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SJI News

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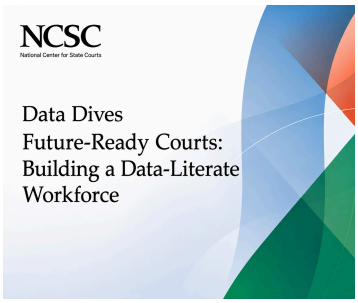
Grantee Spotlight: Data Literacy for Courts



As courts increasingly rely on data to improve services and guide decision-making, the need for a data-literate workforce has never been greater. With support from the State Justice Institute, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) developed **Data Literacy for Courts**, a first-of-its-kind curriculum designed specifically for court professionals. The course equips the court workforce with practical skills in data quality, statistics, visualization, governance, ethics, and the data life cycle. Piloted in Pennsylvania and Georgia, the curriculum was refined through collaboration with courts to ensure real-world relevance and impact. This evidence-based approach produced a scalable resource... Read more

In the News

Jonathan Mattiello Honored with the 2026 Ernest C. Friesen Award

A very special congratulations to Jonathan Mattiello, Executive Director of the State Justice Institute, on receiving the **2026 Ernest C. Friesen Award** at the National Association of Presiding Judges and Court Officers (NAPCO) Conference in Wilmington, Delaware. This prestigious award recognizes Jonathan's outstanding contributions to the courts and his dedicated leadership and service to the justice community. We are incredibly proud to celebrate this well-deserved honor. Presented by The Justice Management Institute (JMI) Board of Directors, the award recognizes an individual who exemplifies excellence in court leadership and honors Ernie Friesen's exceptional analytic abilities, unwavering commitment to effective court management, leadership in education, and passion for justice. Jonathan's dedication to strengthening courts, advancing judicial... Read more

SJI Board Approves FY 2026 4th Quarter Grants

The SJI Board met on August 31, 2026, and approved 14 new grant applications for the 4th quarter of FY 2026. The Board approved four (4) Strategic Initiative Grants (SIG) to: 1) the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System to launch a non-adversarial family law project to pivot family courts away from litigation past conflicts and toward a holistic process focused on healing, family well-being, efficiency, shared responsibility, and independent dispute resolution; 2) the Children's Law Center, in partnership with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and the Child's Voice Project to further develop and promulgate best practices... Read more

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The FY 2026 4th Quarter SJI Board Meeting

The FY 2026 4th Quarter SJI Board Meeting was held on Monday, August 31, 2026, at the Oklahoma Judicial Center in Oklahoma City, OK. SJI Executive Director, Jonathan Mattiello, Senior Program Advisor, Michelle White, and members of the SJI Board were joined by Chief Justice Dustin P. Rowe and Administrative Director of the Courts, Diana O'Neal, of the Oklahoma Supreme Court.... Read more

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Advancing Criminal History Reporting Through NODS Implementation

Accurate and complete criminal history information is essential to informed decision-making across the justice system. Yet data gaps can make it difficult for judges, court staff, and justice system partners to access the information they need, when they need it. A 2022 Bureau of Justice Statistics survey found that 27% of arrests nationwide lack corresponding disposition information. Missing or inconsistent information can create challenges for justice system partners, result in additional and unnecessary work for court staff, and ultimately impact the communities' courts serve. The National Open Court Data Standards (NODS) can help courts address these challenges. While NODS... Read more

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A Unique Opportunity for Rural Judges and Sheriffs

The Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR) team, in collaboration with the State Justice Institute, is excited to announce an opportunity for judge and sheriff pairs serving the same rural jurisdiction to attend an engaging roundtable session in Dallas, Texas, at Southern Methodist University. The event will be held all day on December 8, 2026, and adjourn by 1:00PM on December 9, 2026. This opportunity is open to active sitting rural judge and sheriff pairs from 10 rural communities and includes travel scholarships to attend at no cost. The roundtable will cover critical issues facing rural justice systems, including legal deserts, the mental health and substance use crisis, provider shortages, and the power of the rural judge-sheriff partnership. For full details regarding this... Read more

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Announcements

Registration Now Open! The National Association of State Judicial Educators (NASJE) Annual Meeting will be held from **September 27th - 30th, 2026**, in Athens, Georgia. Join judicial educators and court training professionals from across the country for an engaging and collaborative conference experience in Athens, Georgia. This year's conference will focus on innovative ideas, meaningful connections, and practical strategies that strengthen the future of judicial branch education. Participants will gain practical ideas and strategies that translate directly to judicial security, emergency preparedness, and court training programs. For more information, pricing, and to register now, click here.

Upcoming Webinar! The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) will be hosting *A Closer Look: Court Visitor Programs Making a Difference in Adult Guardianship* on **September 30th, 2026, at 12:00PM EST**. Court visitor programs play a vital role in adult guardianship proceedings and ongoing guardianship oversight. By gathering independent information, meeting with individuals subject to guardianship, and providing courts with objective assessments, court visitors help ensure that judicial decisions and monitoring efforts are informed, person-centered, and responsive to individual needs. This webinar will highlight three innovative court visitor programs and their impact on adult guardianship systems. Register here.

Upcoming Conference! The American Judges Association (AJA) will be hosting their 2026 Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, from **September 27th – October 2nd, 2026**. This year's conference theme is: *Striking the Right Chord: Safeguarding Justice in a Divided Nation.* For detailed information on each of the sessions, please read the full agenda here. For more about the keynote speakers, session topics, pricing, hotel information and to register today, click here.

Registration Now Open! Join the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) 2026 Annual Conference taking place **October 15th – 17th, 2026**, at the iconic Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana. This year's conference, *Rooting in Justice: Rising in Rhythm*, offers an exceptional opportunity to exchange ideas, explore emerging legal issues, and build lasting professional relationships across jurisdictions. For conference details, registration, and hotel information, please click here.

Registration Now Open! Join the 2026 Human Resources & Finance Summit, hosted by the National Center for State Courts, from **October 21st – 23rd, 2026**, in Orlando, Florida. Designed for state and local court professionals in human resources, audit, and finance, this educational summit offers valuable learning and networking opportunities. The event begins Wednesday with HR-focused programming and continues Thursday with engaging HR, audit, and finance plenary sessions. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with colleagues, explore emerging trends, and strengthen the vital work that supports our nation's courts. You must be... Read more

Registration Now Open! The 2026 Fall Institute for New Juvenile and Family Court Judges is being held from **November 2nd – 6th, 2026**. It is designed specifically for state and tribal judicial officers who are new to the bench, newly assigned to a juvenile or family rotation, or who are returning to the juvenile and family court bench after other assignments and desire a refresher course. This intensive and interactive 4½ day program, previously known as Core College, is designed so participants can leave with increased knowledge, practical tools, and an essential foundation of best practice to use in the cases coming before them. Register here.

If you are interested in sharing court related news or announcements in the SJI newsletter, please send all content to contact@sji.gov by the 10th of the month.

Are you a SJI grantee interested in being featured in our monthly newsletter and on our website? Follow the instructions on our Grantee Spotlight Submission Instructions page.

The next deadline to submit a grant application to SJI is **Nov 1, 2026**.

Learn more about SJI grants and apply today!

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