

E-SJI News

July 2007

The Voice of the State Justice Institute

Vol. 17, No. 8



NACM Annual Conference: Opportunity to Share Ideas

The National Association for Court Management (NACM) held its Annual Conference in Chicago July 8-12, 2007, which was well attended. It allowed opportunities for court personnel to share information, learn how other courts addressed similar issues, and hear about programs developed to address common concerns. SJI is proud to have played a role in helping courts address some of these issues and we felt that sharing interesting ideas from that conference should be included in this month's E-SJI News.

During the conference, the 20th Judicial Circuit Court & Ottawa County Probate Court, in Michigan, were the recipients of the 2007 Justice Achievement Award Honorable Mention for their "You and the Courts" Public Education Project. The two courts had identified the need for an education strategy to increase public understanding of the Courts. In order to determine which issues should be addressed, teams were assembled and sent out on the streets to select random people and ask them what they knew about the Courts in exchange for \$1.00. The public responses, along with answers to many questions, were then organized into an educational video/DVD entitled, "You and the Courts." This video is a flexible teaching tool that has many applications for individual, group, school, media or targeted presentations. The hope is that this video will educate the public about the business of the Courts and ultimately increase the public's trust through better understanding of the Courts.

In discussing this project with Kevin Bowling, the Court Administrator, the background of these efforts was more fully explained. He pointed out that this par-

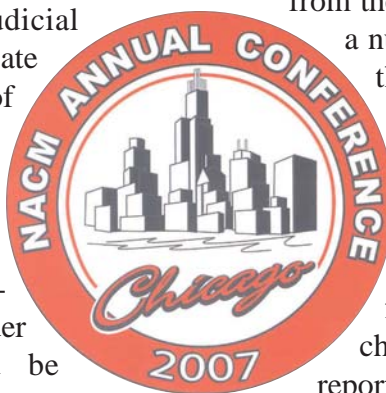
ticular project had actually been one piece of a larger effort that had grown out of an earlier grant from SJI to support a strategic planning process carried out in 2004. That grant supported the two courts in a strategic planning process, which itself had been designed and used by courts in the 1990s and funded by an SJI grant, and the Visioning and Strategic Planning Core Competency published by the National Association for Court Management (NACM). Once the strategic plan was fully developed, additional funding was received

from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to develop a number of different initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan developed in 2004.

Kevin Bowling and the consultant, Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey (President of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.) prepared a report describing the Process that resulted in several very interesting projects, from which "You and the Courts" was chosen to be presented at NACM. The report is quite interesting and useful so we have placed it on our website - statejustice.org. This type of project certainly shows how courts can combine funding strategies for multiple purposes.

Other projects discussed at the Conference included discussions about the National Center for State Courts' (NCSC) "CourTools" project, which provides support and directions on how courts can start to implement

continued on page 3



What's Inside

SJI Announces Changes to the Scholarship Program.....	2
Status of FY 2008 Appropriations.....	2
NACM (continued).....	3
Mark Your Calendars.....	3
Classifieds.....	4
FY 2008 Federal Register Coming Soon.....	4

SJI Announces Changes To The Scholarship Program

SJI is making some changes to its Scholarship Program for FY 2008. Details of the changes will be published in the Federal Register this fall. In the meantime, SJI wants to share with you some of these changes.

Currently, scholarship applications are received by SJI quarterly; each quarter addressing only education programs occurring during a specific three-month period. For example, the upcoming deadline is August 24, 2007, for programs beginning between October 1 and December 31, 2007. These applications are allowed to have a postmark date up to August 24, 2007. After being received by SJI staff, scholarship documents must be prepared and mailed to the Board of Directors for their consideration. As a result, applicants may not hear about the status of their scholarship application until the middle of September, which could be very close to the actual training program if it is being held in early October. To make it easier for applicants to plan to attend educational programs, SJI has decided to allow scholarship applications for any education program in FY 2008 to be submitted any time during the fiscal year with the reviews following each of the deadlines below.

The quarterly review dates for receiving applications will remain the same as in prior fiscal years. Please note that the review dates for FY 2008 are: **November 30, 2007; February 23, 2008; May 25, 2008; and August 24, 2008.** All applications received by each of those dates will be reviewed and applicants will be notified within a month of each date, regardless of when the program is scheduled.

Those wishing to apply for a scholarship are reminded that no annual conference of a membership organization, even when it has a "training track," is eligible for funding. Furthermore, scholarships can only be awarded for courses held in a state other than the one in which the applicant resides or works, or for on-line courses.

Applicants who are awarded scholarships should note that the awarding of a scholarship **does not automatically register them for the course.** Scholarship recip-

ients must complete the registration process and then seek reimbursement for the actual fee and other costs as a reimbursement from SJI once the course is completed. Proof of attendance is required for the check to be sent to the recipient.

The SJI Scholarship Program is available to full-time judges of State or local trial and appellate courts; full time professional, State, or local court personnel with management responsibilities; and supervisory probation personnel in judicial branch probation offices. Senior judges, part-time judges, quasi-judicial hearing officers including referees and commissioners, administrative law judges, staff attorneys, law clerks, line staff, law enforcement officers, and other executive branch personnel are not eligible.



