

# JUDICIARY TIMES

A Publication of the  New Jersey Courts

Fall 2013

## Headed State's Largest Vicinage

# Collins Ijoma Retires as Essex Vicinage TCA

By **Mike Mathis**  
Judiciary Times Editor

Collins Ijoma has held several positions in the Essex Vicinage over a career that spanned more than three decades.

But while his job title changed over the years, the location where he worked in the Essex County Courthouse didn't.

"I worked my way from the cubicle in the front to the next room and the next room until I ended up in the last room," said Ijoma.

For the first time in 30 years, Ijoma has a change in scenery. He retired in August as trial court administrator of the state's largest vicinage.

Amy K. DePaul, the vicinage's family division manager, was named to succeed Ijoma, who was one of the Judiciary's longest serving TCAs.

He was instrumental in helping guide the organization through the 1995 transition from a county court system to a statewide unified Judiciary and has headed several state, regional and national court committees and organizations.

"Few in the Judiciary can match Collins Ijoma's contributions to judicial administration in our system," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, who worked with Ijoma for 10 years when Grant sat as a judge in the Essex Vicinage family division.

"He has a passion for judicial management and is recognized as a national and international expert on the subject," Judge Grant said. "He generously shared his wisdom and insights with his colleagues, and most importantly, with a succeeding generation of managers. We are going to miss his talent, dedication and leadership."

"Collins has been the face of the Essex Vicinage for decades; his importance to us cannot be understated," Assignment Judge Patricia Costello said. "For me, he has been a remarkable executive partner, he has a peerless instinct for anticipating and heading off problems even before they happen. I will miss him terribly. The entire vicinage is already feeling the loss of the wonderful, dedicated, talented man."

A native of Nigeria, Ijoma said he never considered working for the Judiciary when he was a student at New Jersey City University.

"It was all an accident," he said. "I didn't even know the Judiciary existed. I got here to make a living and also



Collins Ijoma

## Survey on Access and Fairness to Take Place in N.J. Oct. 7-Oct. 11



Judge Glenn A. Grant

By **Judge Glenn A. Grant**  
Acting Administrative  
Director of the Courts

We are an organization dedicated to ensuring that litigants, businesses and consumers of court services are treated with respect and dignity throughout our system.

At the New Jersey Judiciary, access and fairness are more than just words. Access and fairness are what we do every day.

Our jobs are to make sure each person who enters a courthouse or a Judiciary office throughout our state is treated fairly and given an opportunity to be heard.

We need the public's help in assessing how well we're doing in this endeavor. Please complete a survey to tell us about your experience in the New Jersey courts.

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## Collins Ijoma Retires As Essex Vicinage Trial Court Administrator

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contribute somehow to public service. I had no idea whatsoever it would lead to becoming a TCA.”

After Ijoma earned his master's degree in public administration from Seton Hall, he was invited to attend a meeting of the school's board of trustees. In attendance were Robert D. Lipscher, the administrative director of the courts, and Essex Vicinage TCA Bill Carpenter.

Ijoma, who earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Seton Hall, had completed an internship at the Essex County Division of Employment Training and had planned on a career as a controller but instead decided on a career in finance for the job stability. Ijoma began working for the Judiciary as a court finance officer in April 1983.

“I wanted to work in the public sector but in the budgeting and finance area,” he said. “I was looking for a job

and they offered me a permanent job right away and I took it.”

Ijoma's role was later expanded to include oversight of human resources. He was named the vicinage's assistant TCA in 1990.

When Essex Vicinage TCA John A. Clarke left to become the executive officer/clerk of the Los Angeles Superior Court in November 1994, Ijoma was faced with steering the vicinage through the transition from a county-based to statewide judiciary.

Clarke, meanwhile, took over the Los Angeles courts during the O.J. Simpson case.

“He said, look guys, you're on your own,” Ijoma said. “I was faced with the task of managing the transition under difficult circumstances.

Ijoma was named TCA in March 1995.

He said initiatives such as assistance officers, centralized court reporting and transcript management and finance office practices such as the purchasing system were started in Essex and implemented across the Judiciary.

Ijoma said the most rewarding part of his job was mentoring staff who later assumed managerial roles throughout the state.

“I always see the good in people,” Ijoma said. “I took seriously that the most important duty of an executive is preparing competent subordinates.”

Giuseppe M. Fazari, TCA in Union Vicinage and a former Essex vicinage assistant TCA, said he was fortunate to learn from Ijoma.

“I am indebted to Collins for making me not just a better manager, but a better person,” Fazari said. “My experience working with Collins showed that his acute understanding of the art and practice of court management made him and the people around him successful; thus, his influence and wisdom affected me in profound ways and to have had the benefit of his leadership for so many years was truly a privilege and blessing.”

