

# REFLECTIONS



## MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR COURT MANAGEMENT Summer 2019

### Update from the MACM President By Aaron Williamson, Hennepin County Criminal Division Project Manager

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Greetings!

This spring has been crazy for everyone across the Branch with many important things going on! It's been no different for our MACM Committees, who have been busy getting some exciting things done for you as members.

Last fall you elected three new Officers, leading our three main committees:

	<p><b>Christopher Channing</b>, First Vice President &amp; Legislative &amp; Outreach Committee Chair <a href="#">View Bio</a></p>
	<p><b>Kris Cunningham</b>, Second Vice President &amp; Education Committee Chair <a href="#">View Bio</a></p>
	<p><b>Mary Dalbec</b>, Third Vice President &amp; Membership Services Committee Chair <a href="#">View Bio</a></p>

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**MACM Reflections**

**Editors:**  
Dave Goeddertz, Accounting Manager, Ninth District Administration  
Jamie Majerus, Internal Audit Manager, State Court Administrator's Office  
Aaron Williamson, Hennepin County Criminal Division Project Manager

**Publisher:**  
Sheldon Clark, Litigant Services Manager, Tenth District Administration

**Editor in Chief:**  
Mary Dalbec, Carver County Court Administrator,

Any MACM member may submit an article for the newsletter. If interested, please contact Mary at [Mary.Dalbec@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:Mary.Dalbec@courts.state.mn.us) for more information.

I've been so impressed with their hard work and dedication to MACM in the last several months! They each bring unique talents and fresh perspectives to their work.

Later in the newsletter you'll be reading about the work each of the committees has been doing. If you are interested in joining a committee, please feel free to reach out to any of them and they would be happy to tell you more about what they do.

### **MACM Board of Directors Update**

The Board of Directors met in April and identified three strategic goals they want to work on to help MACM move forward as an organization. They are:

- 1. Enhance MACM Communication Infrastructure**
- 2. Enhance Internal and External MACM Engagement**
- 3. MACM/Judicial Branch collaboration – supporting strategic plans and initiatives of the Branch**

Over the summer, groups assigned to each of the goals will be developing strategic plans under their goal. We're hopeful that we will be able to announce the full strategic plan at the fall conference!

Many of you attended the Court Business Conference in May. You heard Jeff talk about the importance of the Minnesota Judicial Branch being an innovative, change-ready organization. He gave us some ideas about our role as managers connecting with significant statewide goals we're working on. He also talked about fostering a culture of being innovative and forward-thinking.

I'm hoping to be able to add to this conversation by talking about the role of vulnerability in our work as managers, and how to dare greatly.

I'll be referencing two really good conversations featuring [Brené Brown](#). She is a research professor who has spent more than a decade studying vulnerability, courage, authenticity and shame. Many of you have hopefully seen her Ted Talks on [The Power of Vulnerability](#) and [Listening to Shame](#).

More recently, she recorded a special called [The Call to Courage](#) for Netflix. Later, she appeared on the [We Are Netflix](#) podcast series to discuss Diversity and Inclusion. I highly recommend you watch or listen to both of these!

Adding on to what Jeff had to say about our role as court managers, this made me think about how we cultivate an environment where innovation and creativity are fostered.

### ***Name the MACM Newsletter!***

Upon reflection, with the great new look of our newsletter, we would like your ideas on coming up with a new name for the MACM Newsletter! Send your ideas to [Mary Dalbec](#) by July 1st. The Membership Services Committee will pick the winning name and the submitter will get a \$100 gift card using funds from the \$10 Conference Entertainment Donation fund you have all paid into. Bring on your ideas!

## No vulnerability – no creativity / No tolerance for failure – no innovation

Brené says, “If you’re not willing to fail, you can’t innovate. If you’re not willing to build a vulnerable culture, you can’t create.” It’s important to consider what type of a leader or supervisor you are. Do your staff see you being vulnerable? Do you give them space to make mistakes? This can be really challenging to manage when we work in an industry where mistakes we make can have dramatic consequences on the lives of others. How do we reconcile both concepts? This can be very challenging. Take some time and discuss this with your colleagues. You will likely learn something new about them and what ideas they have to work through this complexity.

*“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”*

- Theodore Roosevelt

### **NACM 2019 Annual Conference By Vicky Carlson, Scott County Court Administrator Past President of MACM and NACM**

**2019 NACM Annual Conference July 21-25, 2019, at the Bellagio Hotel, Las Vegas, NV**

The Annual Conference theme is “*Courts and Society: Creating Public Trust through Engagement and Innovation.*” Courts have a responsibility to serve the citizenry and in fact, society depends and expects the courts to provide an impartial judicial process as the third branch of government. Several MACM members will be presenting!

To register or see the agenda, go to [nacmconference.org](http://nacmconference.org).

**Hope to see you there!**



Photo & Information provided by NACM

## NACM Court Leader's Advantage Podcast

By Vicky Carlson, Scott County Court Administrator  
Past President of MACM and NACM

The National Association for Court Management (NACM) is very pleased to announce the Launch of the *Court Leader's Advantage Podcast*: <https://nacmnet.org/podcasts/>



*Court Leader's Advantage* provides another avenue for NACM to inform court professionals about important innovations and trends of interest to the court community. *Court Leader's Advantage*, hosted by Peter Kiefer, also provides a forum for court professionals to share their experiences and lessons learned. Episodes will cover a range of topics, including artificial intelligence, leadership, ethics, social media, access to justice, and many more.

