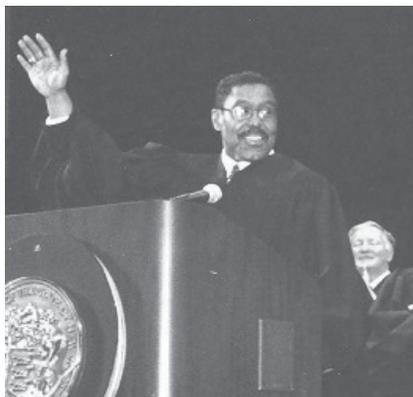


# Supreme Court Welcomes Justice Wallace

On June 4, Appellate Judge John E. Wallace Jr. was sworn in as Associate Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, succeeding Associate Justice James H. Coleman Jr. who retired in May. The public swearing-in followed a private oath of office ceremony held May 20.

Some 800 well-wishers filled Wilson Hall at Rowan University in Glassboro as Justice Wallace took the oath of office administered by Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz. Justice Wallace's wife, Barbara, held the Bible during the



**Justice John E. Wallace Jr.**

ceremony as their five children looked on.

"I believe that each person on our court makes his or her unique and special contribution to the group, and I know that Justice Wallace will make his mark in his own way," said the Chief Justice. "He has heard many difficult cases and made difficult and sometimes unpopular choices because he followed the law as he best understood its meaning. We can ask no more of any judge."

The program, filled with emotional expressions of joy, appreciation and affection for a

*Continued on page 10*

# Judiciary Times

Summer 2003

The newsletter of the New Jersey Judiciary

## Higgins, Domingo and Gould Assume Leadership Roles

**Director of Management and Administration  
Christina P. Higgins**



Christina P. Higgins, who served as a liaison between the Executive Branch's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Judiciary, has been appointed director of Management and Administrative Services. She succeeds Frank C. Farr who retired effective July 1.

Assistant director of management services with the Judiciary from 1999 until her appointment as director, Higgins brings a wealth of experience and expertise to her new role, including background with Medicaid and Human Services, as well as OMB.

*Continued on page 3*

**Union Vicinage TCA  
Elizabeth Domingo**



A Judiciary employee for 16 years with a tireless commitment to customer service, Elizabeth "Liz" Domingo entered a new stage in her career in April when she was appointed trial court administrator (TCA) of the Union Vicinage. She succeeds John N. Miri, who retired.

"This is an exciting opportunity to use the knowledge and skills I've developed working in the Judiciary over the years," said Domingo from her office in the 15<sup>th</sup> floor of the Union County Courthouse in Elizabeth. Under the leadership of Assignment Judge

*Continued on page 4*

**Burlington Vicinage TCA  
Thomas M. Gould**



After living and working for most of his life in Ohio, Thomas M. Gould, the Burlington Vicinage's new trial court administrator (TCA) is finding the Garden State much to his liking.

"My wife, Jennie, and I and our four kids moved to eight acres

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### *Inside...*

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## N.J. Judge in New Brunswick, Federal Judge in Seattle Hear Mass Tort Experts Together at Videoconference

*The federal judge is in Seattle.*

*The state mass tort judge is in New Brunswick*

*A dozen national experts are testifying over a period of three days.*

*The hearings take place entirely through videoconferencing.*

*Judiciary Times* is prepared by Communication Services, Office of Public Affairs, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for employees of the Judiciary and volunteers who work with the court system.

The Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court is Deborah T. Poritz. The Administrative Director of the Courts is Richard J. Williams.

Please e-mail short news articles saved as Word documents, photos and/or suggestions to: [Linda.Holt@judiciary.state.nj.us](mailto:Linda.Holt@judiciary.state.nj.us) or send disk, photos and paper copy to: Editor, *Judiciary Times*, Office of Public Affairs, PO Box 037, Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex, Trenton NJ 08625-0037. Submissions are subject to editing, and not all can be published.

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other Judiciary staff who contributed articles and photographs.

At one time, this would have sounded like the stuff of science fiction.

Now, thanks to a groundbreaking partnership between the New Jersey Judiciary and a federal court in Washington state, the virtual courtroom has arrived.

“The quality is tremendous,” said Judge Marina Corodemus, civil judge in the Middlesex Vicinage. Judge Corodemus, one of five of the state’s mass tort judges, sat during the hearings in her New Brunswick chambers. “I just couldn’t believe how good it was!”

The videoconferenced hearings not only provided extraordinary quality and uniformity of justice, but also saved litigants, the court system and taxpayers thousands of dollars in time and money.

New Jersey is the first state to partner with a federal court in real-time, mass tort hearings conducted through videoconferencing. The subject of the hearings was the PPA mass tort dealing with the adverse effects of the drug, phenylpropanolamine, at one time a common ingredient in cold and allergy medicines. The drug has been linked with hemorrhagic stroke and other conditions.

But for some courts, videoconferencing is so new that attorneys for both the plaintiffs and the defendants had to rent equipment in order for Judge Barbara Rothstein of United States District Court, Western District of Washington, to participate from her Seattle courtroom. New Jersey’s courts already are fully equipped for videoconferencing.