Ijoma has been an active member of professional organizations. He served as president and a board member for

the National Association for Court Management (NACM) and is a fellow of the National Center for State Courts' Institute for Court Management.

Both organizations have recognized him for his work and accomplishments. “It's a calling to want to serve in the Judiciary,” he said. “It's like no other job in the world because you're dealing with people's liberty, freedom and lives.”

In retirement, Ijoma said he intends to continue as a consultant to courts around the world, which he has done on his vacation time for several years.

He also plans to relax as well as read, collect wine and attend wine festivals.

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## Access and Fairness Survey Set for Oct. 7-Oct. 11

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The survey will be distributed from Oct. 7 through Oct. 11 to people visiting the Superior Courts that week.

The survey is anonymous. You will not be asked for your name or other identifying information.

You can take the survey at any Superior Court courthouse and many probation services buildings in the state.

You also can complete the survey if you are at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton visiting the Superior Court Clerk's Office or sitting on a grand jury.

We plan to post the survey results at njcourts.com next year.

The survey will be available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Hindi, Gujarati and Portuguese.

An American Sign Language interpreter video will also be available in every court building for deaf and hard of hearing court users.

If you visit one of our court buildings between Oct. 7 and Oct. 11, please complete the survey, and tell us how we're doing. Visit Ensuring an Open Door to Justice at njcourts.com to learn more about how the Judiciary provides access and fairness in the courts.

*Judiciary Times* is published by the Office of Communications and Community Relations, Administrative Office of the Courts, for employees of the Judiciary, volunteers who work with the court system and the public.

The chief justice is Stuart Rabner. The acting administrative director of the courts is Judge Glenn A. Grant.

Please send short news articles, photos and suggestions to Mike.Mathis@judiciary.state.nj.us. Submissions are subject to editing, and not all can be published.

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## New Court Administrators Named in Essex, Monmouth Vicinages

By **Tamara Kendig**

Communications Manager  
Administrative Office of the Courts

New trial court administrators have been named in two vicinages.

Amy K. DePaul, formerly the Essex Vicinage family division manager, is the new TCA in Essex and Andrew M. Graubard is the new TCA in the Monmouth Vicinage

DePaul began work on Sept. 3. Graubard, who has held court positions in Florida and Wisconsin, began on Aug. 19.

The trial court administrator is the highest ranking staff executive in the vicinage in charge of all court operations, including financial management, human resources, information systems, case coordination, case flow management, probation services, jury utilization, facilities, equipment, maintenance, records management and statistical analysis.

Under New Jersey court rules, the administrative director of the courts appoints the trial court administrator in each vicinage.

Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, said he named DePaul and Graubard on the strong recommendation of Essex Vicinage Assignment Judge Patricia K. Costello and Monmouth Vicinage Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson.

"Amy has been a valuable member of our vicinage for a number of years and I am confident that she has the wisdom and ability to lead us forward," said Judge Patricia Costello. "Her leadership skills, her dedication to her work, and her extensive knowledge of our programs and procedures will ensure a smooth transition and the continued excellence of our performance in all areas of our courts."

DePaul earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Villanova University and a law degree from Seton Hall University School of Law. She served as a law clerk to Judge Costello from 2002 to 2003 before becoming an associate at the law firm of Chasan Leyner & Lamparello.



Amy K. DePaul

In 2006, DePaul returned to the Judiciary as an assistant civil division manager in the Essex Vicinage.

From 2007 to 2009, she served on special assignment in the Newark Municipal Court, the state's largest municipal court. In 2009, she was appointed director of the Newark Municipal Court. She returned to the Essex Vicinage in 2011, serving as family division manager until her current appointment.

DePaul's work includes service on a number of committees charged with helping improve court services for families, youth, and children, including the Children in Court and Children in Court Improvement Committees. She also sat on the Newark Model Court Committee and the Newark Municipal Court Improvement Committee.

"For the last seven years, I have had the great privilege of working with the incredible staff, managers and judges of the Essex Vicinage. I am grateful for the guidance and support I have received from Assignment Judge Costello and Trial Court Administrator Collins E. Ijoma. I am honored and humbled to have been selected as the next TCA, and I look forward to continuing the strong tradition of excellence here in Essex."

Graubard holds a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from Barry University in



Andrew M. Graubard

Miami Shores, Fla. He is a fellow of the Institute for Court Management, which is run by the National Center for State Courts.

"I am impressed with the depth and breadth of Andrew's court management experience," said Lawson. "He brings to our vicinage a wealth of expertise that will be a valuable asset as we continue to meet the public's high standards for access, fairness, and customer service."