Episodes will air the third Thursday of each month.

## Education Committee Update

By Kris Cunningham, Committee Chair, Washington County Deputy Court Administrator

The committee is busy planning for our fall conference at Cragun's Resort in September. This year we solicited potential speakers from our membership and received several great proposals that we are considering. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to send one in. I encourage anyone who has heard a great presenter to send myself or anyone on the committee information on them and even if they are not used at this year's conference, we will consider them for a future one.



We are also in the process of finalizing our location for the 2020 conference which will be in Duluth. Duluth is a very popular location in the fall. It is necessary to secure the event farther in advance than we normally do. Also because they are so popular, it is necessary to adjust the days of the week for the conference due to availability of the conference center. In 2020, our conference will be held Tuesday through Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> – October 1<sup>st</sup>. Once we have everything finalized, a save the date will be sent out.



Kris Cunningham

Kris

# Membership Services Committee Update

By Mary Dalbec, Committee Chair, Carver County Court Administrator

The committee has been working hard on planning the 2019 Conference networking events, specifically the New Member/First-Time Attendee Mixer, Awards Banquet and Vendor Show. Similar to years in the past the New Member/First-Time Attendee Mixer will be held the night before the start of the conference, Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. The committee will soon request award nominations for the 2019 MACM Awards which will be presented at our 2019 Conference at Cragun's. Please start considering nominees for the below award categories:

- **Distinguished Service**
- **Lifetime Achievement**
- **Coach/Mentor of the Year**
- **Early Career Excellence**
- **Champion of Change**

Since our 2018 Conference and our May committee meeting we have approved and welcomed nineteen new MACM members! Please join the committee in welcoming the below new members:

**Maggie Skelton** – 4<sup>th</sup> District Juvenile Division Staff Attorney/Hearing Officer

**Jeanena LaZella** – 9<sup>th</sup> District- Beltrami County Court Operations Supervisor

**Dan Ostdiek** – SCAO Finance Director

**Katie Schwaesdall** – 1<sup>st</sup> District- Scott County Court Operations Supervisor

**Kari Hill** – 1<sup>st</sup> District - Dakota County Court Operations Supervisor

**Mary Dickinson** - 4<sup>th</sup> District – Hennepin County Probate Court Operations Supervisor

**Meghan Knapp** - 1st District Finance Manager

**Cheryl Sauerer** - CPC Accounting Manager

**Rachel Schmidt** - 8<sup>th</sup> District - Pope County Court Operations Supervisor

**Lacey Staeffler** - 5<sup>th</sup> District - Lyon County Court Operations Supervisor

**Jodie Pfeffer** - 10<sup>th</sup> District - Washington County Court Operations Supervisor

**Kaitlin Schwab** - 5<sup>th</sup> District - eDAT Court Operations Supervisor

**Abby Sylvester** - 10<sup>th</sup> District - Court Business Systems Coordinator

**Nancy Sturman** - 9<sup>th</sup> District - Beltrami County Court Operations Supervisor

**Lindsay Schwab** - 4<sup>th</sup> District - Hennepin County Juvenile Court Operations Supervisor

**Sara Beck** - 7<sup>th</sup> District - Sterns County Court Operations Supervisor

**Kristen Trebil** - SCAO Court Services Director

**Tamara Fletcher** - 7<sup>th</sup> District - Clay County Court Operations Supervisor

**Leah Lint** - 7<sup>th</sup> District - Douglas County Court Operations Supervisor

Lastly we have been increasing our presence on Facebook by posting additional details regarding new members, retirements, promotions/new hires, job postings and other court related updates. Since we've increased our posts we have seen an upsurge of our [MACM Facebook](#) page likes, shares and post engagements. If you haven't already please check out our Facebook page and follow or like the page for the latest updates.



Mary Dalbec

## **MACM Annual Day at the Capitol**

**By Chris Channing Leadership and Outreach Committee Chair, Goodhue County Court Administrator**

Every year we set a day aside to go and meet with your legislators at the Capitol. While this is not the sole chance for us to reach out and educate our representatives as to the Constitutional mandate that is the underlying basis for our biannual budget request, it does allow for us to observe committees and see some testimony taking place. It truly is an excellent chance for us to further our relationships with those who represent us and lay the foundation of understanding as to the mission of the courts and our purpose.

While geography and a busy work schedule can hamper the ability for members to attend on our designated day it should still be something that we strive to attend at least once. Below you will find a description from two distinct viewpoints, one from a new member attending for the first time and the other from a long time member. They actually set a plan to meet and go together to alleviate any nerves and concerns that the new member had about these meetings.

### **Becky Brandt, Olmsted County Court Operations Supervisor, Third District**

I drove up to St. Paul for MACM Day at the Capitol and parked in Lot H where I usually park when visiting the legislators. I had marked myself out for the day when MACM Legislative and Outreach Committee announced the day for the event. I walked to the State Office Building and stopped to pick up a Members Directory. The Members Directory is a great tool, it lists the location and all the committees for all of the representatives and senators. Also, near the elevator, all the Committee Meetings/Hearings for the day are posted on easel boards.

I headed up the stairs to conference/hearing room 300N. I was greeted by Chris Channing, Mary, and Karen. Chris handed me several brochures and talking points to pass out to all the legislators from Southeastern Minnesota. He pointed out the committee hearings for my legislators. Annette arrived shortly after and we walk through the tunnel to the Senate Office Building. We stopped and observed Senator Carla Nelson in the Finance Committee hearing in Room

1200. After the hearing, we stopped by Senator Nelson's office to drop off our material. We also stopped by the offices of a couple senators for Washington County. It was interesting how Annette made observations and was able to have personal conversations with the assistants.