“The New Jersey Judiciary is a leader in the delivery of quality services to the public through leading-edge technologies,” said Judge Richard J. Williams, administrative director of the courts. “Ours was one of the first court systems to establish a videoconferencing network in every courthouse in the state. The mass tort hearings are yet another example of New Jersey’s leadership in expanding services, reducing costs and improving quality through technology.”

The PPA hearings provided an opportunity to bring together resources on a state and federal level.

“PPA suits have been filed all over the country,” noted Michelle Perone, chief of civil court programs in the Administrative Office of the Courts. “In New Jersey, PPA suits were centralized and transferred to Judge Corodemus. In essence, this videoconference served both the entire federal system *and* a multitude of New Jersey vicinages.” The hearings fall under Federal Rules of Evidence 702/703.

During the hearings, held three consecutive days in May, the judges heard four experts a day (the experts testified “live” in the Seattle courtroom).

As a “bonus,” the videoconference was saved as a video. Now other courts can refer to the videotape for actual expert witness testimony, Judge Corodemus said.

“Technology can solve so many problems,” said the judge, who has been active with mass torts for some seven years. “I wish I had this technology seven years ago. This is why America’s so great!” she added with a smile.

# Christina P. Higgins Named Director Of Management and Administrative Services

Continued from page 1

But it is her unique combination of leadership ability, technical skills, vision and values that ultimately resulted in her selection as one of the senior administrative leaders in the Judiciary.

“I have worked with Chris for four years and know she is a quick study, a creative and innovative thinker and someone who is a team player,” said Frank Farr as he prepared for his retirement. “I strongly recommended her to take over the reins, and I know Judge Williams was pleased to make the announcement of her appointment.

“Chris is ever ready to support her staff, as well as her co-workers in other units. For me, she has been a trusted colleague and she will always be counted among my friends. I wish her well,” Frank added.

In an interview this spring, Higgins reflected on the origins of her interests and abilities and how, unintentionally and in hindsight, they seemed to build a pathway to her current role.

“My parents were immigrants from Germany and Ukraine, and always encouraged my brother and me to

work hard and do our best,” Higgins reflected. “A first-generation American, I was the first person in my family to go to college.”

Growing up in the Flemington area, Higgins remembers always being fascinated by mathematics.

“I was the ‘nerdy’ girl in the math Olympics,” she recalled with a laugh. Even in the early grades, she would tell her teachers about easier ways to solve math problems. “In second-grade, I remember being just so intrigued by fractions,” she admitted.

But Higgins also loved to learn more about people and what makes us tick. So following a six-week National Science Foundation archeological dig in her junior year of high school, she decided to combine her aptitude for math and science with her interest in

people by studying anthropology at the University of Delaware.

While pursuing her studies, she worked summers with the Medicaid regional office for the Hunterdon, Somerset, Warren County area.

After graduation, she applied for a position with the state as a social worker and soon became part of a Medicaid review team that evaluated elderly people for services in their homes.

After three years, she was recruited to work in the procedures unit as an analyst and helped to maintain 18 provider manuals in topics such as pharmaceutical and mental health services. Higgins maintained policies and procedures for the entire program. “This was definitely the place to develop writing skills,” she said.

After some time, Medicaid tapped Higgins to serve as a liaison between the state and the payers of the health care providers (Blue Cross in Newark and Prudential, then in Millville). In this position, she traveled more and was responsible for the management role of holding contractors to their responsibilities.

“After two years in this position, I realized that I needed to learn

more about finance,” she said.

Shortly thereafter, she moved to the Human Services central office where she managed the federal funding unit. Part of that experience involved putting together a computer monitoring system, which gave Higgins valuable IT experience as well.

While in Human Services, Higgins oversaw the daily draw and accounting for some \$2 billion a year in federal assistance.

After Higgins completed a Master of Arts in Public Administration degree from Rider University, she was offered the position of payroll manager in OMB in 1991.



**Christina P. Higgins**

Continued on page 16

# Elizabeth Domingo Brings 16 Years Experience...

Continued from page 1

Edward W. Beglin Jr., the vicinage has 24 judges and 512 employees. The TCA is the Union Vicinage's senior court administrator who is not a judge.

Most recently the assistant trial court administrator in Morris/Sussex, Domingo brings to her new role a passion for serving others, an impressive background in management and teambuilding, and a strong work ethic instilled from childhood by her parents.

Born in the Bronx, Domingo was the eldest of four children. Her parents immigrated from Puerto Rico, where much of Domingo's family continues to live today.

"From the earliest, we were encouraged to go to school and work," Domingo recalled. "We learned the importance of an occupation or career. My father would take us to his butcher shop on weekends and have us learn to do things: put out the ice for meatpacking, organize his papers, sweep the floor. We moved a lot, but we never wanted for anything and learned the value of service and hard work."

The family moved to Jersey City where Domingo excelled at school. "I was quite the book-worm," she admitted, "loving to read historical novels and anything I could get my hands on. I used to read a book a week, in addition to my schoolwork. But above all, I wanted to do something to help society and to go to law school."

