

SJI Newsletter

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SJI Awards FY 2018 Second Quarter Grants

The SJI Board of Directors met on April 23, 2018, at the St. Louis County, Missouri, Courthouse to make decisions on quarterly grant applications and awarded a total of 13 new grants.

A [Strategic Initiatives Grant \(SIG\)](#) was awarded to the [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) to support a Natural Language Processing initiative for state courts. [Natural Language Processing \(NLP\)](#) is a field of computer science, artificial intelligence, and computational linguistics that employs predictive analysis and machine learning, and focuses on the interaction between computers and both written and spoken language. NLP has become useful for a variety of legal tasks, most prominently as the primary technique employed in e-discovery to identify documents related to a specific query based on keywords or phrases. Although courts have vast repositories of legal documents, they have been slow to adopt NLP technologies. This project will support the use of NLP for court operations in two distinct areas: 1) triage of civil cases into appropriate case processing pathways; and; 2) quality control for high-volume dockets to ensure principals of procedural due process. For civil case triage, the NCSC will work with general jurisdiction courts that participated in the Civil Justice Initiative (CJI) automated civil case triage project, to use NLP to identify and extract key terms and characteristics from the case pleadings and develop a more robust triage model than was possible using a case management system. For quality control over high-volume documents, the NCSC will work with one or more limited jurisdiction courts to identify inaccurate or missing information from case documents in consumer debt collection or other high-volume dockets that would

signal the need for increased judicial review. The project will be guided by an 8-member Advisory Committee consisting of the [Conference of State Court Administrators / National Association for Court Management / NCSC Joint Technology Committee \(JTC\)](#), the [Court Information Technology Officers Consortium \(CITOC\)](#), and other subject matter experts.

A [Project Grant](#) was awarded to the [Missouri Judiciary](#) to support a Circuit Realignment Plan. The plan will include: recommendations for changes to the geographical boundaries and territorial jurisdiction of the judicial circuits; a statement on the numbers and boundaries of the proposed judicial circuits, together with a map of the proposed judicial circuits; a current judicial weighted workload model, clerical weighted workload model, judicial duties and travel time; and other information deemed relevant by the Missouri Judicial Conference.

Seven (7) [Technical Assistance \(TA\) Grants](#) were awarded: The 4th Judicial Circuit of Florida to increase access to family court forms; the [Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts](#) for a criminal case management assessment in Jefferson County; Yakima County, Washington, Superior Court for a calendaring and case management project; the [National Association of Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers \(NAPCO\)](#) to update and promote the 2005 monograph titled, Key Elements of an Effective Rule of Court on the Role of the Presiding Judge in Trial Courts; the Berrien County, Michigan, Trial Court for a strategic planning project; the [Hawaii Judiciary](#) for a plain language English translation and training initiative; and the 37th Judicial Circuit of Alabama for a caseload assessment.

Four (4) [Curriculum Adaptation and Training \(CAT\) Grants](#) were awarded: the [National Judicial College \(NJC\)](#) for a judicial webcasts series; the NJC for a judicial podcast series; the [Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts](#) to develop a curriculum for establishing business courts; and the 8th District Court of Michigan for an implicit bias/procedural fairness education program for judges and staff.

The next deadline for grant applications is August 1, 2018 (FY 2018, 4th quarter).



Senate Confirms SJI Board Member John Nalbandian to Sixth Circuit

On May 15, 2018, The U.S. Senate confirmed SJI Board member John Nalbandian to be a U.S. Circuit Court Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mr. Nalbandian currently is a partner in the Litigation Department of [Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP](#). He concentrates on appellate and complex litigation in state and federal courts and is a member of the firms Appellate Practice group. He has represented clients in a wide range of areas including antitrust, class actions, products liability, intellectual property, and white collar crime. Mr. Nalbandian is a member of the Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, and District of Columbia Bars. He is a member of the Ohio State Bar Association and the

American Bar Association. He also serves on the Ohio State Bar Associations Appellate Practice Specialty Board and is a member of the Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Programs Board of Directors.

Mr. Nalbandian is a Life Member of the [Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals](#) and serves on the Life Member Committee. He has served as a Board member of the Telecommunications Board of Northern Kentucky and the Northern Kentucky Tri-Ed Board of Directors, and has been recognized annually since 2007 by The Best Lawyers in America for his work in Appellate Law. He has also served as a Special Justice on the Kentucky Supreme Court and is a frequent presenter on appellate practice. He was appointed to the SJI Board of Directors in 2010.