Next we met up with several other MACM members at the Transportation Building cafeteria for lunch. After lunch, we headed back to the State Office Building to observe the Transportation Finance and Policy Division Committee in Room 10. There were several interesting hearings to observe. Annette and I stopped by the office of Representative Nels Pierson and advocated for the Branch. What I have learned and been advised, is it helps to know some personal information about your legislators in order to start a conversation and warm up the room.

It was great having Annette with me as she is an experienced public speaker. The buddy system is the way to go if you are uncomfortable speaking to legislators. I hope you consider joining us next year for MACM Day at the Capitol. It is a very valuable experience to get to know your legislators in your district and to advocate for the Judicial Branch.

**Annette Fritz**  
**Washington County Court Administrator,**  
**Tenth District, MACM Past President**

On Tuesday, March 5 I drove to St. Paul for MACM Day at the Capitol. It was a sunny day but cold and windy, the roads were finally cleared of snow after weeks of cold and snow. Months earlier the MACM Legislative and Outreach Committee had planned the event for March 5 so I had it on my calendar. Becky from Olmsted County reached out to Chris Channing and I to let us know that she was planning to be there so that finalized my plan to come to the Capitol. When I arrived at the State Office Building, which sits next to the Capitol, I found my way to room 300N where MACM members were gathering. It was welcoming to see other court leaders from around the state and to talk and hear their plans for the day. Chris Channing had all the materials we would need, talking points (prepared by Janet Marshall), brochures (prepared by Peter Dyer), legislator information books (compliments of legislature), and information on committee meetings. Several of us were going to

talk with representatives and senators and/or listen to committee meetings.

Becky and I walked over to the Senate Office Building and sat in a committee meeting. Then we met with a few legislators from the Olmsted County area and stopped by the office of some Washington County legislators. It was good team work. Becky demonstrated her skill at representing the branch and I added comments. For lunch several of us met at the Transportation Building cafeteria, also next to the Capitol, to catch up on the events of the day. After lunch, back to listen to more committee meetings, then back to the State Office Building room 300N to check in with Chris.

It was a good day of advocating for the branch and networking with other court leaders. I hope you consider joining us for MACM Day at the Capitol next year. If you have any apprehension about what to do or what to say, consider attending with someone that has done it before. It is a valuable and educational experience.



Photo by [Daniel McCullough via Unsplash](#)



# MACM DAY AT THE CAPITOL **03.05.2019**

Check in with MACM Group  
8:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

STATE OFFICE BUILDING,  
100 REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD  
ROOM 300N

**Sponsored by the MACM Legislative & Outreach Committee**



- Prior to March 5, schedule 15 minute meetings with your legislators during the day.
- If you are new to meeting with legislators, an experienced MACM member will join you for the visit. Contact [Chris.Channing@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:Chris.Channing@courts.state.mn.us) to schedule a meeting mentor.
- Gather at the State Office Building Room 300N, between 8:00 a.m. and 9:45 a.m., to meet with your meeting mentor and receive legislative talking points and MACM brochures.

## Fellows Class of 2019

By Lynn Smith, Training and Development Manager, SCAO

Congratulations to our two new Fellows Class of 2019! Kim Larson and Alice Middendorf graduated in Washington, DC from the Fellows Program on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. They join 23 other Minnesota Fellows. They have spent over a year developing their research into their final thesis. Kim's paper is titled, "Implementing Court Operations Without Boundaries". Alice wrote, "Assessing Stakeholder Experiences Amid Reengineering Efforts in The Seventh Judicial District". You can find their papers along with the other Minnesota Fellows' papers on the branch's [CMP SharePoint site](#). "The ICM Fellows Program is the flagship program of the National Center for State Court's Institute for Court Management. The only program of its kind in the United States, the Fellows Program traces its history to Chief Justice Warren E. Burger's call for improved management of court administration. The overall purpose of the Fellows Program is leadership development. Successful graduates of the Fellows program earn the distinction of being a Fellow of the Institute for Court Management and contribute to the growing literature on court administration." ~ National Center for State Courts

Since the Institute for Court Management inception in 1970, there are 1300 Fellows worldwide. You are eligible to apply each fall for the Fellows program once you have achieved your Certified Court Executive status. The Fellows Program involves the Court Project Phase. Fellows candidates develop a court research and improvement project of a problem facing their courts today. Approved research papers are the equivalent of a master's degree thesis. Completed papers are maintained in the National Center for State Courts Library and readily accessible online.



Kim Larson (left) & Alice Middendorf (right)

You will get a chance to see some of the Fellows present on their research topics at a breakout session during the 2019 MACM Conference. For more information on CMP courses or the Fellows Program, please contact [Lynn E. Smith](#), Training & Development Manager.

# District Updates

## FIRST DISTRICT

### Dakota County “Warrant Resolution Day”

On Saturday, November 17, 2018, Dakota County District Court, the Dakota County Sheriff’s Department, Social Services, Probation, County Attorney, city prosecutors, the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and La Asamblea de Derecho Civiles (Civil Rights Assembly) hosted a “Warrant Resolution” event at Crossroads Church in Eagan. The event offered anyone with an outstanding Dakota County arrest warrant an opportunity to meet with justice system officials and take steps to resolve their case.