After graduation from the McNair Academic High School, Domingo was accepted at Seton Hall University where she studied pre-law and legal history. "We had very good teachers. Father

Driscoll treated us as though we were already law students!" she said.

Domingo worked her way through Seton Hall as a trainer of bank tellers, and later put herself through Seton Hall Law School while working as a probation



**Elizabeth Domingo**  
(photo by N. Southard)

officer in Hudson County, her first Judiciary position. Before long, she was an attorney and hired as assistant jury manager and later, jury manager, a role that taught her the importance of the public's perceptions about the court system.

"It wouldn't be unusual to have more than 300 people on Hudson's juries in a given week," she noted. "Our focus was on the public. We were directly responsible for their needs and comfort." While working with juries in Hudson from 1987 to 1995, Domingo also learned the importance of "being in the front line...and thinking outside of the box."

Domingo's career continued to develop as she became Hudson's assistant civil division manager with the special civil part division.

"I have been fortunate to work with so many excellent judges and staff over the years," reflected Domingo. "I think the world of Chief Justice (Deborah T.) Poritz and Judge (Richard J.) Williams. And it's an honor to work with Assignment Judge (Edwin W.) Beglin. He is a truly brilliant individual.

"When I was with special civil in Hudson, what a pleasure it was to work with Judge (Patricia) Costello. She was the presiding judge at the time. She was excellent, and I learned so much." Domingo spoke warmly of Assignment Judge Arthur N. D'Italia, "who is so supportive of change and service to the public." Domingo said she also enjoyed working with Joseph F. Davis, now Hudson TCA, during her years with the vicinage.

"During her 12 years in the Hudson Vicinage, Liz proved herself as a confident, progressive and innovative manager," Davis reflected recently. "She was admired by her peers for her professionalism and incredible work ethic. None of us is surprised by her recent appointment as the Union County TCA," he added.

While Domingo was in Hudson, the Judiciary moved from county-based courts to a unified, statewide system, opening doors of communication between divisions and counties. "I really enjoy the camaraderie and working relationships with other vicinages and divisions," she said. "We have the same goals, we're not in a vacuum. It's great to be able to pick up the phone and call

Continued on page 5

## ...to Role as Union Trial Court Administrator

Continued from page 4

a colleague in another part of the state and ask a question or share information.”

In 1997, Domingo became assistant TCA for Morris/Sussex, assigned to the Newton Courthouse where she learned about and was responsible for the various trial court divisions as well as all areas of administration, from calendar assignments to volunteers. Throughout her work with the Judiciary, she continued to upgrade her managerial skills through National Center of State Courts courses, the Certified Public Manager program and classes offered by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

“It really was excellent preparation for the scope of responsibilities of the TCA,” she said. So excellent, in fact, that when the position announcement for the Union TCA was posted, she read it through and thought, “I think I can do that!” The rest is history.

What Domingo likes most about her new role is the variety of functions, working with the assignment judge on what he thinks needs to be done, and the opportunity to offer quality customer service to a larger segment of the public.

In addition to the skills and experience she brings to Union, Domingo also is a role model for others as the first Hispanic woman to serve as TCA. “The Judiciary, like society at large, is more inclusive now,” she noted. “When I first started working, I remember being told by someone that women shouldn’t try to compete with men in the workforce. Thanks to laws and the media, that has changed.” In Sussex, she said, 80 percent of the workforce was women, including a large percentage of vicinage managers.

“We have many judges and senior managers who are women,” Domingo said. “The Judiciary, like our state in general, is increasingly diverse, with many cultures and flavors. I think that is a good thing.” Domingo’s family, including husband Edward Domingo, and their two children, Sarah, age 6, and Alex, 1, are supportive of her career in the justice system.

While there is still so much to plan and accomplish, Domingo was thoughtful for a moment when asked what she would like to be remembered for many years in the future.

“As someone who worked hard...and listened to others,” she said with a smile.

—Linda Brown Holt

## Harvard Law School Establishes Scholarship In Honor of Judge June Strelecki



This spring, the Harvard Law School Association of New Jersey held a reception in Summit in honor of the Judge June Strelecki, retired judge of New Jersey Superior Court.

The event was coordinated with Celebration 50, a conference held at Harvard Law School (HLS) in May to recognize and celebrate 50 years of women graduates.

Harvard Law School began admitting women in 1950, and the HLS class of 1953 was the first to include female graduates.

As a member of the class of 1955, Judge Strelecki was among

the first women to graduate from HLS. During her career in New Jersey, Judge Strelecki served not only as a Superior Court Judge, but also as the first female assistant prosecutor in Essex County, the first female prosecutor to try a murder case, and the first female director of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

In honor of Judge Strelecki, the Harvard Law School Association of New Jersey made a contribution to HLS in the amount of \$7,500, to be used to fund a scholarship to help a New Jersey woman attend her alma mater.

Attended by more than 900 graduates and their guests, Cel-

ebration 50 is thought to have been the largest gathering of women lawyers and HLS alumni of either gender in the history of Harvard Law School. Speakers at Celebration 50 included the Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, HLS ‘59, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court; Janet Reno, HLS ‘63, former Attorney General of the United States; Mary Robinson, HLS ‘68, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the former President of Ireland; and Professor Elena Kagan, HLS ‘86, who became dean of Harvard Law School on July 1.

