

E-SJI News

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SJI RECEIVES OVER \$1 MILLION IN GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR THE 3rd QUARTER

SJI received a total of **\$1,374,751** in grant applications for the 3rd quarter of FY 2010. SJI received over \$1 million in new grant applications for each of the 1st and 2nd quarters; and the total amount of grant requests for FY 2010 through three quarters is **\$4,293,416**. For FY 2009, SJI received a total of \$3,485,034 in grant requests for the entire fiscal year. The amount requested so far in three quarters of FY 2010 has exceeded the FY 2009 total by 23 percent.

The demand for SJI grants has increased dramatically as the state courts are looking for assistance to deal with the ongoing budget crisis. SJI has responded by maximizing its limited grant funding to support critical technical assistance projects, focusing on how to deal with the budget cuts, and by supporting state court re-engineering at a national impact level through its Strategic Initiatives Grants program.

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE APPROVES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

On May 27, 2010, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the President's nominations for six new members for the Board of Directors. The next step in the process is for the nominations to go to the Senate floor for a confirmation vote. SJI will provide updates as these nominees progress through the Senate confirmation process:

Chief Justice James Hannah – Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court.

Daniel Becker – State Court Administrator of the Utah Administrative Office of the Courts. (continued on page 2)

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Hon. Gayle A. Nachtigal – Judge for the Circuit Court of Washington County, Oregon.

John Nalbandian – Partner in the Litigation Department of Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP.

Marsha J. Rabiteau – Policy Consultant with Rabiteau Consulting, where she works on a number of policy, legislative, and court rules issues.

Hernán D. Vera – President & Chief Executive Officer of Public Counsel, the nation's largest pro bono, public interest law firm.

By law, SJI is supervised by a Board of Directors consisting of 11 members appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 10703, the President appoints 6 judges and 1 state court administrator from a list of candidates submitted by the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ). In addition, the President also appoints 4 public member positions, no more than 2 of whom can be from the same political party.

BOARD APPOINTS NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Janice Munsterman, SJI Executive Director, will be retiring effective July 3, 2010. She has had a truly distinguished career, and the Board is very grateful for her commitment to SJI's mission and advocacy for the state courts. She joined SJI as Deputy Director in 2006, after working for the Department of Justice (DOJ), National Institute of Justice (NIJ) for eight years. While at NIJ, she was responsible for the research portfolio on sentencing and adjudication issues, including all state court-related activities. Prior to her work at NIJ, she served for six years as a Program Manager for SJI. Earlier in her career, she served as a Senior Research Associate at the National Center for State Courts, conducting research projects and providing technical assistance in court administration.

The Board has appointed Jonathan Mattiello, SJI Deputy Director, as the next Executive Director. During his time at SJI, he has worked to: develop the innovative Strategic Initiatives Grants program; increase awareness of the critical federal role SJI plays in supporting the state courts; and enhance SJI's visibility with key stakeholders. He joined SJI in 2007, after previously serving at DOJ as a Program Analyst working on resource management issues, which included a detail to the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE WORKING WITH SJI ON STATE COURT RE-ENGINEERING

SJI, through its Strategic Initiatives Grants (SIG) program, has been focusing on supporting state court re-engineering in response to the ongoing budget crisis. Recently, BJA has agreed to assist in these efforts, and provided \$700,000 to SJI to increase the amount available for court re-engineering. This is in addition to the SIG funding SJI has already invested in FY 2010 for the program. The BJA funding will allow the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to provide technical assistance to additional states in FY 2010.

Of the amount provided, \$200,000 is for a new \$400,000 BJA/SJI Partner Grant to NCSC for court workforce training. This training will specifically focus on the future of the court workforce, and will address court governance issues and essential business components that will enable the state courts to successfully operate with limited resources. In addition, this training will result in a set of recommendations for maintaining essential court services in times of financial crisis, and how access to justice can be maintained within severe resource constraints.

TEXAS TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE CONCLUDES SJI-FUNDED PROJECT WITH SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS



The Texas Office of Court Administration/Texas Task Force on Indigent Defense, a standing committee of the Texas Judicial Council, was awarded a SJI grant in FY 2008 (SJI-08-N-072) to evaluate strategies for promoting diversionary and therapeutic dispositions in appropriate cases where criminal behavior is caused by mental illness. The Task Force, in collaboration with the National Center for State Courts, Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University, and the Council of State Governments Justice Center, recently released the final report showing that criminal offenders with mental impairments who are treated for their illnesses, instead of being jailed, are less likely to commit crimes again for up to 18 months. In addition, the project showed that offenders suffering from 1 of 3 serious mental illnesses – major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia – were twice as likely to receive probation rather than jail time, if represented by a mental health public defender, compared to defendants with similar criminal and mental health backgrounds.

The two-year project examined mental health courts and mental health public defender offices in Tarrant, Dallas, and Travis Counties. These programs create a means through which an arrest can be used to address therapeutic needs. (continued on page 4)

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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.



The project showed that these specialty interventions offer good alternatives to incarceration that save money, and address the underlying problems leading to criminal behavior.

The full project report is available on the Task Force website:

<http://www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid/pdf/MHStudyFinal.pdf>

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Grant and scholarship application deadlines for the remainder of the fiscal year: **August 1, 2010** (4th Quarter).
- Grant and scholarship application deadline for the 1st quarter of FY 2011: **November 1, 2010**.
- Current grantees are reminded that Quarterly Status Reports (QSRs) and Financial Status Reports (FSRs) should be mailed to SJI. The FSR must also include an original signature.
- Current grantees who require grant adjustments to allow more time to complete their projects, need budget realignments, other changes to their projects that require SJI approval, must submit a letter to SJI requesting the adjustment. The letter should clearly describe why the change is necessary.
- Current and future grantees and scholarship recipients can 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](#), which is available on the SJI website under the [Forms](#) tab.