Status of FY 2008 Appropriations

On July 26, 2007, the House of Representatives passed the FY 2008 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Bill (H.R. 3093); which included SJI's request of \$4.64 million. On June 28, 2007, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved the CJS Bill (S. 1745); which included \$3.5 million for SJI. The Institute appreciates the continued support of Congress. SJI will continue to provide updates on the FY 2008 appropriations process in future E-SJI Newsletters.

performance measures in various program areas, such as access and fairness, trial date certainty, clearance rates, and numerous others. Several courts that had implemented various parts of the “CourTools” reported on their efforts, including Lubbock County District Court and County Courts at Law in Lubbock, Texas; County of San Mateo Superior Court of California; and the Superior Court in Yuma County, Arizona. More information about these projects can be obtained from NCSC. SJI is happy to have provided funding to several courts to conduct projects using this tool.

There were also sessions that addressed Accountability in Rural Courts. These courts often face unique problems of distance, sparse populations, and limited resources. The ways in which these courts are organized vary widely from state to state but they face a

number of common issues. Sessions were held to provide open discussions of the problems and potential ways that court managers can improve and enhance the courts to provide high quality justice services and appropriate accountability. Small groups were included in the sessions to allow participants to work together in addressing similar problems. These sessions seemed to provide considerable support and encouragement to rural courts that are often overlooked when urban court issues are being addressed.

NACM provides a considerable amount of information and documents on their website - nacmnet.org. The Conference certainly showed the value of sharing information and meeting with other court jurisdictions to discuss common issues facing the courts today. SJI encourages you to continue sharing your ideas with others and with the Institute.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FY2008, 1st QUARTER APPLICATIONS ARE DUE FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 1, 2007

Please note that should SJI be under a continuing resolution during the first part of FY 2008, new grant awards can only be made tentatively, and are subject to the final availability of appropriations. Therefore, those considering submitting new applications in the 1st quarter of FY 2008 are cautioned that the grant (if awarded) may not be able to receive SJI funds during the first part of the fiscal year. Once a final appropriation is enacted, SJI will be able to release FY 2008 grant funding.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| August 1 | Applications due for last quarter of FY 2007 |
| August 24 | Scholarship applications deadline |
| September 19-20 | SJI Board Meeting (Alexandria, VA) |
| October 1 | 1st quarter applications deadline for FY 2008 |

Board of Directors

Chairman

Robert A. Miller
Chief Justice (Ret.)
Supreme Court of South Dakota
Pierre, SD

Vice Chairman

Joseph F. Baca
Chief Justice (Ret.)
New Mexico Supreme Court
Santa Fe, NM

Secretary

Sandra A. O'Connor
States Attorney of Baltimore County (Ret.)
Towson, MD

Executive Committee Member

Keith McNamara, Esq.
McNamara & McNamara
Columbus, OH

Terrence B. Adamson, Esq.
Executive Vice-President
The National Geographic Society

Robert N. Baldwin
*Executive Vice President and
General Counsel*
National Center for State Courts

Carlos R. Garza, Esq.
Administrative Judge (Ret.)
Round Rock, TX

Sophia H. Hall
Administrative Presiding Judge
Circuit Court of Cook County
Chicago, IL

Tommy Jewell
Presiding Children's Court Judge (Ret.)
Second Judicial District Court
Albuquerque, NM

Arthur A. McGiverin
Chief Justice (Ret.)
Supreme Court of Iowa
Des Moines, IA

Janice Munsterman
Executive Director

Jonathan Mattiello
Deputy Director

Van Debrick
Finance Director

The State Justice Institute is a private, non-profit corporation established by Congress in 1984 to provide financial support for projects to improve the quality of justice in State courts. SJI is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.



CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT

Pro Bono Net & Legal Services Corporation Announce Document Assembly Circuit Rider Position

Pro Bono Net (PBN), a national nonprofit organization using innovative technology to increase legal assistance to indigent persons, is seeking a highly qualified candidate to serve as the National Document Assembly Project Circuit Rider for legal aid and court communities nationally. With funding from LSC's Technology Initiative Grants (TIG) program and SJI, the Document Assembly Circuit Rider will work closely with the National Project partner organizations involved in court-legal services collaborations as they plan for and incorporate document assembly into their service delivery systems. The Document Assembly Circuit Rider will provide strategic, editorial, and technological advice as well as serve as a critical communication link for delivering information about best practices to the broader community. Although the Document Assembly Circuit Rider may troubleshoot some software issues, this is not a technology support position. Those interested should email resume, references, and cover letter to jobs@probono.net.

In FY 2006, the SJI and LSC partnership provided over \$600,000 in TIG grants to legal aid technology projects with a distinct court nexus. SJI and LSC are continuing this partnership in FY 2007.

FY 2008 Federal Register Coming Soon

A few minor changes in the SJI Grant Guideline are anticipated for FY 2008. They will be placed in the Federal Register for public review in late September. The anticipated changes include the scholarship application procedures (reported in this Newslet-

ter) and the Special Interest Areas. SJI will post the Guideline on our website, as well as in the Federal Register and encourages you to keep an eye open for that document.

E-SJI News is published by the **State Justice Institute**, 1650 King Street, Suite 600, Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 684-6100 Fax: (703) 684-7618 Web site address: <http://www.statejustice.org>

Editors
Janice Munsterman
Jonathan Mattiello

Design/Layout
Candice Jackson