Visitors to the event were able to speak with consulting attorneys and prosecuting attorneys, and arrange to pay any outstanding fines. Representatives from the Driver and Vehicle Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety were also present to assist attendees. Both Spanish and Somali interpreters were available at the event.

Many defendants who were able to clear their warrants indicated the event was worth their time. Other key elements to the event’s success included the timing of holding it on a weekend, highlighting that defendants could resolve warrants without having to serve jail time, the event location being close to public transportation, and the publicity of the event contributed to a successful effort. Arriving defendants first checked in and met with a public defender. The public defender worked out a resolution to the charge or probation violation with the appropriate prosecutor and probation officer and then appeared before the judge to put the agreement on the record. Defendants left with a copy of the Order resolving their outstanding warrant. Many were vocally appreciative and relieved that their warrant was quashed and case resolved.



There were 10 court administration staff, three Judges, two Court Reporters, and three supervisor/Event Planners, including a Judge and court staff from Ramsey County to handle warrants from that county. In total, 80 outstanding warrants were handled. This included 8 from Washington and Hennepin counties, 15 from Ramsey County, and 57 from Dakota County.

A lot of hard work was put into making this event so positive and productive. All in all, it was a tremendous success.

# District Updates

## SECOND DISTRICT

### **The Second District Rolls Out New Check-In Kiosks in Phases** By Megan Bergman, Ramsey County Calendar/Coordinator Supervisor

The 2<sup>nd</sup> District began a journey a few years ago, taking on the task of asking themselves, “How do we make our check-in process more user-friendly?” This question developed into a more in depth review of the importance of simplifying processes and making the courts more relevant and current. The Kiosk Project was established, and discussions ensued about how to utilize up-to-date technologies and incorporate them in to the check-in process. Beginning with Phase 1, the District started with the juvenile division. Integrating touch screen technology to check-in the customer for the court hearing was implemented successfully.

The project committee also asked themselves many questions about what the goals of using this type of technology for the courts and the public would be and how it would benefit both parties. They came up with many benefits that this type of technology has to offer now and in the future. One goal was that in phases, each location would establish check-in kiosks that were uniquely set up for their division’s needs. A future goal identified for the criminal division check-in process would be to add entering public defender applications electronically.

After successfully piloting in the juvenile delinquency division, the Ramsey County Suburban Courthouse located in Maplewood began their phase of the project. The criminal division explored the possibility of utilizing the same technology to assist with improved race data collection and streamlined check-in processes. “We were having issues with collecting race data,” Jan Peterson, Court Operations Supervisor for Ramsey County Suburban criminal court stated, “using the kiosk has really improved this collection.” Currently, the kiosks in the Suburban Courthouse are used primarily for checking-in for the customer’s court session and entering in their race data.



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# District Updates

## SECOND DISTRICT (cont.)

The process moves like this:

Customers arriving at the courthouse will be directed to the public lobby to check in and answer basic questions such as language, name and date of birth, on the touch screen kiosks before proceeding to the courtroom. The kiosk will be available thirty minutes prior to court to encourage people to check in as soon as they arrive in the building. Late arrivals will be asked to check in and fill out information with the clerks in the courtroom. The goal is to streamline the check in process, gather essential data, and eliminate undo traffic in the courtroom.

After going live mid-April 2019, the feedback has been nothing short of wonderful. “It has really made things more simple for the public,” Peterson reported, “we’ve had people come up to the counter and comment how they wished other courthouses had the same option for check-in.” Two divisions have successfully executed the roll-out of this new process and the 2<sup>nd</sup> District anticipates more divisions will follow as each phase of the project continues to be applied in the future.

## FOURTH DISTRICT

### **Fourth District Emergency Management Preparation**

By Stacy Carlson, Hennepin County Administrative Services Manager

We’ve all heard the old adage about inviting people to a party and no one shows up. Conversely, what if everyone showed up but, on short notice, your venue was no longer available? A party planner’s nightmare for sure!

In the Fourth District, discussions, trainings and tabletop exercises took place over the last two years to prepare for a similar situation. Instead of a party, what if all the people who were subpoenaed and scheduled for court proceedings showed up, but your normal court facility wasn’t safe or available due to any number of reasons – power outage, water or gas leak, or storm damage, just to name a few? As they say in show business, “the show must go on.” As we know in the Judicial Branch, court must go on as well.

Business continuity plans, procedures and policies ensure a business can function despite a significant disruption to normal operations. The disruption might be a facility issue, but could also be a major network system issue rendering our electronic communications, transmissions, forms and other processes temporarily unavailable.

# District Updates

## FOURTH DISTRICT (cont.)

In either of these examples, court customers still need access to our documents, services, staff and judicial venues. Internally, staff still need to access functions like Human Resources, Accounting and Information Technology.

Initially, basic concepts of business continuity planning were introduced to District/Deputy Administrators, the Chief and Assistant Chief Judges, and the group of Presiding Judges. We can take for granted all the facilities, technologies and equipment we use every day, so it takes a lot of discussion and critical thinking to evaluate our regular processes and determine how we can deliver critical and statutorily mandated services without all our normal tools. Since the start of business continuity planning, the District has made great strides in preparing for a disruption event. In fact, an unexpected facility issue occurred last year in a suburban location, which required relocating calendars with only a few hours' notice. Our previous discussions and planning were a big reason why these incidents went very smoothly and checklists already existed to carry out a relocation.

