

E-SJI NEWS

SJI Receives 4th Quarter FY 2012 Grant Applications

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SJI received 23 grant applications requesting a total of \$1,349,759 for the 4th quarter of FY 2012. The Board will meet on September 17, 2012, to finalize decisions on grant awards for the last quarter of this fiscal year. The results of this Board meeting will be available that same week.

SJI continues to receive inquiries regarding funding priorities and interests for FY 2013. The SJI Grant Guideline for FY 2013 will be available online through the SJI website in October.

The grant and Education Support Program (ESP) application deadlines for FY 2013 are: 1st quarter - November 1, 2012; 2nd quarter - February 1, 2013; 3rd quarter - May 1, 2013; and, 4th quarter - August 1, 2013.

SJI staff are available to assist with questions on the application process, and applicants are encouraged to review the SJI website and social media outlets for information and news on recently funded projects.

Federal Deferred Immigration Action for Childhood Arrivals may Impact State Courts

The SJI-funded Immigration and the State Courts Initiative, led by the [Center for Public Policy Studies \(CPPS\)](#), is alerting state courts that deferred action for childhood arrivals recently announced by the Department of [Homeland Security/U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#) will likely result in requests for state court records by individuals applying for consideration under the program. The program provides deferral of removal action for two years, with the possibility of renewal for additional two-year periods, and applies to individuals who meet certain [requirements](#), including having not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more misdemeanors, or posing a threat to national security or public safety.

This requirement will likely result in numerous requests to state courts for records, as any individual with an arrest record will have the burden of showing to USCIS, on the initial request and as part of any request for subsequent renewal, that the arrests did not result in conviction of any of the crimes that preclude eligibility for deferred prosecution. CPPS has published an [article](#) on the uses of state court records in removal proceedings that explains the different types of records that may be used by federal immigration officials to determine the character of a criminal conviction.

CPPS has a [website](#) available for background information on these issues, recent reports, and guidance for how to obtain technical assistance.

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Arkansas Judiciary Provides Critical Court Security Training

In 2007, the Arkansas General Assembly adopted the *Arkansas Court Security Act* to ensure safe and secure courthouse environments through a general program for security and emergency preparedness for the judicial branch. The Act created a court security grant program for cities and counties that have developed security and emergency preparedness plans. In addition, the Act created a Director of Security and Emergency Preparedness position with the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). One of the Director's responsibilities was to develop a required training and certification program of not less than 12 hours for court security officers, in addition to their basic law enforcement training. Court security officers must complete the program within a year of beginning service.

In order to meet this requirement, the Arkansas AOC was awarded an SJI grant in FY 2008 (SJI-08-T-147) to develop this new certification program. The AOC selected the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to provide the technical assistance needed to develop the curriculum, and administer the training to a core group of court security officer trainers throughout the state. The principal areas of course coverage include: 1) overview of the Arkansas court system and procedures; 2) overview of relevant constitutional, statutory, and case law for court security; 3) best practices for providing courthouse and courtroom security; 4) procedures for jury trials; 5) prisoners in the courtroom and their transport; and 6) protection of individuals and targeted threats.

The SJI-funded court security officer "train the trainer" program was conducted in December of 2008. Following the conclusion of the grant, the AOC began partnering with local courts and law enforcement agencies to host the course across the state. Since 2008,

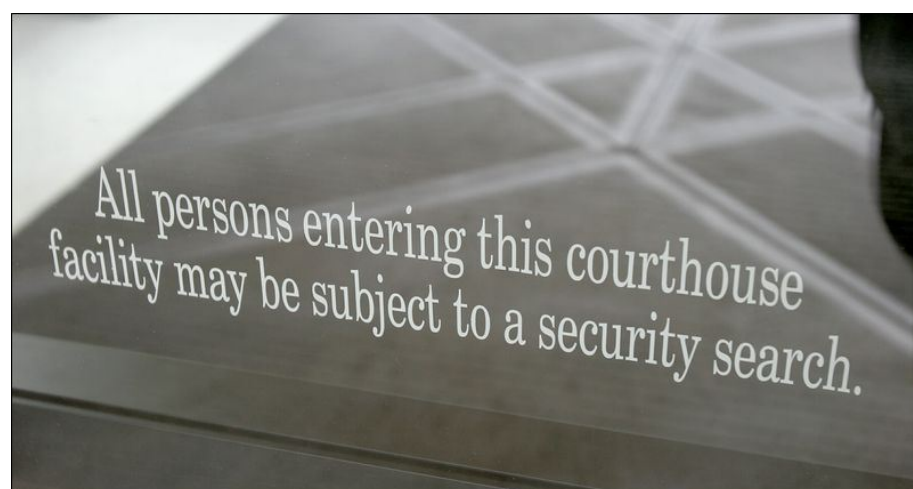


approximately 1,550 law enforcement officers have participated in the training statewide.

On September 13, 2011, a man entered the Crawford County Courthouse (located in Van Buren, Arkansas) looking for a judge. The assailant was armed with three semi-automatic handguns and a semi-automatic rifle when he entered the courthouse. There were no metal detectors at the entrance of the courthouse, and court was not in session at the time he entered the building. However, court staff were able to contact 911 through recently installed panic alarms that were acquired through the State's

court security grant program. The assailant shot the judge's assistant, and then exited the courthouse and began exchanging gunfire with law enforcement officers and was eventually killed. Two of the responding law enforcement officers that day had completed the court security officer training. In subsequent interviews, both officers noted the value of this training, especially the modules on responding to violent scenarios in the courthouse.

Despite judges, court administrators, and law enforcement officers working together to improve court security, not all courthouses, especially those in rural areas, are fully protected. Staffing, equipment, and training are all key to adequate protection of the courts and the citizens they serve. According to research from the Center for Judicial and Executive Security, court violence is on the rise. There has been a steady increase in shootings, bombings, and arson attacks over the last 40 years – 28 incidents from 1970-1979; 45 from 1980-1989; 67 from 1990-1999; and 88 from 2000-2009. Already in 2012, there have been five courthouse shootings across the United States. The training and certification program developed in Arkansas can be a model for other states seeking to address this critical issue.



Texas Judiciary Releases Shared Solutions Toolkit

With SJI assistance, the Texas Judiciary and the Conference of Urban Counties convened a Shared Solutions Summit for local justice leaders to share promising practices, plan collaborative local strategies, analyze data, iden-

tify opportunities, and chart a course for the Texas courts that is both economical and effective.

The goal of the summit was to launch and sustain local justice system improvements in the context of criminal, child protection, mental health, juvenile, and self-represented cases. The Judiciary and its partners have collaborated to make content from the Shared Solutions Summit available online in the form of a [Toolkit](#). The toolkit includes videos and pres-



entations from the summit: local project plans, progress reports, and data; and other information related to improving local responses to these key case types.

SJI strongly supports project dissemination plans that include the use of websites, videos, e-versions of print materials, and social media. This increases the likelihood that local or state level projects will have value (and be available) to other courts across the United States.

NACM Announces Call for Proposals

The National Association for Court Management (NACM) Conference Development Committee is seeking proposals for the 2013 NACM Annual Conference, July 14-18, 2013, in San Antonio, Texas.

The theme of this conference is *Court Management 2.0*, which is described in further detail through its call for proposals and concept papers.

Submissions from the court community are encouraged, and should conform to the standards requested in the [solicitation](#).

Proposals will only be accepted via email to nacm@nacmnet.org through September 15, 2012.

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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.

