

E-SJI News

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SJI BOARD APPROVES GRANTS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER

The SJI Board of Directors met in Alexandria, Virginia, on September 19, 2008, to review applications for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2008. One (1) Project Grant, 6 Technical Assistance (TA) Grants, and 2 Curriculum Adaptation & Training (CAT) Grants were approved, for a total of \$255,779. Grant funding was extremely limited for the fourth quarter due to high demand throughout FY 2008.

Grant awards included a Project Grant to support the New Mexico Justice System Interpreter Resource Project. This partnership between the New Mexico courts and numerous justice agencies will improve interpreter training and qualifications, and establish a qualified pool of interpreters for use across the state. The project also addresses SJI's Special Interest Program Category: Immigration Issues. Six (6) TA applications were approved by the Board, including case management support for the 4th Judicial District in Louisiana; resources to improve access to justice in Yuba, Tehama, and Nevada Counties in California; and sentencing improvements for the Judiciary of Guam. Two (2) CAT Grants were approved that will allow the Vermont courts to provide critical education for judicial officers, and the National Judicial College to expand web-based training for judges.

For FY 2008, SJI awarded 9 Project Grants totaling \$760,321; 5 Partner Grants totaling \$937,000; 2 Strategic Initiatives Grants totaling \$448,168; 22 TA Grants totaling \$608,184; 8 CAT Grants totaling \$117,452; and 134 Scholarships totaling \$183,508; for a grand total of \$3,054,633. Total grant and scholarship requests for FY 2008 was \$4,322,398; therefore, SJI supported approximately 71 percent of the total requests. While some grant and scholarship requests did not make it through the review and Board approval processes to award, SJI also had to limit the number of awards due to lack of available grant funding. SJI anticipates that the demand for grants will continue to increase in FY 2009.

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U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE AND SJI WORK TO IMPROVE JUDICIAL SECURITY



The U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) and SJI recently finalized a Partner Grant to support a component of the USMS Judicial Security Fellowship Program. This program provides an opportunity for state and local law enforcement officers charged with court security to train with the USMS. This includes training on high level executive protection and court security operations. During the program, the Judicial Security Fellow (JSF) is exposed to all aspects of USMS judicial and court security, and travels to sites of ongoing high-threat trials and protective details. JSFs will be full-time sworn officers of a duly constituted law enforcement agency, whose responsibility includes judicial and court security in the jurisdiction of the JSF. Furthermore, the JSF is at the rank of lieutenant or above, and will have at least five years court security experience.

The USMS/SJI Partner Grant will directly support a component of JSF program that includes joint training with court administrators at the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). This training will include coordination of public and media relations in high visibility trials, coordinated approaches to policy and procedures, and consolidated training for court staff in security awareness and response. Furthermore, the NCSC will help the JSF and his/her court counterpart develop close working relationships for analyzing security needs and formulating action plans to improve security in the state or location jurisdiction they represent. The JSFs will also achieve an understanding of court security needs from a court perspective.

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION AND SJI FINALIZE THIRD YEAR PARTNER GRANT



LSC and SJI began working to tighten the bonds between courts and legal aid providers in FY 2006. SJI provides additional funding for LSC to make awards for projects that have a court component in their Technology Initiative Grants (TIG) program. LSC and SJI work together to determine appropriate projects for joint funding. (continued on page 3)

Legal Services Corporation and SJI Finalize Third Year Partner Grant (continued from page 2)

In FY 2008, LSC and SJI are continuing these efforts by recently finalizing a Partner Grant totaling **\$600,000**. This third year Partner Grant will fund a slate of innovative technology projects designed to promote full access to justice through the use of technology. The Partnership uses LSC's existing Technology Initiative Grants (TIG) program to support these innovative projects. SJI's share, \$300,000, is fully matched by LSC, and will provide additional resources to develop collaborative efforts between the courts and legal service programs in order to better serve self-represented and low-income litigants across the United States. Between FY 2006 and 2008, LSC/SJI Partner Grants have supported **\$1.9 million** in TIG projects. More information on the FY 2008 Partner Grant will be available in the future from both LSC and SJI. In the meantime, those interested in LSC's TIG program should visit the program website: <http://tig.lsc.gov/>.

NEW PAYMENT PROCESS FOR GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Beginning in FY 2009, SJI contracted a significant portion of its financial processes to the General Services Administration (GSA). This includes payments for awarded grants and scholarships. SJI will no longer issue checks directly; rather, electronic fund transfers (EFTs) or hard checks will be issued directly from the U.S. Treasury.

The process for requesting reimbursement for grants and scholarships remains the same; however, SJI has recently updated some of its forms. For grants, a **SJI Form R-Request for Advance or Reimbursement** must be submitted to request awarded funds. The only change to this form is that the Employee Identification Number (EIN) also known as a "Tax ID" is required on the Form R. For scholarships, a **SJI Form S3-Scholarship Payment Request/Financial Report** must be submitted to request scholarship reimbursement. The only significant change to this form is that the individual who received the scholarship must include his/her Social Security number. Payments from the U.S. Treasury can only be made if an EIN or Social Security number are included on these forms. Failure to include these numbers will result in delays receiving payments.

GSA will be responsible for processing payments from the U.S. Treasury on behalf of SJI. SJI has an agreement in place that, once the proper documentation is received, GSA will process these payments within two weeks.

Current and future grantees and scholarship recipients can also 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**.

Updated forms are available on the SJI website: <http://www.sji.gov/forms.php>. Please feel free to contact SJI if there are questions regarding this new payment process.

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The State Justice Institute is a private, nonprofit 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.

DEADLINES FOR NEW SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

This year, SJI permanently aligned the application deadlines for both new grant and scholarship applications. These deadlines, November 1; February 1; May 1; and August 1, correspond with the federal fiscal year quarters. The SJI Board meets on a federal fiscal year quarterly basis to make funding decisions because SJI is 100 percent federally funded. This structure allows SJI to start awarding new grants and scholarships once its budget is provided by Congress each fiscal year, and allocate the grant funding across four fiscal quarters.

For the 4th quarter of FY 2008, SJI continued to receive scholarship applications after the due date of August 1. Potential applicants are encouraged to review the deadlines prior to submitting scholarship applications, and to plan their courses accordingly.

More information about SJI grant and scholarship deadlines can be found on the SJI's website: <http://www.sji.gov/deadlines.php>.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next grant and scholarship application deadline: November 1, 2008 (1st QTR, FY 2009).
- The NCSC's *Guide for Continuity of Operations (COOP)* planning for courts has been updated with a new online course that augments and reinforces the information provided in the *COOP Planning Guide*. http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Research/coop/index.html.

