

# SJI NEWSLETTER

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## SJI Board Elects New Chair

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SJI uses [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to promote the work of its grantees and also shares information of interest to the entire state court community.

If your organization's work complements ours, let us know and we will share it!



During its meeting on Monday, June 13, 2016, the SJI Board of Directors elected Chief Justice Chase Rogers as Chair. She is the first female ever to be elected Chair of the SJI Board.

Chase Rogers has been the Chief Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court since 2007. She served as a judge on the Connecticut Appellate Court from 2006 to 2007, and as a judge on the Connecticut Superior Court from 1998 to 2006. Prior to becoming a judge, she was a partner at Cummings & Lockwood in Stamford, Connecticut, where she focused on employment law and commercial litigation.



She served on the Board of Directors of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) from 2008 to 2011. She has been a member of the Committee on Federal-State Jurisdiction of the Judicial Conference of the United States since 2012; member of the National

Center for State Courts Expanding Court Access to Justice Project Advisory Committee since 2012; member of the CCJ Civil Justice Initiative Committee since 2014; member of the Connecticut Bar

Foundation Nominating Committee since 2007; Ex Officio Member, American Law Institute; and Ex Officio Director, Connecticut Bar Foundation.

Chief Justice Rogers was appointed to the SJI Board of Directors in 2010. She has been an Adjunct Professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law since 2012. She received an Honorary degree from Quinnipiac University School of Law in 2010, and an

Honorary degree from the University of Hartford in 2011. She received her J.D. from Boston University School of Law, and B.A. from Stanford University.

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## SJI Awards FY 2016 Third Quarter Grants

The SJI Board of Directors met on June 13, 2016, at SJI Headquarters to make decisions on quarterly grant applications and awarded a total of nineteen (19) new grants.

One Strategic Initiatives Grant was awarded to support the implementation Phase of the Civil Justice Initiative.



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Two (2) Project Grants were approved, one to the Center for Court Innovation for a Domestic Violence Risk Factor Guide for Civil Courts Enhancement Project; and one to the New York Unified Court System for development and implementation of an Online Dispute Resolution Platform.

Ten (10) Technical Assistance (TA) Grants were approved, including: the Maricopa County, Arizona, Superior Court for a commercial court evaluation; the Nebraska Judiciary for a review of clerk's offices statewide; the Colorado Administrative Office of the Courts for a Domestic Relations Triage Project; the Delaware Administrative Office of the Courts for a Criminal Case Scheduling Initiative; and the Greene County, Ohio, Juvenile Court for an Operational Assessment.

Six (6) Curriculum Adaptation & Training (CAT) Grants were approved, including: support to the Judicial Council of California for an



Advanced Judicial College; the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts for an online Guardianship Training Course; the Arkansas Judiciary for development of online modules for court security officers; and the American Judges Association for domestic abuse education for judges.

## Courting Justice Listening Tour



On June 10, 2016, judicial leaders from across the country gathered in Los Angeles to record the first edition of "[Courting Justice](#)," a multi-part, televised "listening tour" being produced in cooperation with PBS broadcaster Tavis Smiley and offered during Smiley's regular programming slot.

Support for "Courting Justice" was provided by SJI, in addition to financial and in-kind resources from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), Walmart, the California Endowment, and the Public Welfare Foundation. More information about Courting Justice is available on the NCSC's website: [www.ncsc.org/courtingjustice](http://www.ncsc.org/courtingjustice)

Each edition in the series features a town-hall style program inclusive of judges from around the country, who engage in an unprecedented dialogue with the communities they serve in order to provide stakeholders

from disenfranchised communities an opportunity to discuss the issues that erode trust in our judicial system. A [recent survey](#) conducted for the NCSC found that only 32 percent of African Americans believe that state courts provide equal justice to all.

Panelists for the June 10th town hall included: Judge Daniel J. Buckley (Superior Court of Los Angeles County); Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye (Supreme Court of California); Judge Jimmie Edwards (22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District, City of St. Louis); Associate Justice Maria P. Rivera (California, First District Court of Appeals, Division Four); and Chief Judge Eric T. Washington (District of Columbia Court of Appeals). Audience members were drawn from Los Angeles area social justice, advocacy, faith, and small business communities, in addition to local and national court and bar leaders.

"I am gratified that many of the most influential judges in the country are eager to step down from the bench and engage in a free and open exchange with the people most affected by their decisions," said Tavis Smiley, who serves on the advisory board of the initiative. "This frank discussion is unprecedented. Securing the public's trust in our judicial system is fundamental to our democracy."

The first in a series of town hall meetings was recorded at Loyola School of Law. Future dates and locations for town halls will be announced as schedules are finalized.

## New Reports on SRLs in Family Court

In late 2014, the [Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System \(IAALS\)](#) received SJI support for a project titled, *Cases Without Counsel: Experiences of Self-Representation in Family Court*.

As a complement to its *Honoring Families Initiative*, IAALS examined the experiences of litigants navigating U.S. family courts without attorneys, and made recommendations for courts and others to better serve these self-represented litigants.

Two essential products were generated through IAALS' work, including: [Cases Without Counsel: Our Recommendations After Listening to the Litigants](#); and [Cases Without Counsel: Research on Experiences of Self-Representation in U.S. Family Court](#). Both reports conclude that: 1) in many cases when parties are not represented, challenges arise for both the court and litigant(s) which could be addressed with proper counsel; and, 2) there is an urgency to developing and deploying client-centric family law courts and processes to assist these self-represented litigants.

[IAALS weblog](#) includes the *Cases Without Counsel* research and recommendations reports, as well as insights from the project team.



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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.