# Burlington TCA Tom Gould Puts People...

Continued from page 1

in Medford,” he said recently from his office in the County Courts Facility in Mount Holly. An older daughter is in college. “We had a farm in Ohio where I was administrator and chief deputy clerk of courts in Hamilton County. It gave the kids a chance to gather eggs, to ride horses. I think it’s important for kids to grow up with something beside video games and TV.”

One of the state’s most agricultural counties, Burlington is a good match for the new TCA. While living in Hamilton County in a suburb of Cincinnati, the Goulds maintained the family farm in nearby



**Thomas M. Gould**

(Photo by L. Holt)

Adams County where, 40 minutes away from the nearest house, they raised livestock and produce and donated much of it to local people.

“With a 31 percent unemployment rate, Adams County is probably the poorest county in the state,” Gould said. “These are Appalachian families who years before came to Ohio from Arkansas, West Virginia and Alabama. Many lived in houses with dirt floors with no running water or electricity. What for us was a weekend getaway became to the local people a source of food and a place to keep their tools and animals. In turn, they looked after the place for us when we were away. It was a positive, symbiotic relationship.”

The idealism that sustained the Goulds in Ohio is helping them adapt to a new state where their children recently saw the ocean for the first time. And it forms the basis of a values-based philosophy

as Gould takes on the challenges of administering the court system for New Jersey’s geographically largest county.

Gould’s interests in both the courts and philosophy can be traced back to his earliest years. Both his father and grandfather were attorneys. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the University of Cincinnati, where he specialized in mathematical logic, the branch of philosophy that deals with systems, patterns and connections. Following a family tradition, he earned the J.D. degree from the University of Michigan Law School and entered private practice.

After nine years of practice, Gould was ready for a new challenge and became vice president of Marketech, Inc., a national marketing research firm that grew and won recognition for excellence during his tenure. He sold his interest in the business after seven years and returned to private practice for a period of time before accepting an opportunity to lead Ohio’s largest clerk of courts operation in Hamilton County. He was responsible for more than 360 employees in more than 20 facilities operating 24 hours per day, every day of the year.

## Different than in Ohio

“Things are done much differently in Ohio courts,” he reflected, noting that all judges are elected, not appointed as they are in New Jersey. “This creates a highly political context for all court activities,” he said. In Ohio, judges usually begin their careers as appointees filling vacancies, and then are eligible for re-election every six years.

Ohio courts are divided into municipal, common pleas (comparable to New Jersey’s Superior Court) and appellate. Unlike New Jersey, there is no unification, with 88 sets of rules for 88 counties, Gould noted. “It made it very difficult for people moving across counties to have the same experience of justice,” he observed. “If you didn’t have ‘the secret handshake,’ you would be out of luck!”

At the same time, there was more autonomy for leaders in the county courts. “If we wanted to install a new computer system, we just did it,” he said. In Ohio, he was personally accountable for the county court’s finances. As a result of natural inclination, business experience and his independent work in the Ohio court system, Gould developed an energetic

Continued on page 7

## ...at the Heart of Court Administration

Continued from page 6

entrepreneurial style that invites change and rewards innovation, he said.

Appointed TCA by Judge Richard J. Williams on the recommendation of Assignment Judge John A. Sweeney, Gould succeeded Richard J. Callanan who retired as TCA last year. Since moving into his new office in March, Gould has begun implementing actions to achieve his goals.

“On the local level, staff need to make sure that whatever a judge *needs* done, *gets* done,” he said. “We also need to be responsive to the public and the bar, making sure that we have a sound operation. There needs to be a dependable process for identifying problems and fixing them.”

Gould also stressed a good relationship with the county. “They own the building, but what else do we have in common?” he asked. “We need to dialogue and determine our mutual concerns.”

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### Bar Section Honors Thomas Farrell



**Service to the Bar Award**—Thomas Farrell (right), manager of Complementary Dispute Resolution Programs with the Judiciary’s Administrative Office of the Courts, received the Service to the Bar Award from the dispute resolution section of the New Jersey State Bar Association on May 15. Shown with him are Bonnie Blume Goldsamt, former dispute resolution section chair; and Robert E. Margulies, current chair of the dispute resolution section, winner of the section’s Boskey Award. Farrell received a plaque which acknowledges “...his extraordinary service to the dispute resolution community and unparalleled dedication to complementary dispute resolution and its integration into the practice of law in New Jersey.” (Photo by J. Beckner courtesy of the New Jersey State Bar Association.)

### A Career Pathway...a “Calling”

Gould is a “big believer in training,” and understands that the best technicians may not always make the best managers. “People making the transition need training on how to supervise,” he said. “Staff need to think of their employment in terms of a career pathway, leading to a specific destination. In a way, it’s also a calling. Each staff person needs to ask him- or herself, ‘How can I as a person fit into the system?’”

As part of his commitment to understanding and communicating with all the courts in the vicinage, Gould is spending time making personal visits to courthouses throughout the county, which stretches from the Delaware River to the Atlantic Ocean.