National Judicial Webcasts Build Judicial Knowledge and Skills

The [National Judicial College \(NJC\)](#) regularly offers webcasts that provide judges with a flexible opportunity to engage in professional development from their chambers. SJI and other partners often provide resources to the NJC, so they are able to offer webcasts at no charge with advance registration. The NJC also maintains an [On-Demand Catalog](#) of course content and webcasts that are archived.

The NJC has a website for [upcoming webcasts](#), and the option to [subscribe](#) to a list for future course and eCasts announcements.



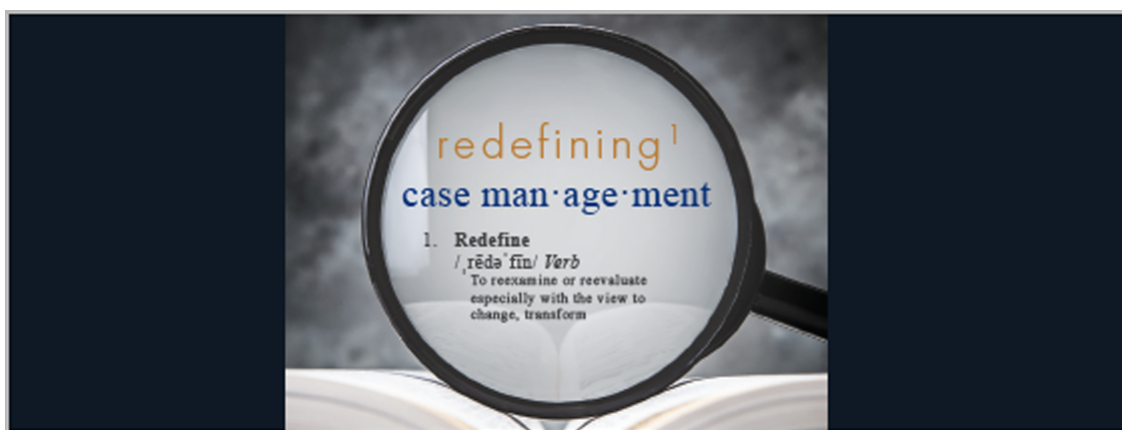
Cochise County, AZ, Completes Court Self-Help Center

Earlier this month, as part of Law Day celebrations taking place across the country, the Cochise County Law Library reopened as a Self-Help Center. Housed within the Bisbee Courthouse, the newly remodeled space offers dynamic new spaces filled with natural light, allowing for individual and group discussions.

With a grant from SJI, consultants from the [National Center for State Courts \(NCSC\)](#) were able to provide assistance to the Court in order to achieve a transformation that will allow greater access to legal forms, information, and/or guided help with research for both attorneys and the public. Some of the outcomes included:

- Space where events and informational clinics can be held;
- Added public computer terminals for public research;
- Dedicated space for interpreters and translators to work with clients;
- Caselaw access electronically; and,
- A new librarian position to assist with increased traffic.

To learn more about the effective use of court space and resources, visit the Cochise County [news page](#) and the NCSCs [courthouse facilities section](#) website.



IAALS Guide Seeks to Help Redefine the Culture of Case Management

The Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) issued a new report titled, [Redefining Case Management](#). The report provides strategies to help courts take charge of the delivery of justice in response to changing landscape, utilizing a strategic style of case management. Specifically, the objectives of the report include:

- Empowering the court throughout all phases of the case management process;
- Incorporating the litigants desire to see resolution of their dispute as a function and outcome of case management;
- Emphasizing the access to justice (progress) over specific steps (process); and,
- Providing responsive strategies that enable a holistic vision for case management.

The report uses input from a well-versed group of subject matter experts, and notes that new challenges arising before the courts are also opportunities for judges and administrators to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and satisfaction with the legal process.

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federally-funded, non-profit
corporation established by federal
law in 1984 to improve the quality of
justice in the state courts.*

Products and Resources

Since 2011, SJI has designated the library at the National Center for State Courts as the official repository of published work related to SJI-supported grant projects. You can search the ecollection online by using the term, State Justice Institute.

Share the News

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 organizations work complements ours, let us know and we will share.