

E-SJI News

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BOARD APPROVES FY 2009 1st QUARTER GRANTS

On December 5, 2008, the Board of Directors met via teleconference to make decisions on grant awards for the 1st quarter. One (1) Project Grant, 4 Technical Assistance (TA) Grants, and 1 Curriculum Adaptation & Training (CAT) Grant were approved, for a total of \$181,516.

Approved grants included a Project Grant to support a California Judicial Administration Graduate Program. This program will help the California judiciary attract and retain employee-students who have the potential to become highly educated judicial administrators. Four (4) TA applications were approved by the Board, including a child maltreatment caseflow project for the Superior Court of Maricopa County, Arizona; a re-engineering project to support the Vermont Judiciary in light of severe budget cuts across the courts in that state; and a strategic planning initiative for the Superior Court of San Luis Obispo County, California.

SJI is currently operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) (P.L. 110-329) through March 6, 2009. While under a CR, the Board of Directors will approve new grant requests for FY 2009, but will not make any awards until SJI's final appropriation is available.

IMMIGRATION ISSUES IN THE MINNESOTA COURTS AND NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS



The Minnesota Annual Judges Conference was held earlier this month, and included education sessions on the impact of immigration in the Minnesota courts. The 3-hour session was presented twice to approximately 70 judges, and included both short presentations and question and answer sessions to address participant concerns about immigration issues. (continued on page 2)

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The presenters included representatives from the Center for Public Policy Studies (CPPS), Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Consulate of Mexico in St. Paul, and the Somali community. These educational sessions were part of the CPPS's grant activities in Minnesota; which are directly supported by SJI's Strategic Initiatives Grants (SIG) program.

The following topics were covered during the education sessions:

1. Points of intersection between federal, state, and local immigration law and policy that impact the state courts, including: who the immigrants are and the problems they face in court; the impacts of immigration in the state courts; and future strategies for addressing the most critical problems faced by the state courts in regards to immigration.
2. Federal enforcement issues, including: the role of ICE; ICE interactions with the state courts; local law enforcement, and jails; and ICE holds. During the session the ICE representatives provided an extremely useful summary of their procedures and how these impact the state courts.
3. The potential immigration consequences of state criminal actions, including: roles and responsibilities of the judges; classes of immigrants; what is considered a conviction and a sentence; consequences of state criminal convictions and sentences for admissibility and deportation of different classes of immigrants.

A detailed summary of the meeting can be found on the SJI website:

http://www.sji.gov/PDF/MN_Judges_Conference_Summary.pdf

SJI began using the Strategic Initiatives Grants (SIG) program in FY 2008 to address immigration issues in the courts at a national impact level. Two grants were awarded; one to the CPPS; and another to support a collaborative effort between the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and the National Judicial College (NJC).

NEW HANDBOOKS PROVIDE HELPFUL INFORMATION TO COURT-APPOINTED GUARDIANS IN GEORGIA



In FY 2008, SJI awarded a grant (SJI-08-N-007) to the Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts to work with the Council of Probate Court Judges to develop handbooks and videos on guardianships. The handbooks included information about guardianships of incapacitated adults and minors, and the responsibilities that are conveyed to guardians. **(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.

There were two handbooks produced with this SJI grant: *Handbook for Guardians and Conservators of Adults in Georgia*, and *Handbook for Conservators for Minors in Georgia*. There are also Spanish versions of both handbooks. The accompanying videos serve as an educational tool to provide in-depth reviews of the procedural expectations of the court. The handbooks and videos are not intended to serve as a substitute for professional legal advice; they simply provide an accessible and user-friendly resource that explains the responsibilities of guardians and their role in court.

The materials highlight the diverse facets of the guardianship process while maintaining a focus on the needs of appointees and courtroom proceedings; enhance knowledge and understanding of the process while clearly articulating the responsibilities of the guardian and the expectations of the court; raise awareness of guardianship cases for the general public; and provide instruction and identification of procedural requirements for self-represented litigants, including the use of forms or schedules for report submission.

A PDF copy of the [Handbook for Guardians and Conservators of Adults in Georgia](#) is available on the SJI website. The handbook for minors, and the Spanish versions of both handbooks, are available electronically upon request.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next grant and scholarship application deadline: February 1, 2009 (2nd QTR, FY 2009).
- The FY 2009 SJI [Grant Guideline](#) is now available on the SJI Website.
- For current and future grantees: all grant and scholarship payments are made directly from the U.S. Treasury, including paper checks.