“Ultimately, this job is about people: the people who run the courts and the people who visit them,” he said, gazing past the large windows overlooking the shade trees, spires and rooftops of Mount Holly. “What’s really important is to know how to translate these memos...” he flipped through a foot-tall stack of papers on his desk, “...and to break them down into information people can use. That’s why I’m here, and I’m eager to do it.”

—Linda Brown Holt

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### Putting Customers First



**May We Help You?**—Ocean Vicinage staff take turns greeting court customers weekday mornings. Shown taking a turn at making visitors feel at home are (left to right): Kathy Sabo, civil division; Maria Rotunno, probation; and Michael Carpenter, family division. (Photo by W. Mecca)

## Safe & Sound

# Alertness is the Best Defense against Danger

by Arlene M. Bonville, Court Access Services



We all want to be safe, no matter where we are or what we're doing. I hope this story will help you in that endeavor.

If you've ever attended college, you know what it's like to take course after course, only to forget everything you've learned the day after the final exam. All that time and energy spent and *poof* – it's gone. Frustrating? You bet. Then there's that one course that you remember for years and years because it had such an impact on you.

I'll tell you about that one special course that I remember.

Seven years ago when I was attending Bucks County Community College, I took a course called *Personal Safety*. My teacher was about five-foot-two inches tall, weighed about 125 pounds (probably soaking wet), taught Tai Chi Chuan and loved the martial arts.

He was going to teach us how to defend ourselves if we were ever attacked: not to overtake our attacker, but to distract them by applying sudden force to certain parts of their body, hurting them just enough to escape and call for help. We learned how to administer kicks to the shins, elbows to the stomach, punches to the throat, pokes to the eyes, slaps to the ears and knee thrusts to the groin – moves that made us all feel like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan. It was great!

After several weeks of class, he was able to identify each of us on sight. He announced that he had a challenge for us. He would prove that most people do not pay attention to their surroundings and that women in particular have a habit of putting themselves in vulnerable situations.

This was his plan: Our class was held from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m., with normal arrival of students between 6:40 p.m. and 6:55 p.m. He would be roaming the campus during this 15-minute period; we would not know where he was, but he would be able to identify any one of us. He would be armed with little sticky notes. If he could get close

enough to slap one of these little devils on any of us before we saw him and yelled, "Stop!" then whoever got caught would have to do 20 push-ups in front of the whole class.

I vowed that I would not be caught off guard. For weeks I walked to class looking like I was paranoid – my eyes darted left and right, I did complete turns to check behind me, around corners and on roofs of buildings, behind bushes. There was no doubt that I was aware of my surroundings. I got peculiar looks from people, but I would not fall victim and fail. Until...

I was late. I jumped out of my car, grabbed my backpack, locked the car door and started running. I had about five minutes to get to class. It was dusk, so the brightness of the sun was disappearing. I was oblivious to everything around me.

Instead of keeping my eyes constantly moving in all directions and being cognizant of all sights and sounds, I was digging in my backpack as I was running, trying to put my keys away, yanking out my bottle of water and making sure I had all my books. I looked up quickly and noticed that there was no one around, but I was too busy running to hear heavy footsteps behind me and feel the gripping hand on my shoulder. I heard a raspy voice say, "Got 'ya. I finally got 'ya."

I felt panic and fear in the pit of my stomach. I turned quickly, ready to strike. I was relieved and annoyed at the same time to see my teacher standing there with a grin on his face, victorious. All I could think was that it could have been real – by being distracted, unfocused, and unaware, even just one time – *I could have been a real victim!*

So the next time you're rushing off somewhere, late as usual, and not paying attention, someone may be paying close attention to you! Think about it.

(PS. Yes, I *did* have to do those 20 push-ups in front of the class!)

## Tech-KNOWLEDGE-y



# Set Your Sites for Summer

by Janet Bastien, Project Manager, Information Technology

Don't let the summer solstice pass without surfing some Web sites crammed with ideas for summer fun. Grab your mouse and get clicking to discover the possibilities available right in your own back yard at the New Jersey state Web site, [www.state.nj.us](http://www.state.nj.us). Click on either "Attractions, Arts, Sports, Recreation" in the center of the page or go directly to the Travel and Tourism homepage via the link on the left. You'll be faced with more choices than mosquitoes on a June night in Jersey. Golfing, shopping, camping, wineries... ideas for everyone from the gardener to the history.

If you're short on vacation time (does anybody ever have enough?), take one of the site's "Virtual Tours," so you can be sure the adventure you select will appeal to you before you even set out. You'll find a variety of possibilities for day trips and long weekends from sea to shining sea, that is, the Camden waterfront to the Jersey shore, and all the gardens, historical sites and recreational opportunities in between. If you're on the lookout for lighthouses, the Travel and Tourism site will point you to each New Jersey beacon, and then link directly to The New Jersey Lighthouse Society's Web site at <http://njlhs.burlco.org>. Here, learn more about lighthouses and find out how to spend your summer practicing for the "Lighthouse Challenge" this fall: visiting New Jersey's 11 points of light in one week-end!