Some of the overarching steps in business continuity for the Fourth District included tasks like:

1. Ensuring every supervisor and judicial officer carries an updated contact list of their staff, should they need to contact them after hours due to a disruption event;
2. Determining the appropriate leadership team to convene to make decisions on where to relocate displaced court functions;
3. Evaluating what alternate facilities are available to the district for both in-custody and out-of-custody defendants. Understanding the Sheriff's Office's ability to relocate is also crucial in this step;
4. Determining which case and hearing types take priority when far fewer courtrooms are available than during normal operations;
5. Planning how leaders will communicate with each other if cell service is out, or if the disruption event happened overnight and everyone's computer is in the building which is inaccessible. In the Fourth, we purchased portable radios and assigned them to key staff and decision-makers;
6. Determining what messaging will be provided to the public and court partners about the event and where they can get information about relocated proceedings;

# District Updates

## FOURTH DISTRICT (cont.)

7. In the case of a network outage, we have a library of Branch document templates on a portable thumb-drive that can be printed out and used instead of online forms;
8. Determining if the District needs to open an Emergency Operations Center as a command post for joint leadership decision-making;
9. Keeping a dozen or so laptops stored off-site to be used when assigned laptops are inaccessible due to incident. In the Fourth, these laptops would be given to the various representatives assigned to the Emergency Operations Center;
10. Setting up an Accounting code to track all expenses associated with the disruption event;
11. Determining whether to recess or continue current jury trials;
12. Determination the staff and judicial officers who should report for work based on ability to carry out court functions, and communicating that to them.

That is a long list, and it doesn't even encompass a number of small details needed to complete those tasks! Through continued dialogue and refinement, the Fourth District is now much further along the spectrum in preparation for a disruption event.

Annually, a tabletop simulation exercise is

conducted with key District staff and judicial officers. In this exercise, a detailed scenario is presented and the team must decide how to carry out business functions in a different landscape, without all our normal resources. Though it seems daunting, it is critical for every District and every organization to start business continuity discussion and planning, and there are many resources available to assist in this endeavor.

A second prong of emergency preparedness is also occurring in the Fourth District. Over the last couple of years, staff members on each floor have been identified and trained as floor monitors. Floor monitors guide staff and the public in the event of an emergency evacuation, such as a fire. Additionally, the District is conducting active shooter response training at all levels of the organization. This is important training as these types of violent incidents are occurring with alarming regularity across the country.

A mass shooting is generally defined as one continuous incident in which four or more people were injured or killed. How many mass shootings do you think occurred in the United States in 2018?

- a. 86
- b. 134
- c. 212
- d. 323

# District Updates

## FOURTH DISTRICT (cont.)

The sad answer is D: 323 mass shooting incidents last year, close to one per day. This frequency means it is important to be prepared should you find yourself in one of these incidents. The training in the Fourth District is done within the work environment, but the concepts transfer to any venue. This is important, since we know these shootings happen in every kind of place imaginable: schools, movie theaters, churches, shopping malls. The curriculum covers general concepts, lessons learned from past mass shootings, demographics of the active shooter, pre-incident signs when the shooter was an employee of the venue, best practices for responding, police priorities and other consideration points. With staff, the training is done with the entire operational team together in their normal work space. With the judicial officers and their staff, the training is carried

out in their courtroom. The last component of the training includes two simulations in which the participants are asked to respond as they would if the situation was real. No real or simulated weapons are used – all cues are taken from verbal and physical actions of the role players. These simulations have prompted a myriad conversations among the teams about how they would respond, which makes them better prepared should an actual event occur.

Unlike most trainings we put on in the District, this is the one kind we hope the participants never have to use. The District plans to conduct this training throughout the organization every other year. If you're wondering where to start in your District, you don't have to reinvent the wheel, there are many resources available. If you have questions about the Fourth District training, feel free to contact

[Stacy.Carlson@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:Stacy.Carlson@courts.state.mn.us).

## FIFTH DISTRICT

### Wendy Rost Retires After 46 Years with the Courts

Wendy Rost began her career with the Lincoln County Clerk of Court's Office on October 1, 1972 as a deputy clerk. Twelve and a half years later, Wendy was appointed Clerk of Court on April 1, 1985. The title of her position was later changed to Court Administrator.

Early in her career, Wendy's office not only handled court cases, but also all vital statistic records including births, deaths, marriage licenses and passports. They also handled issuing and renewing driver's licenses. Over time, these non-court functions were migrated to other county departments.

# District Updates

## FIFTH DISTRICT (cont.)

Throughout her 46 years, Wendy says “One of the constants has been change. Everything is e-Court now. Paperless. The days of manual typewriters, electric typewriters, carbon paper, hand writing in large registers is a distant memory. Computers, ITV, scanning all document images, eFiling, eServing, eCharging, and eCitation is how we conduct business now. I would not want to go back to the paper files.”

### **Most Memorable Case**

In 1983 there was a double homicide that occurred in Lincoln County. Two bankers were killed. The preparation for the grand jury and later the jury trial was quite a learning experience. Because of the climate of crisis at the time, this case drew national attention. Connie Chung was one of the reporters who covered the trial!

### **In Appreciation**

Wendy has stayed in her position for over 46 years because she has enjoyed the work, Court Administration Staff, Judges, Judicial Support Staff, the Fifth Judicial District Administrator and support staff, her peers, stakeholders and justice partners from many agencies.

Wendy says “People who enter into the judicial system are often in a stressful situation, and they are afraid of what is going on. We are public servants and it is all about customer service. Basically, the only fun things that occur in a courtroom are adoptions and performing marriages. In a different side to my job, I have officiated approximately 300 weddings. The venues have varied from homes, courthouses, lakes, parks and barns.”