Graubard began his career in 1986 as a deputy clerk in the Dade County Probate Court in Miami. He served as a calendar clerk in the criminal court before moving to the Administrative Office of the Courts of the 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida in 1988, where he served as a systems analyst.

In 1992, he became a justice planner, analyzing budget, case flow and operations for the Metro-Dade County Department of Justice Assistance.

He returned to the 11th Circuit in 1993 as a senior system analyst and analysis group coordinator, managing programmers and analysts in the design and implementation of a number of computer systems. He became the support group coordinator overseeing several IT functions in 1994 and was named assistant director and support project manager in 1998.

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## Mendez Visits 37 Municipal Courts in Atlantic/Cape May

By Sally Hanlin

Assistant Municipal Division Manager  
Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage

Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage Assignment Judge Julio L. Mendez began visiting the vicinage's 37 municipal courts last October.

Mendez's goal was to meet with court staff and local government officials to discuss court security, Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), answer questions and thank staff.

He was accompanied on each visit by Municipal Court Presiding Judge Louis Belasco and Trial Court Administrator Howard Berchtold Jr.

Many reported that Mendez's visit was the first to their courts by a high ranking judge.

"I thought his visit was great," Sea Isle City Court Administrator Carol Fusco said. "I was very proud to have him there praising us on what a good court we have and telling the mayor and others the same. What a great morale booster."

Judge Mendez discussed the impact of Hurricane Sandy on the courts and commended the municipalities that had well thought COOP plans.

Courts in Margate and Sea Isle City



Atlantic/Cape May Assignment Judge Julio L. Mendez (center) poses with staff from the Sea Isle City Municipal Court during his tour of the vicinage's 37 municipal courts. One staff member called Mendez's visit "a great morale booster."

reopened days after they were relocated in their respective municipalities.

Mendez also commended the courts that are in full compliance with the Statewide Municipal Court Security Policy and discussed the need to fulfill security obligations with those not yet in full compliance.

His discussions had such impact on those in attendance that three more courts have come into compliance since

the visit with Judge Mendez.

"I thought Judge Mendez was very approachable," Folsom Municipal Court Administrator Catherine DeYoung said.

"He was interested in our court," she said. "I was impressed that he actually wanted to visit each court. I enjoyed meeting him in my environment."

## Ocean County Man, 89, Adds Volunteer of the Year to His Titles

By Ann Marie Fleury

Ombudsman  
Ocean Vicinage

Sheldon Mead has held several titles in his life - husband, father, educator and columnist.

He can now add one more: Volunteer of the Year.

Mead has been named the recipient of Ocean Vicinage's 2013 Volunteer of the Year Award.

Mead, who will turn 90 later this year, has been a volunteer mediator in the courts since the 1990's and assists in landlord tenant, special civil and small claims cases. He is an enthusiastic



Ocean Vicinage Assignment Judge Vincent J. Grasso congratulates Sheldon Mead for being honored as the vicinage's Volunteer of the Year.

volunteer who brings his wisdom, keen understanding of the courts and patience into every situation he

encounters.

Throughout the years, he has been a dedicated mediator, remaining calm even when the plaintiffs and defendants have given up. He exhibits the same enthusiasm and youthful energy every day and raises the bar for everyone in the courtroom.

Every case Mead settles saves the court time and money.

"I don't know anyone with more enthusiasm for volunteering, or for life in general, than Sheldon," said Judge Steven Nemeth, who nominated Mead for the honor.

Mead's dedication to the courts

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## Passaic Vicinage Unveils Renovated Historic Courthouse

### *Work on 115-year-old Building Included Refurbished Rotunda, Display Cases*

**By June Zieder**  
Ombudsman  
Passaic Vicinage

Those who have visited the Passaic Vicinage recently have seen a new look inside the Historical Courthouse on Hamilton Street in Paterson.

What were once gray pillars, walls without pictures, old carpeting and dulled, stained glass have been replaced with bright walls, historic pictures, new carpeting and stained glass that has been refurbished to its original glory.

The courthouse dates to 1898 and is one of the most prominent buildings in Passaic County.

The rotunda area, with a glass circular pattern that is embedded in the marble floor, is considered one of the most unique indoor spaces in New Jersey.

As the building aged, the need for renovations grew.

A Historical Project Committee directed by Assignment Judge Donald J. Volkert Jr., was formed in July 2012 to renovate the inside of the building and showcase historical artifacts and documents.

The committee, composed of vicinage and county staff and representatives from the Paterson Museum and Lambert Castle, created an area for the public to view and become acquainted with Passaic County history.