Is golf your bag? More than 200 golf courses is par for New Jersey. Click on the link along side the Virtual tours or go directly to [www.state.nj.us/travel/golfing.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/travel/golfing.shtml). This site provides you with directions, course descriptions and specs, even photos. Shooting birdie is up to you.

Take time to smell the roses, and the lilies, the irises and herbs. Find out why our home state is truly the Garden State by clicking on the site's Virtual Garden Tour (or directly at [www.state.nj.us/travel/virtual/gardens/index.html](http://www.state.nj.us/travel/virtual/gardens/index.html)). Walk through some of the many beautiful public gardens and pick some ideas for your own flower patch.

If you just can't stand the summer heat, you can shop 'til you drop at the malls and shopping villages

listed at <http://www.state.nj.us/travel/shopper.shtml>. Coordinate a day of bargain hunting with some pampering at a spa or winery; they are all on the same page, with a drop down listing by town.

Channel all that summer energy and lend a hand to help others, at [www.nj.com/cc/volunteer](http://www.nj.com/cc/volunteer). You'll find volunteer opportunities, as well as be able to post a volunteer need or build a free Web site for your non-profit or community group.

It seems like you could spend your whole summer in New Jersey, but if you want to stray farther from home, some interesting sites to check out are:

- [www.gophila.com](http://www.gophila.com): for a trip across the Delaware to the City of Brotherly Love;
- [www.valleyforge.org](http://www.valleyforge.org): for a taste of American revolutionary history, and info on shopping, gardens and festivals nearby;
- [www.travel.org](http://www.travel.org): for travel destinations anywhere in the world (lodging, transportation and reviews from those who have been there, done that);
- [www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org): home of the American Community Gardening Association, a non-profit group supporting community gardening in urban and rural areas;
- [www.gocampingamerica.com](http://www.gocampingamerica.com): a directory of RV parks and campgrounds in the United States and Canada listed by state or province;
- [www.virtualcities.com](http://www.virtualcities.com): another worldwide travel site, listing lodging by type and various interests (dude ranches, pet friendly, spots ideal for weddings or certain sports, and providing recipes from selected inns).

If you're looking for someone to share your summer, look up some old buddies at [www.classmates.com](http://www.classmates.com). But if you'd rather have a companion who won't tell you how fat or gray you've gotten since high school, try [www.petfinder.org](http://www.petfinder.org), for a four-legged companion to lick the sweat off your nose.

If all this activity makes you weary, just kick back Jimmy Buffet style and watch the sun sink into the bay. Go to <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/>, the US Naval Observatory Data Services site to calculate the time of sunset (as well as sunrise, moonrise and moonset) for any tiki bar in the world.

## Colleagues Pay Tribute to “...a Most Extraordinary Jurist”

Continued from page 1

beloved judge from southern New Jersey, also included remarks by Gov. James E. McGreevey; Judge Sylvia B. Pressler, presiding judge for administration of the Appellate Division; and retired Assignment Judge Samuel G. DeSimone. In addition, the program included an emotional rendition of the National Anthem by Michael Jones and a beautiful selection on the harp by Heather Gilstrap.

calling the new Justice “a most extraordinary jurist.” Justice Wallace served as an appellate judge for 10 years prior to his appointment to the state’s highest court.

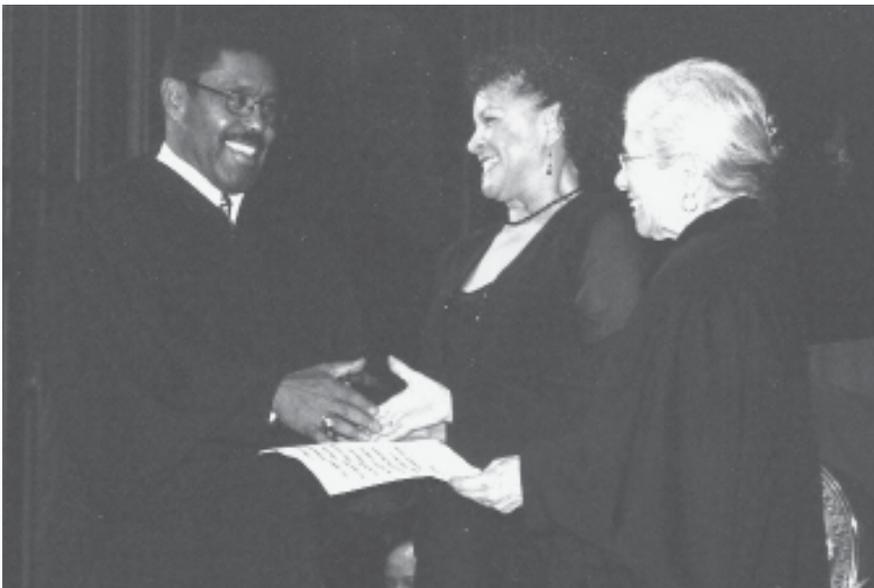
“To define the qualities one would, in a perfect world, hope for in a Supreme Court Justice is to define John Wallace,” Judge Pressler said, noting that he was an example of a “gentleman and a scholar.”