She also says “There are new challenges every day. That is what makes this job so interesting. There are very capable people who will be taking over after I retire. Teamwork is something we have always been able to count on in Court Administration. That has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.”

In 2017, the centralized Court of Appeals Unit from Hennepin County was relocated to Greater Minnesota (Lincoln and Pipestone Counties). Wendy indicates this has been a positive experience and has allowed additional staff to be located in the smallest counties in the Fifth Judicial District.

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# District Updates

## FIFTH DISTRICT (cont.)

### New Chapter

After decades of longstanding work habits, routines and relationships, Wendy says retirement will be a new adventure. “I will enjoy spending more time with my three children, their spouses and nine grandchildren. I look forward to being more available to my family, motorcycling, travel, attending grandchildren’s events, rekindling old friendships, Gold College, attempting the game of golf and occasionally sleeping in.”

On behalf of the entire Judicial Branch family, thank you Wendy for such long and dedicated service. We hope you thoroughly enjoy retirement and we will miss seeing your smiling face and hearing your infectious laugh. Congratulations!



Wendy Rost

### Kim Jelen Appointed Court Administrator

On December 10, 2018, Kim Jelen was appointed court administrator for Lyon County, following Karen Bierman’s retirement. Prior to becoming court administrator, Kim had over 20 years’ experience with the Lyon County District Court, including almost five years as the court operations supervisor and as a leadworker prior to that. In addition to her work as court operations supervisor, Kim has been a contributing member of countless county, district and state workgroups including serving as team lead for both the Family/Juvenile and the Criminal/Juvenile eFS teams as well as current chair of the Court Administrative Team.

Kim has always lived in her hometown of Porter in southwest Minnesota. She is a widow and has one daughter who recently completed her schooling and lives in the city of Minneota and works in Marshall.



Kim Jelen

In her free time, Kim likes to relax by reading in her pool, and enjoys being outdoors. She has multiple flower gardens to tend and volunteers on the Porter Festival Days committee. Kim also loves to travel and was able to cross off several locations from her bucket list when she and her daughter took a trip to Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii in 2015. Kim says the trip was great but not so much the 20 plus hour flight to get there.

Upon the retirement of Wendy Rost, Kim was appointed Court Administrator for both Lincoln and Lyon Counties. Congratulations Kim!

# District Updates

## SIXTH DISTRICT

### Iron Range Committee for Equal Justice Holds Virginia/Hibbing Open House Events

By Susan Roerig, St. Louis County-Virginia Court Operations Manager

The Iron Range Committee on Equal Justice hosted open house events for the community in both the Hibbing and Virginia Courthouse locations. The committee worked hard at planning these events. Virginia's Open House was on Friday, April 5, 2019, and Hibbing's Open House was Friday, May 5, 2019. These were free events intended to not only showcase the work of the Minnesota courts, but also to provide education and resources to the public about the work of judges, attorneys, law enforcement, and citizens in administrating the state's justice system and how these entities can serve the public. Some of the events included were:

- An opportunity to meet the Judges and other leaders in the justice system and local government
- Courthouse tours and Information Fair, including legal resources and other community services information
- Keynote speech by Court of Appeals Judge James Florey
- "In Her Shoes" presented by Advocates for Family Peace

In addition to the Open House, high school students were asked to participate in a mock trials during the morning hours.

The Virginia event was considered a success!



Court Administration Booth at Virginia event along with Treatment Courts and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

# District Updates

## SIXTH DISTRICT (cont.)

### Little Blue Bookshelf

By Nicole Korby, Carlton County Court Operations Supervisor

This was an effort sponsored by our District AFSCME LMC for each courthouse to conduct a charitable contribution drive. Carlton County Court Administration staff partnered with United Way of Carlton County, 4-H and Carlton County Extension. It was a local 4-H group that built the shelves as part of a community service project. Courthouse employees donate books year round to fill the bookshelves. Kids can read the donated books while they're at the courthouse and have the option to take them home. We also stock "busy bags" with coloring crayons and coloring books and kids are welcome to take those home as well. It's been a great success!



## EIGHTH DISTRICT

### Kandiyohi County Law Day May 2019

By Deb Mueske, Kandiyohi County Court Administrator

On Friday, May 3, 2019, Kandiyohi County hosted an open house Law Day event at the Kandiyohi County Courthouse. Supreme Justice Paul Thissen and 8<sup>th</sup> District Court Judge Stephen Wentzell kicked off the event and welcomed a full courtroom of participants at the beginning of the open house. During the opening remarks session, Justice Thissen and Judge Wentzell provided a brief history and significance of Law Day, reviewed some 8<sup>th</sup> District projects and case filing statistics, and outlined the activities of the day.

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# District Updates

## EIGHTH DISTRICT (cont.)

Outside the front entrance of the courthouse, the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Department was present with their SWAT vehicle and K-9 unit, and the sheriff deputies spoke with members of the community and demonstrated some K-9 maneuvers. Central MN Legal Services had two attorneys present to provide free legal advice to the public throughout the open house event, and State Court Administration Communications Specialist Lissa Finne was present with posters and informational brochures regarding the three levels of Minnesota courts.

There was also a career/information booth with various agency partners in attendance, such as: Kandiyohi County Human Services Child Protection Unit, Kandiyohi County Community Corrections, Willmar Police Department and Minnesota Judicial Branch.