In addition to the pictures and maps that are now on the walls, display cases that contain historical items from the vicinage and the county have been placed in the rotunda area. A judicial portrait gallery is located on the third floor.

Renovations to the outside of the courthouse are continuing. New handrails and lighting specific to the period when the building was constructed will be installed.

#### Did You Know?

The Old Salem County Courthouse in downtown Salem was built in 1735 and is one of the oldest courthouses in the country.



The rotunda in the Passaic County Historic Courthouse in Paterson is shown during and after a major renovation and construction project.

## Ocean Opens New Legal Research Center

**By Ann Marie Fleury**  
Ombudsman  
Ocean Vicinage

To bolster the New Jersey Judiciary's commitment to ensure equal access to the courts and fairness in procedures, the Ocean Vicinage has converted its law library into a Legal Research and Information Center (LRIC).

The LRIC, which is located in the Ocean County Courthouse on Washington Street in Toms River, enables the public and attorneys to conduct legal research and to obtain court forms, brochures and packets and information about court processes and procedures.

With public access terminals, publications, forms and community resource information available in one location, the LRIC is a one-stop center where court users can go for customer service and assistance.

Workshops and seminars to educate the public about court processes and procedures will be coordinated from the center.

The conversion of the law library into the LRIC has resulted in the relocation of the ombudsman's office from the Ocean County Justice Complex on Hooper Avenue in Toms River to the center.

In addition to the ombudsman, an administrative specialist is available to provide assistance.

#### Editor's Note

The deadline for the winter 2013-2014 edition of the *Judiciary Times* is Friday, Nov. 29.

Feature stories about court programs and newsworthy profiles about judges and court staff are welcome.

Current stories and information about court staff and events and submissions of awards, honors, promotions and appointments are sought for *JT Briefing*, the Judiciary's e-newsletter.

## Artwork in Middlesex County Courthouse Depicts History of

By **Mike Mathis**

Judiciary Times Editor

Because New Jersey is situated between New York and Philadelphia, New Jerseyans can partake of an immense amount of culture those cities offer.

However, they don't have to travel out of state to see some of the best artwork in the region.

The Middlesex County Courthouse and the Middlesex County Family Courthouse, both in New Brunswick, has one of the most engaging, informative and entertaining collections of public art in the state.

The exhibits document the history of New Brunswick, explain the state's judicial system and describes general equity cases and depict family life through the eyes of schoolchildren.

"This is not just a building, it's a public building, a courthouse in New Jersey," explained retired Judge Amy Piro Chambers, who was instrumental in coordinating the creation and exhibition of the art. "We wanted the exhibits to reflect the law, the county and history."

Retired Middlesex Vicinage Assignment Judge Robert Longhi asked Chambers to chair a committee to commission artwork for the courthouse following a renovation project in 2004.

Each project was completed and funded separately.

Organizations that provided funding included the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission and the New Jersey State Bar Foundation.

Documents, drawings and photographs were obtained from Rutgers University and the New Brunswick Free Public Library. The Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University and the Rhode Island School of Design assisted with the design of some of the displays.

The New Brunswick exhibit features drawings of an old map of New Brunswick and the first and second Middlesex County courthouses, which stood on the location of the current



An artist's rendering of the old Middlesex County Courthouse, jail and sheriff's residence in New Brunswick. The courthouse and a previous one stood on the location of the current building.



One of the displays includes drawings and definitions of cases heard in chancery court.

building.

The illustrated panels of the chancery cases set forth maxims that are the basic principles the chancery court could apply when determining whether to grant equitable relief. General equity judges handle non-jury cases such as those involving trade secrets, labor matters, foreclosures and other disputes

in which court relief, often in the form of restraining orders, is sought on an emergency basis.

Examples include a court ordering a company to stop discharging pollutants into a river and ordering a farmer to sell a field in accordance with a contract the farmer signed.

# New Jersey Judiciary And Events That Shaped County, State

“The only way to illustrate it was to have sample cases,” said Chambers. For the exhibit in the family courthouse, students from the New Brunswick School District were asked to draw a picture using one of the following themes: What family means to me, a day in the life of my family, all about my family or a favorite moment.

The results are crayon masterpieces that show children and their families at the amusement park, the beach, the airport, the playground and at a picnic.