DeSimone, assignment judge in Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem during then-Judge Wallace’s tenure on Superior Court. “Even guilty parties felt they got a fair trial from him. He put the same effort into a small claims case that he would put into a case involving a large contract.”

Gov. McGreevey, whose nomination led to Justice Wallace’s appointment, praised the new Justice’s intelligence, expertise and diligence. “He will be a champion for the rights of our citizens,” the Governor said.

The comments made at the public swearing-in ceremony reflect comments made by other judges who have worked with Justice Wallace over the years. Appellate Judge James J. Ciancia, who sat on a five-judge part with then-Judge Wallace during the past year, had equal praise for the new Justice’s legal abilities and human qualities.

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**Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz** congratulates Justice John E. Wallace Jr. as Barbara Wallace looks on.

Retiring Justice Coleman and the other members of the Supreme Court joined the Wallace family and other dignitaries, including three former Justices and Attorney General Peter C. Harvey, on stage during the ceremony.

“You have to be living on another planet—or at least in another state—not to be aware of the euphoria that swept through the legal community when John’s nomination to the New Jersey Supreme Court was announced,” said Judge Pressler in her remarks,

A graduate of Harvard Law School, Justice Wallace served as a superior court judge in the Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Vicinage from 1982 to 1992. Previously he served as a municipal court judge in Washington Township. He is the first Justice to be appointed from southern New Jersey since Justice Vincent S. Haneman of Brigantine, who served from 1960 to 1971.

“One of Justice Wallace’s most striking attributes is his attentiveness to every litigant,” said Judge



**Judge Samuel G. DeSimone**

# Supreme Court Associate Justice John E. Wallace Jr.

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“It’s hard to exaggerate his qualities,” said Judge Ciancia. “I’ve never heard a negative word about him. He is a rare, rare person.”

In his own remarks after taking the oath of office, Justice Wallace spoke not of himself, but



**Musical Talent--** Heather Gilstrap and Michael Jones shared their talent during the ceremony.

of the many other people who have played important roles in his life, professionally and personally.

He congratulated Justice Coleman on this retirement, characterizing him as “a dedicated family man who has served our Supreme Court with great distinction. (His) unending quest for justice and fairness will live on through his thoughtful opinions,” he added.

Justice Wallace thanked the Chief Justice, Governor, Judge Pressler and other judges and state leaders for their support, and expressed his gratitude for being raised “in a loving and stable family” by his late parents, John and Evelyn Wallace. He spoke warmly of his wife Barbara and of their five children—John III, Andrea Lynn, Kimberly Denise, Michele Eileen and Michael—and

acknowledged others from his family, community and the courts.

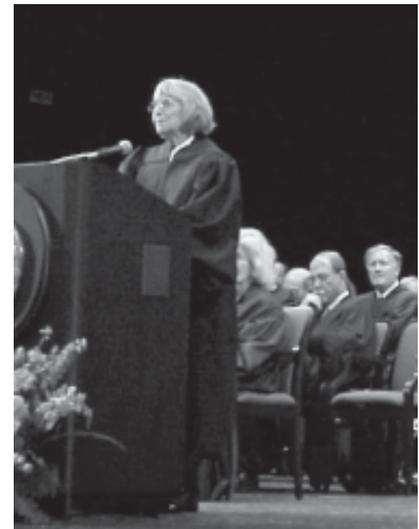
Both Justice and Barbara Wallace are known throughout the southern part of the state for their selfless devotion to young people. He coaches high school football and Babe Ruth baseball, while Barbara has been active as a volunteer with Special Olympics, Girl Scouts and gymnastics.

“John hasn’t demonstrated a place at either end of the political spectrum,” Judge Ciancia said. “He looks at every case individually. He brings depth to his deliberations and has seen it all, from trial courts to appellate. He has a



**Best wishes--**Justice Wallace extends best wishes to retired Justice Coleman (above). The Wallaces sit with Gov. James E. McGreevey during the ceremony (right). (Photos by L. Holt)

very natural sympathy for the human condition.”



**Appellate Presiding Judge Pressler**

A resident of Washington Township, the Justice is a trustee with his alma mater, the University of Delaware and is a former trustee at Gloucester County College where his wife Barbara also served on the board. Justice Wallace served as a captain in the U.S. Army and is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Pitman.

Justice Wallace, and his secretary of 19 years, Sheila Silva, look forward to relocating his office space to Woodbury, where the Justice began his career in Superior Court.

--LBH





## E-Writ Program is Fast, Efficient

During the E-Writ Orientation Program at the Department of Corrections on May 15, Judiciary staff described the rollout of the automated writ-preparation program in the courts.

Mary Ann Byrne (right), assistant chief, automated court systems, AOC, said there are more than 500 users with inquiry access. Sue Callaghan (left), assistant criminal division manager, Essex Vicinage, described how the rollout took place at the county level. Further details about this program will be featured in a future edition of *Judiciary Times*.



## Union Vicinage Holds Seminar For Mediators and Arbitrators

by Lloyd Garner, Esq.  
Union Vicinage Assistant Civil Division Manager/  
Special Civil Part

Some 155 judges, attorneys, professionals and others attended the Third Annual Seminar for Union County's roster of certified mediators and the Sixth Annual Seminar for its roster of arbitrators on May 30. This was the largest turnout in the history of the seminars.

