

E-SJI News

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SJI RECEIVES OVER \$1 MILLION IN GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2nd QUARTER

SJI received a total of **\$1,720,544** in grant applications for the 1st quarter of FY 2010. The amount requested was double the amount normally requested during a given quarter, and historically SJI receives the least amount of grant applications in 1st quarter of the fiscal year. For the 2nd quarter, SJI received **\$1,138,121** in new grant applications; marking the second quarter in a row that SJI has received over a million dollars in new grant requests.

There may be several reasons why grant applications have increased: 1) the state courts are dealing with severe budget constraints, and need financial assistance in order to conduct critical projects; 2) SJI increased the amount available for Technical Assistance (TA) and Curriculum Adaptation and Training (CAT) grants. TA Grants were increased from \$30,000 to \$50,000, and CAT Grants were increased from \$20,000 to \$30,000. This has provided more flexibility to the state courts to conduct larger projects; and 3) SJI has increased its visibility with the state courts through outreach, which combined with limited federal funds for the state courts in general, has led to an increase in applications.

The Board will meet on March 25, 2010, to make decisions on grant awards for the 2nd quarter. The results of this meeting will be available the following week.

SJI SUBMITS FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST TO CONGRESS

SJI recently submitted its FY 2011 Budget request to the House and Senate Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittees. For FY 2011, SJI is requesting \$6,273,000 to enhance its efforts to improve the quality of justice in the state courts. The request is \$1,142,000 above the level provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (P.L. 111-117); and \$727,000 below the level as authorized by the State Justice Institute Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-372). **(continued on page 2)**

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SJI remains the only source of federal funding dedicated exclusively to improving the quality of justice in state courts. There is a strong interest in continuing to support the State courts, since they handle over 97 percent of all the cases in the United States. The funding requested for FY 2011 will enable SJI to continue identifying issues that impact all courts, fostering innovative solutions, and sharing information on successful approaches nationwide.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES IN COURT BUILDING SECURITY



In FY 2009, SJI awarded a Strategic Initiatives Grant (SJI-09-P-125) to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to develop a set of guidelines for implementing best practices for court building security. This [document](#) is now available on both the SJI and NCSC websites.

Operating a court building today is by its very nature a risky business. Court buildings are visited by a large volume of disgruntled and even lawbreaking citizens. In addition, court buildings can be seen as an important symbolic target for those who wish to cause mischief or even terror. In an effort to assist the state courts in the development and implementation of effective measures for court building security, NCSC has developed *Steps to Best Practices*. In addition, SJI supported a companion piece that provides guidelines for implementing those steps, and specifically focuses on the costs and strategies for obtaining necessary funding to improving court building security. The companion piece includes four parts:

Part I – identifies the estimated costs associated with implementing the recommendations contained in the *Steps* document.

Part II – includes a framework of priorities that a court may wish to follow in deciding when and how to implement the recommendations contained in *Steps*.

Part III – recommends strategies for seeking the funding necessary to implement the recommendations contained in *Steps*. (continued on page 3)

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The State Justice Institute is a private, non-profit corporation established by Federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in state courts, and foster innovative, efficient solutions to common issues faced by all courts. SJI is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.



Part IV – describes performance and accountability measures that a court may wish to utilize in order to measure the effectiveness of implementation efforts, and to sustain funding for those efforts.

Court building security is not a one-time achievement. It is a serious and continuous goal that requires constant vigilance. The risks involved in court building operations are numerous, and can never be completely eliminated. However, they can be minimized. Following the recommendations of the *Steps* document, along with the guidance provided by the companion piece, can help the state courts minimize the risks and help keep the public, judicial officers, court staff, and building tenants more safe and secure.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next grant and scholarship application deadline: **May 1, 2010** (3rd Quarter, FY 2010).
- The Board will meet on March 25, 2010, to make grant awards for the 2nd Quarter.
- Grant and scholarship application deadlines for the remainder of the fiscal year: **August 1, 2010** (4th Quarter).
- Current and future grantees and scholarship recipients can choose to receive payments via EFT. This is a faster method of receiving payment from SJI. To participate in EFT, SJI will need a completed [SF 3881-Automated Clearing House \(ACH\)/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form](#), which is available on the SJI website under the [Forms](#) tab.