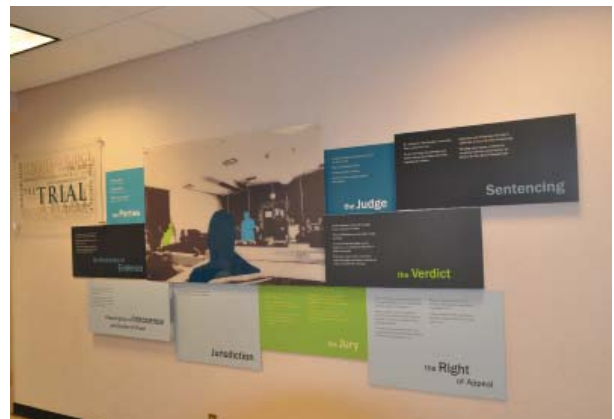
“For a family courthouse, it’s so appropriate,” Chambers said of the artwork, “People come to these hallways anxious and upset. It’s a family environment and (the artwork) focusses on what family is all about, children.”



Retired Judge Amy Piro Chambers points to a chart that shows the framework of the New Jersey court system before enactment of the 1947 state constitution. The constitution streamlined the Judiciary and reduced the number of courts from 17 to five.



The jury in the case of Bridget Dergan poses after convicting the maid and condemning her to death for the Feb. 25, 1867 murder of the wife of her employer, a physician.



One displays details the parties and series of events during a criminal trial



A copy of a map of East Jersey. New Jersey was divided into East Jersey and West Jersey in 1674 before New Jersey was once again a single royal colony after 1703. The East Jersey capitol was Perth Amboy.



One of the many pictures drawn by children that hang in the Middlesex County Family Courthouse in New Brunswick

## Chief Justice Names Two Judges to Appellate Division Bench

By **Tamara Kendig**

Communications Manager  
Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner has elevated two Superior Court judges to the Appellate Division.

Harry G. Carroll and George S. Leone sat in the Bergen and Camden vicinages, respectively, before their appointments.

The appointments were effective Aug. 1.

The Appellate Division of the Superior Court is New Jersey's intermediate appellate court. The 34 Appellate Division judges hear appeals from decisions of the trial courts, the Tax Court and state administrative agencies. The Appellate Division decides approximately 6,500 appeals and 7,500 motions each year.

Carroll was appointed to the bench on Jan. 30, 2002 by Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco and was reappointed in 2008 by Gov. Jon S. Corzine.

Assigned to the Bergen Vicinage, he served in the family division until Sept. 1, 2005, when he moved to the criminal division. He was named presiding judge of the criminal division on Sept. 2007. In 2010, he moved to the general equity part, where he remained until being named to the Appellate Division.

A graduate of Fordham University and Fordham University Law School, Carroll worked in private practice while serving as a municipal court judge in several municipalities, including Bogota, Cresskill, Bergenfield, Washington Township, Midland Park, Waldwick, and in the Bergen County Central Municipal Court. Prior to those appointments, he served as a municipal prosecutor in Leonia and then in Bogota. He also volunteered as a youth sports coach in Washington Township.

"Being a judge is an honor and a privilege that I take very seriously," said Carroll. "I am humbled by the chief justice's confidence in my work, and I am excited about serving the people of New Jersey in this new role."



Harry G. Carroll

Appointed to the Superior Court by Gov. Chris Christie on Jan. 3, 2011, Leone served on the family bench in Camden County until Aug. 31, 2012, when he moved to the civil bench.

A graduate of Harvard University and the University of Chicago Law School, Leone began his legal career as a law clerk to U.S. Court of Appeals Judge James Hunter III. He then worked for the law firm of Dechert, Price & Rhoads in Philadelphia before joining the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office in 1987.

In 1995, he became an assistant



George S. Leone

U.S. attorney for the District of New Jersey in Camden. From 1998 until his appointment to the bench, he served as chief of the appeals division in the Newark office of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

"I am honored and humbled to have this opportunity to serve the people of New Jersey in this new capacity," said Leone. "I thank the chief justice, the judges of the appellate division and the judges at the Camden Hall of Justice for their guidance and support. I have been lucky to work with so many talented and dedicated people."

## Putting Classroom Lessons Into Practice

By **Jeanette Zaragoza De León**

Master Court Interpreter  
Passaic Vicinage

Judges acted as defendants and court interpreters were witnesses as lawyers reenacted their cases.

The scenario helped aspiring court interpreting professionals practice their roles when Passaic Vicinage staff and the Court Procedures class at New York University met at the university's main campus in New York on Aug. 7

Judges Terry Paul Bottinelli and Judge Miguel de la Carrera and Senior Assistant Passaic County Prosecutor Salvatore Bellomo were joined by attorneys Leticia Zúñiga and E. Drew Britcher, who frequently represent clients in the vicinage.

Students practiced their interpreting skills, recalled their code of ethics, and used the procedural knowledge they

learned in the mock proceedings.

The proceedings included some of the most common in which court interpreters are used: an uncontested divorce, a temporary restraining order, an opening statement in a medical malpractice case, an arraignment and a sentencing.