Guided tours were offered throughout the courthouse and provided information on various topics. Tour stops included:



Supreme Court Justice Paul Thissen, Court of Appeals Judge Lucinda Jesson, District Court Judge Stephen Wentzell

- Treatment Court (Judge Stephanie Beckman and Karon White (the treatment court coordinator))
- CHIPS Pilot (Judge Jennifer Fischer, Ashley Welz (court reporter) and Andrew Quintus (law clerk))
- Three Levels of Minnesota Courts (Justice Paul Thissen (Court of Appeals) Judge Lucinda Jesson and District Court Judge Stephen Wentzell)
- Self-Help Center and Court Forms (Jill Greenhagen and Kandiyohi County Court Operations Associate Tracey Kalkbrenner)
- In-Custody Secure Courtroom (Security Bailiff Anthony Holtz)
- Law Library Resources (Kandiyohi County Law Librarian Aurora McCleary)
- Central MN Legal Services Resources (Casey Wiegmann)
- What to Expect as a Kandiyohi County Juror (Kandiyohi County Court Operations Supervisor Diane Gerhardson)

# District Updates

## EIGHTH DISTRICT (cont.)

Thanks to all of the volunteers and agency collaboration Kandiyohi County's first Law Day event was successful. Approximately 100 community members attended the event and the West Central Tribune published an article summarizing the day. The West Central Tribune article can be reviewed at <https://www.wctrib.com/news/crime-and-courts/4608216-kandiyohi-county-courthouse-opens-its-doors-public-depth-view-judicial>

Special thanks go to: Justice Paul Thissen of Minnesota Supreme Court; Judge Lucinda Jesson of Minnesota Court of Appeals; 8<sup>th</sup> District Judges; Kandiyohi County Court Administration and Eighth Judicial Administration staff; State Court Administration Communications Office; local agencies such as Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Department, Willmar Police Department, Kandiyohi County Human Services and Kandiyohi County Community Corrections; Central MN Legal Services; Kandiyohi County Law Library; and courthouse security and building maintenance staff.



Cheryl Torgerson and Lisa Vosika  
Welcome and refreshments table



Judge Stephanie Beckman presentation  
during Drug Court tour stop



Ann Meredith and Mary Stock, District Human  
Resources at Careers with the Courts booth

# District Updates

## TENTH DISTRICT

### **Pine, Isanti, Chisago, and Kanabec (PICK) Counties Attend MACM Day** By Sharon Schubert, Kanabec County Court Administrator

The PICK Counties went fully loaded for the MACM day on the Hill outreach event on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Veterans Lu Ann Blegen (Pine County Court Administrator) and Tracy Gullerud (Isanti County Court Administrator), were joined by newbies Sharon Schubert (Kanabec County Court Administrator) and Amy Isaacson (Pine County Court Operations Supervisor).

To say it was a busy day is an understatement. On a cold and windy day, with challenges in traffic, we were not deterred in our mission. We were burning the fat bits with the many steps required to go from the Senate Building to the State Office Building and back.

We met with 7 different Representatives or Senators representing the PICK Counties. We also had one cancellation, which gave us the opportunity to watch a committee meeting.

We provided materials, and the warm and friendly PICK perspective, on the Judicial Branch 2020-2021 Budget Request.

We were able to lunch with fellow Court Administrators to catch up.

The comradery was incredible, and we did one small part to share our very important message, that represent not only us in the PICK, but the State as a whole. We are hoping this information and connection is remembered when they are voting.



(from left to right) Senator Jason Rarick, Lu Ann Blegen, Tracy Gullerud, Amy Isaacson and Sharon Schubert

### **Self-Help Center Partners with Anoka Technical College to Bring Self-Help Services to the College Campus**

By Amy Isaacson, Pine County Court Operations Supervisor

The Tenth Judicial District Self-Help Center is going to start appearing at Anoka Technical College. The district and the college have reached an agreement that will see staff from the Self-Help Center set up a workstation on campus to aid the public with legal forms, procedures and information. The project will be the first in the state to see court self-help personnel out in the community on a regular basis. This program, which is slated to begin in February 2019, will start at the college's Anoka campus off Highway 10 and will be held on the first Wednesday of each month.

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# District Updates

## TENTH DISTRICT (cont.)



Self-Help staff will appear for 4 hours on campus in addition to their usual schedule at each of the eight district courthouses. The pilot is slated to run during the spring and semester.

Anoka Technical College serves more than 2,500 students annually, with the majority of those students residing in Anoka, Sherburne and Wright County. The average age of Anoka Technical College students is 27 years old. The program's focus will be removing any potential legal issues that might be a distraction to college success or a roadblock to post-graduate employment.

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### **New Court Operations Supervisor in Washington County** By Gena Jones, Washington County Court Administrative Manager

Jodie Pfeffer joined Washington County Court Administration in September, 2018 as a Court Operations Supervisor. She replaced Geri Tresselt who joined the Court of Appeals. Jodie supervises the Criminal and Traffic divisions. Jodie previously worked for Dakota, Goodhue, and Douglas Counties as a senior court clerk. Prior to her work with court administration, she worked as a 911 dispatcher in Dakota County and correctional officer in Washington County. Jodie has four children (with a set of twins to top them off!) and enjoys watching her children participate in various sports activities.



Jodie Pfeffer

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### **Consolidated Projects Look to Strengthen Services Provided in the Tenth** By Sheldon Clark, Litigant Services Manager

The Tenth Judicial District has taken on several new initiatives as part of its Strategic Plan. As part of the District's move to consolidate EFS acceptance, the District has appointed Business Process Specialist Patty Mallum to work with acceptors and supervisors on document security questions and clarifying responses. Patty also represents the District on the statewide Document Security Committee. Another consolidated project is preparation for the implementation of Task Manager.

