolution calling for the creation of a Civil Justice Initiative to address the impact of excessive costs and delays in civil litigation on access to justice, public trust and confidence in the courts, and the constitutional role of the courts. The project will develop guidelines and best practices for civil litigation based on best practices in various states, and other applicable informa-

tion. The project will focus on a wide variety of issues such as civil case processing including variations for pleading standards, discovery procedures, summary judgment and other dispositive motions, business court programs, and managing mass tort litigation. The project will result in: 1) a written report presented to CCJ summarizing the project's findings and recommendations including evidence-based practices, best practices, and templates for civil rules and operational practices for CCJ members to consider adopting in their respective states; and 2) a series of briefing papers on the current landscape of civil litigation in state courts and other issues addressed by the project.

## New Priority Investment Area for 2014

Each fiscal year, SJI allocates significant financial resources to support its Priority Investment Areas. In FY 2014, the Priority Investment Areas will be (in no ranking order): 1) Language Access and the State Courts; 2) Self-Represented Litigation; 3) Reengineering in Response to Budget Reductions; 4) Human Trafficking and the State Courts; 5) Immigration Issues in the State Courts; 6) Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Elder Issues; and 7) a new Priority Investment Area on **Remote Technology** – e.g., innovative use of technology to improve the business operations of courts and provide enhanced services outside the courtroom (videoconferencing, online access, educational services, remote court proceedings, the electronic record, centralization/regionalization of court services, etc.).



The state courts have been increasing their use of technology to enhance services, become more efficient, and reduce costs. However, much of this work has been fragmented across and within states, and often depends on various factors such as awareness of how remote technology can be harnessed to improve the

delivery of court services and/or willingness to embrace new technologies. Technological advancements such as the electronic record, digital recording, and videoconferencing require courts to not only reassess current business processes, but also create new rules and procedures that support access outside the traditional courthouse/courtroom context.

SJI is interested in innovative approaches to promoting awareness of the ease and benefits of embracing remote technology to improve access to justice, enhance court operations, and reduce costs.

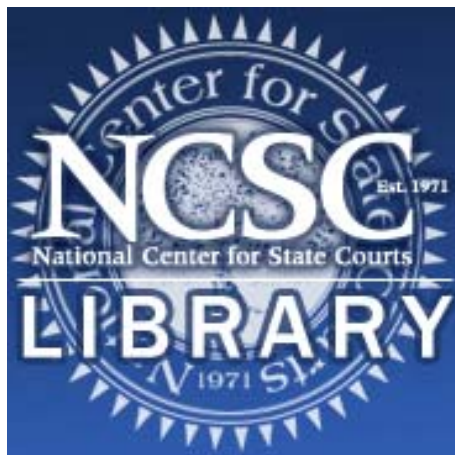
Please note that SJI will not support the operational costs associated with the development or enhancement of case management and electronic record systems, in addition to any other equipment costs that support these systems.

## New Titles Available via the NCSC Library eCollection

Two new SJI-supported titles were recently added to the NCSC Library eCollection. Each grant focused on a past or current [SJI's Priority Investment](#) area.

[Multijurisdictional Teen Court Evaluation: A Comparative Evaluation of Three Teen Court Models](#), (SJI-09-N-156)

The Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts worked with the University of Maryland School of Social Work to evaluate three of the ten existing Teen Court models currently operating in Maryland. Teen, or Youth/Peer Courts, are a diversion program utilized by the juvenile justice system in cases where youth have minor offenses and no history of violence. The conditions under which a teen or youth would be considered for participation in the court program varied by court, which included: Baltimore City (urban), Charles County (rural), and Montgomery County (suburban, Metro Washington, D.C.). Overall,



the study found the three Teen Court programs offer an alternative to traditional case processing with lower recidivism rates while garnering support from youth and parents. The full report details the programs, methodology, metrics, and offers more conclusions regarding the success of this diversion effort in terms of recidivism, efficiency, and effectiveness.

[Language Access Planning for New Mexico State Courts](#), (SJI-10-TA-179)

As part of the larger New Mexico Justice System Interpreter Resource Partnership (NMJSIRP), this project enabled the New Mexico Judiciary to prepare 13 judicial districts for the development of language access plans (LAPs) that were tailored to the unique needs of their communities. Plans developed through this project were designed to achieve compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166. With the support of this project, 100 percent of district courts and 87 percent of magistrate courts have created LAPs. The full report contains valuable stakeholder, timeline, and data needs to consider before beginning the LAP process. Additionally, several plans are also featured.

## NACM 2013 Annual Conference Content Available Online

During its 2013 annual conference, the National Association for Court Management (NACM) recorded educational sessions. This content can be accessed online without being a NACM member, and features all of the keynote presentations covering topics including, court leadership, self-represented Litigants, protecting vulnerable persons while court-involved, procedural fairness, and court technology. The website also provides contact information for exhibitors and general interest resources.

You can access all of this information online at: <https://nacmnet.org/educational-opportunities/nacm-annual-2013-conference-video.html>



## REMINDER: FY 2014 SJI Grant Deadlines

Dates for the FY 2014 SJI grant cycle are as follows:

- First Quarter - applications due on November 1, 2013, with grant awards by December 2013;
- Second Quarter – applications due on February 1, 2014, with grant awards by April 2014;
- Third Quarter – applications due on May 1, 2014, with grant awards by July 2014; and,
- Fourth Quarter – applications due on August 1, 2014, with grant awards by September 2014.

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The State Justice Institute is a federally-funded, non-profit corporation established by federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in the state courts.