The roleplaying sometimes generated laughter as the interpreters responded to unexpected yet realistic courtroom situations.

Similar activities will be planned in the future.

### Did You Know?

The Judiciary uses Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and SMS texts to communicate the work of the courts to the public and court staff. To sign up for these services, go to [njcourts.com](http://njcourts.com) and look for the icons on the right side.

## Cumberland County Captures Annual Judiciary Olympics Title

By **Mary McGinty Flanagan**

Probation Services Division  
Administrative Office of the Courts

Cumberland County won first place in the 26<sup>th</sup> annual Judiciary Olympics at Newark Schools Stadium in Newark on Aug. 15.

Burlington County and the Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP) tied for second place and host Essex Vicinage placed third.

A total of 136 juvenile probationers from 17 counties and JISP competed for medals in 11 events, including track, long jump, an obstacle course, basketball, football free throws, a tug-of-war, and a jump rope competition based on standards used in national competitions.

Participants are offenders who are compliant with their conditions of probation and are given the opportunity to practice good sportsmanship and social skills while interacting with their peers.

The event was hosted by Juvenile Probation Services' Positive Interventions Committee (PIC), which is composed of juvenile probation officers from throughout the state who identify and implement activities and training designed to assist in the rehabilitation of young offenders.



Participants in the 26th annual Judiciary Olympics proceed into Newark Schools Stadium Aug. 15 before opening ceremonies.

Members exchange information on locally developed ideas so that successful interventions can also be used in other counties. PIC members along with probation staff from every participating county coordinated transportation and accompanied probationers to the event.

“This type of event underscores probation’s commitment to encouraging positive life skills for our clients,” said Curtis Hurff, Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem

Vicinage assistant chief probation officer and PIC chair. “They are being rewarded for their efforts at their own rehabilitation, they have an opportunity to learn more social skills by travelling to and participating in the games, and they see that our judges and probation officers truly want them to succeed.”

Newark Schools Stadium, which was built in 1925, has been the site of many track and field events, including the 1928 National Women’s Olympic trials. Olympian Jesse Owens also ran there.

### Director Speaks at National Annual Convention

### Judge Grant Addresses Vision and Strategy for eCourts and Technology

Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the court, discussed the New Jersey Judiciary’s strategy for e-courts at the American Bar Association’s annual convention in San Francisco in August.

During the presentation, *Electronic Tribunals and Digital Trials—Visions of the 21st Century Court*, Judge Grant spoke of the challenge of converting old case management systems, or legacy systems, into a modern e-court. Monetary constraints have prevented the New Jersey Judiciary from implementing a comprehensive e-court, but Grant pointed to several examples in which the Judiciary has used

technology to better serve court users. These include NJMCdirect, the online ticket information and payment center, and JEFIS Special Civil and JEFIS Foreclosure, which allow attorneys to file documents in those cases electronically.

“The creation of a technology vision for a court system must recognize that the business needs should drive the technological changes,” Grant said.

“Given the financial and operational difficulties facing all government, courts must look to prioritize information technology solutions and focus on those applications which provide the

biggest return on investment.”

The program also examined the growing reliance on email as official correspondence and how virtual appearances by attorneys and witnesses will affect court proceedings.

#### Did You Know?

You can view Supreme Court arguments without traveling to Trenton. To see the live proceedings, go to [njcourts.com](http://njcourts.com) and click on the box for the Webcast on the left side. Tentative oral argument schedules and cases and a link to archives of past arguments also can be found on the Webcast page.

## Asst. Chief Michelle Smith Named Clerk of the Superior Court

By **Tamara Kendig**

Communications Manager  
Administrative Office of the Courts

Michelle M. Smith has been named clerk of the Superior Court by the New Jersey Supreme Court. The appointment is effective Sept. 21. Smith succeeds Jennifer M. Perez, who recently was named chief of the Judiciary's Automated Trial Court Systems Unit.

As clerk, Smith oversees the Superior Court Clerk's Office, in the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton. She directs the administration of staff and budget resources, develop and implement plans for the efficient operation of the office, and implement court rules, policies and directives related to court processing, public access to court records, records management, and electronic filing of court cases.

She also works closely with other clerks of court, trial judges and managers throughout the Judiciary, and partners in the executive branch to improve court operations throughout the trial courts.

The clerk also oversees the management of foreclosure cases, maintains the civil judgment and



Michelle M. Smith

order docket in which statewide liens are recorded, oversees the Judiciary's records management process for both electronic and paper records, and manages a customer service operation that includes a call center and a public reception area.