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# District Updates

## TENTH DISTRICT (cont.)

Business Process Specialist Amanda Jewell and Litigant Services Manager Sheldon Clark have been charged with preparing for and working with the State Court Administrator's Office Task Manager Team. The District is currently analyzing local court administration processes in each Task Manager workflow before implementing a best practice model across the District. To determine what each county's current processes are, court operations associates and leadworkers are traveling to neighboring counties to ask their peers questions about their processes. This will provide greater consistency and make Task Manager implementation much smoother.

Another large scale project the District is working on is the creation of a unified staff onboarding program. Court Administrators Annette Fritz (Washington), Sharon Schubert (Kanabec) and Lori O'Brien (Anoka), along with Human Resources Manager Kristine Lancaster, are developing a program whereby new staff across the District will have a designated start date allowing for streamlined onboarding. This will allow a group of employees to go through the onboarding process together, building comradery across the District. Inspiration for this model came from the Third District after hearing about their successes with this type of plan.

There is also discussion of having dedicated trainers for each case type. These dedicated trainers would be experts in their particular line of business, allowing the District to leverage that knowledge. By consolidating onboarding, we anticipate maximizing resources to generate greater efficiencies.

Lastly, the District has focused on communication and ensuring everyone in the District is aware of ongoing projects, new developments and has an avenue to provide helpful information. In October, the District Office began publishing a monthly newsletter called Tenth Court Press that is shared with all Tenth District staff and Judges. Tenth Court Press provides information on local court administration projects, recognizes staff milestones and achievements and helps everyone stay connected. At the same time, District Administrator Paul Patterson has been doing 'Town Hall' style gatherings twice a year in each courthouse. This allows staff to receive updates to ongoing initiatives and ask questions and provide feedback in an inviting setting.

# District Updates

## TENTH DISTRICT (cont.)

### 3 Tenth District Counties Host Law Day Events

By Annette Fritz, Washington County Court Administrator, Abby Sylvester, Anoka County Court Operations Coordinator, and Brenna Thompson, Wright County Supervisor

Washington County hosted a Law Day event on May 1. Events included guided courthouse tours where 70 students attended, k-9 demonstration and guided law enforcement center tour, several information booths including “ask a lawyer” where the volunteer attorneys were busy all day answering questions. There were other booths as well: court administration, self-help center, law library, Tubman Family Alliance, Washington County Parks and Historic Courthouse, and the Sheriff’s Department. Department of Vehicle of Services (DVS) was on site and assisted 52 people with driver license issues.

The event was a success in that it provided a forum to educate others about their court system. Many thanks to David Tomenes, Bar Association President (former Washington County Law Clerk), for his lead of the planning committee. Other committee members included: Judges Mary Hannon, Tad Jude, and Ellen Maas; Court Administration - Sean Young-Stephens, Trisha Abt, Amanda Jansen, Nancee Prchal, Crystal Roquette, Jodie Pfeffer, Cory Marsolek – Law Clerk, Kristine Simons – Court Reporter, Molly Buckrey – Litigant Services, Tim Divine with the Law Library, Sgt. Cory Reedy of the Sheriff’s Department, and Elise Gardner of the Historic Courthouse. Retired Judge Gary Schurrer also volunteered at the event to provide guided tours.



Washington County Deputy Chris Majeski with his K-9 partner Jake providing a demonstration for students in attendance.

Anoka County held its annual Law Day event on Friday, April 26, 2019, from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. The event kicked off with opening remarks by Anoka County Commissioner Rhonda Sivarajah and Judge Barry Sullivan. Total clinic attendance reached a record 450 customers who received assistance at one of our eight clinics. Over 1,200 traffic cases from 31 different counties were resolved by one of three judges who had statewide jurisdiction for law day.

# District Updates

## TENTH DISTRICT (cont.)



Anoka County Court Operations Associates Melissa DeLeeuw (left) and Mallory Pasiowitz (right) assist individuals at the driver's license clinic.

Law Day is an opportunity for area schools to come to the courthouse and learn more about the justice system. The student educational track consists of a presentation by the Medical Examiner, a Mock Trial and a K-9 Demonstration. This year Centennial, Anoka Hennepin, and Regional participated in our event.

There was also an information fair with representatives from Judicare, Center for Excellence, Mediation Services, Alexandra House and Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid.

Courthouse tours were held, as well as three separate continuing legal education presentations – Tax Law Impact in Family Law Cases by Dax Stoner, CPA; Body Worn Cameras, Lieutenant Robert Shene, Duluth Police Department; and The First Amendment in Minnesota, by Chief Judge of the Minnesota Court of Appeals Edward Cleary.

Please reach out to Abby at [abby.sylvester@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:abby.sylvester@courts.state.mn.us) or 763-760-6548 if you would like more information about the event.

Wright County hosted a Law Day event on Friday, May 10. Visitors received free legal advice in the eight separate clinics, as well as complimentary rides to the courthouse from Trailblazer Transit. The DVS/Warrant Clinic was particularly busy—they handled 879 cases from 33 counties, assisting 143 different people.

Wright County also offered an information fair as well as presentations throughout the day. One special presentation is about The Turn – Wright County's Adult Drug Court. A panel of participants shared their stories and identified how The Turn is helping them.