"Michelle Smith brings to this new role a strong record of leadership and enthusiasm for helping others," said Chief Justice Stuart Rabner. "Her ability to manage a large staff while developing efficiencies in court processes and procedures will help the Judiciary better serve the public."

Smith earned a bachelor's degree from St. John's University in Jamaica, N.Y. and a law degree from the Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center in Huntington, N.Y.

She began her career as a case worker

for family courts in Queens in 1997. During that time, she also was certified as a family mediator. In 2005, she was named director of the New York City Family Court Mediation Program. In 2006, she became the associate executive director of mediation services for Community Mediation Services, Inc.

In July, 2012, Smith was named an assistant chief in the Superior Court Clerk's Office, a position she held until her present appointment. She had day-to-day responsibility for the foreclosure and judgment court processing.

## Ocean Vicinage Honors Volunteer

*Continued from page 4*

was proven further when, not long ago, he had heart surgery. Just four days later, he was back at the courthouse, insisting on volunteering.

Asked why he likes to volunteer in civil mediation, he said "I like to assist people and help them reach some kind of acceptable ending to their legal situation. The result of good mediation may not be ideal but is a solution that everyone can live with."

Mead's service did not start and does not stop in Ocean County.

He served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific during World War II and was photographed with Gen. Douglas MacArthur in the Philippines.

He taught business-related courses at Hackensack High School, Bergen Community College and at the former Englewood Cliffs College.

Mead's love for volunteering and serving travels with him during his winter months in Florida, where he works for specialty tourist attractions and for a local police department.

When Mead is not volunteering, he likes to write. His *Helpful Hints* column is a favorite among those who read the newsletter in his retirement community.

Mead has been married to his wife Lynn for 60 years. They have two sons.

## New Trial Court Administrators Named in Essex and Monmouth

*Continued from page 3*

Aside from his technology responsibilities, Graubard served as the director of emergency management and court continuity from 2004 to 2010, and as the intake officer and investigator for discrimination and harassment complaints.

In 2007, he also was appointed to the 7-member Executive Committee overseeing all executive-level decisions regarding the budget and operations of the 11th Circuit.

In 2010, Graubard was named the district court administrator for the 2nd Judicial District of Wisconsin, where

he was responsible for administrative oversight of all operations of the circuit and municipal courts in the district consisting of Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties.

"I am very excited to join the New Jersey Courts in this capacity," said Graubard. "New Jersey's statewide Judiciary has an outstanding reputation for being one of the most efficient and effective court systems in the nation, and I am looking forward to being a part of it. On a personal note, I grew up in Philadelphia, so I am also excited about returning to the northeast."

## John Italiano Named Assistant Director of Support Services

By **Tamara Kendig**

Communications manager  
Administrative Office of the Courts

John Italiano has been named the assistant director of support services.

As assistant director, Italiano is responsible for the daily operations of the Support Services Division within the Office of Management and Administrative Services at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

He oversees court security and security of all Judiciary facilities, facilities management and health and safety for the entire Judicial branch.

These duties include telecommunications, construction projects and printing services. He also serves as liaison to trial court management and to officials in the executive and legislative branches regarding security, facilities, and health and safety issues.

"John has proven himself a valued member of our management team," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts. "I am delighted that he will be taking on a larger role in our organization where his experience, commitment and leadership skills will serve the Judiciary very well."

A graduate of St. Joseph's University, Italiano has more than 33 years'



John Italiano

experience in administrative services, including 23 years in private industry.

He joined the Judiciary in 2003 as operations manager, first in the Bergen Vicinage and then in the Burlington Vicinage.

In 2012 he was named support services administrator for the AOC. In this role, he has overseen statewide court and general security, facilities management, health and safety, emergency planning, continuity of operations plans, ADA accommodations, office services, and fleet services.

"I am honored to serve the Judiciary in this new role," said Italiano. "I have enjoyed working with judges and staff in the vicinages and at the AOC, and I look forward to continuing those relationships and to working with other Judiciary managers and staff to ensure the ongoing success of our operations."

## Monmouth Vicinage Panels Target Backlog

By **Jennifer F. Nemeth**

Civil Division Manager  
Monmouth Vicinage

A new program in the Monmouth Vicinage aims to reduce civil division backlog through alternative dispute resolution.

The program, which was developed by Monmouth Vicinage Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson and Civil Presiding Judge David F. Bauman, pairs an experienced plaintiffs' attorney and an experienced defense attorney to create a panel. Each panel conferences cases selected by the court, including automobile and personal injury cases.

During the conferences, panelists make recommendations for settlements based on their experience.

About 44 experienced attorneys were selected to act as panelists. The first panel sessions were conducted in June.

Of the initial cases sent before the panels, 87 out of 141, or 62 percent, have been settled.

Panelists and litigants agreed the program promotes communication and is an ideal way to settle cases.



Burlington Vicinage Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder, flanked by (from left) Judges John L. Call Jr., Patricia Richmond, Karen L. Suter and Marc M. Baldwin, calls to order the annual Opening of the Courts and memorial service for deceased judges in September. The ceremony marks the traditional start of the court year and is an opportunity to remember and recognize the accomplishments of judges, Judiciary staff and members of the legal profession who died during the previous year. The Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage also held a ceremony.

## AOC's Michael Garrahan Named Recipient of National Award Played Key Role In Development of New Jersey Judiciary's Jury System

The National Center for State Courts has selected Michael Garrahan, programs and procedures specialist for the Administrative Office of the Courts, as the recipient of the 2013 G. Thomas Munsterman Award for Jury Innovation.

The Munsterman Award recognizes states, local courts, organizations or individuals that have made significant improvements or innovations in jury procedures, operations and practices.

Garrahan has played a critical role in redeveloping New Jersey's jury system for almost 20 years.

"Michael's accomplishments are quite impressive," says NCSC President Mary C. McQueen. "He improved New Jersey's jury system by working with all types of stakeholders, as well as addressed issues and problems as varied as state legislation, state and local court rules and practices, jury automation and public outreach and education."

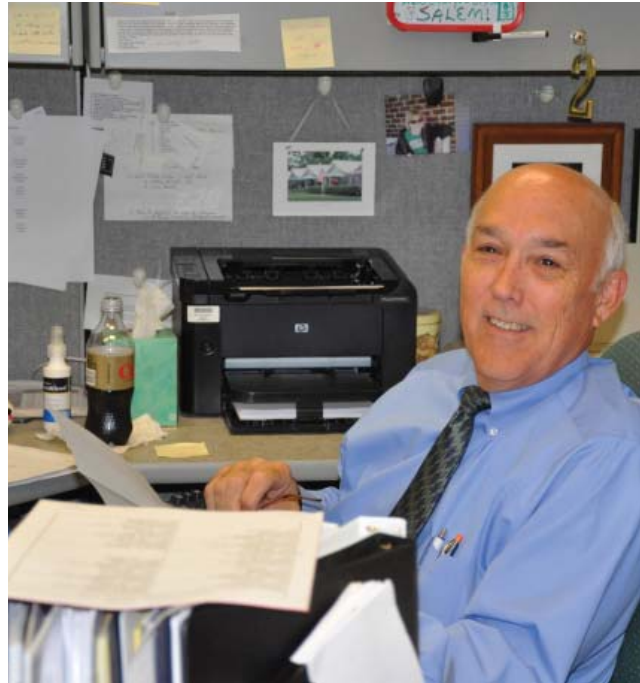
In the early 1990s, Garrahan worked with the Law Revision Commission to broaden the jury pool and to make the juror selection process fairer. He worked with IT professionals to execute a new statewide Jury Automated System, or JAS.

Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, offered high praise for Garrahan's work.

"Mike has been a leader in jury improvement initiatives launched in our state over the past two decades," he said. "His enthusiasm for making the jury experience convenient, informative and pleasant is woven through those improvements, from statewide standards to technology innovations such as online summons responses and texts to jurors about their service. We are proud to see him honored on the national stage."

Garrahan recently helped upgrade JAS to introduce contemporary telecommunications technologies in order to enhance communication between the New Jersey trial courts and jurors.

Garrahan also has worked with New Jersey's Supreme Court Committee on Jury Selection in Civil and Criminal Trials to draft court rules introducing important innovations to improve juror comprehension,



Michael Garrahan, programs and procedures specialist for the Administrative Office of the Courts, is the recipient of the 2013 G. Thomas Munsterman Award for Jury Innovation.

performance and satisfaction. He also developed statewide jury management standards and best practices and continues to advise local jury managers on legal issues as they arise.

"The National Center for State Courts was impressed with the long list of accomplishments that Michael Garrahan achieved during his 20 year tenure in New Jersey," remarked Paula Hannaford-Agor, director of the NCSC Center for Jury Studies.

"We commend his exceptional efforts of improving nearly every aspect of the jury management system in the Garden State and are incredibly pleased to honor him with this award," she said.

Hannaford-Agor and NCSC Executive Vice President Robert Baldwin will present Garrahan with the Munsterman Award during the Michael O'Brien Memorial Staff College on Nov. 26 in Princeton.



### Mission Statement of the New Jersey Courts

*We are an independent branch of government constitutionally entrusted with the fair and just resolution of disputes in order to preserve the rule of law and to protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and this State.*