Under the direction of the Union Vicinage Assignment Judge Edward W. Beglin, Jr., this event has become an annual opportunity for the certified mediators and arbitrators of this vicinage to learn about new trends in complementary dispute resolution events and related statistics, review the guidelines for mediators and arbitrators, and observe the proper conduct protocols during CDR proceedings which included role playing and other mediation exercises.

This four-hour training seminar also satisfied the continuing legal education requirements of the Administrative Office of the Courts for the statewide and presumptive mediation programs. Union is the only vicinage that provides annual training for mediators and arbitrators. The service is provided free of charge.

Sandra Thaler-Gerber, Union Vicinage civil division manager has coordinated and facilitated this year's seminar as well as all prior seminars. She received assistance from the Union County Advisory Committee on Contract/Commercial Arbitration and Mediation whose membership

includes: Louis H. Miron, Russell M. Woods, Ben Zander, Harvey Fruchter and Laura M. McGeough. Michele Perone, chief of civil court programs for New Jersey, also provided invaluable assistance.

Two similar mediation seminars were held in 2001 and 2002 and arbitration seminars were held each year since 1998.

In opening remarks, Thaler-Gerber reflected on the significant impact that CDR events have had and the tremendous aid that it provides to the court system.

Following remarks by Judge Beglin and Judge William L'E. Wertheimer, presiding judge of the civil division for the Union Vicinage, presentations were made by members of the Union County's Advisory Committee on Contract/Commercial Arbitration and Mediation.

The program subsequently divided into 10 workshops. In each workshop, a facilitator acted as a mock mediator in a fictitious lawsuit scenario. Louis H. Miron prepared these role-playing sessions which allowed attendees to observe mock mediation sessions and actively participate and provide constructive criticism to each other. Evaluations collected at the end of the program reflected extraordinarily high praise for this highly popular and informative training seminar for mediators and commercial arbitrators.

Judge Beglin signed *Certificates of Completion* which were issued to the mediators at the conclusion of the training seminar.

## Arbitration Advisory Committee Considers Ideas Advanced at Statewide Conference

by Michelle V. Perone, Esq.  
Chief of Civil Court Programs

On May 29, a statewide conference on the uniform administration of court-annexed civil arbitration was held at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick. The conference was hosted by the Supreme Court Arbitration Advisory Committee, chaired by Ocean County Civil Presiding Judge Frank A. Buczynski Jr.



Jonathan M. Hyman (above), Siobhan A. Teare and Terry L. Trantina (above left) addressed participants from throughout the state (left). (Photos by T. Farrell)

Appointed by the Supreme Court to oversee the civil arbitration programs and recommend policies and procedures for the programs, enhancement of the civil arbitration programs, the committee consists of civil judges, members of the bar and court staff.

Attendees at the conference included members of the Conference of Civil Presiding Judges, key court staff, chairs of the county bar civil practice committees, chairs of the county bar arbitrator selection committees, representatives of the New Jersey State Bar Association, other bar representatives including members of the various specialty bar groups, and key users of the system including insurance carrier representatives.

The advisory committee's goal in holding this conference was to clarify how the arbitration pro-

gram is to be administered on a uniform statewide basis and to discuss possible enhancements to the program.

As a result of the discussions at the conference a number of very promising ideas were explored for ways to improve the arbitration programs. These are currently being considered by the committee, and a report will be made to the Conference of Civil Presiding Judges. It is hoped that this report will lead to a number of constructive and worthwhile improvements to the arbitration program.

### *We've Just Heard...*

#### **Staff Honored at Conferences**

Congratulations are due to vicinages and staff who received honors at the 21th Annual New Jersey Child Support Conference last year. The New Jersey Child Support Council, which sponsors the annual conference, makes awards in several categories based on nominations from the Department of Human Services, the Division of Family Development and the Judiciary's Administrative Office of the Courts. Awards included:

Family Division Award for County of the Year: Bergen Vicinage

Family Division Supervisor of the Year Award: Tanya Barr (Probation) and David Broselli (Family) of the Mercer Vicinage

Family Division Worker of the Year Award: Ocean Vicinage Team, led by Team Leader Patti Amor. Other team members are: Eve Holt, Patrick Conley, Erica Wich, Brian Giustozzi, Marion Shabinaw, Traci Martinet and Adela Ortiz-Esposito.

Probation Child Support Award for County of the Year: Hudson Vicinage

Probation Child Support Award for Supervisor of the Year: Michelle Tierney of Ocean Vicinage.

Probation Child Support Award for Worker of the Year: Lynn Price of the Bergen Vicinage.

Johanna Antonacci, Bergen family division manager and chair of the New Jersey Child Support Council, received a special award in recognition of her long-standing efforts to improve the child support program and for her efforts to encourage partnerships between divisions.

At a separate conference, Probation Officer Fernando Uribe, assigned to adult supervision in the Hudson Vicinage, was recognized as the Probation Officer of the Year. The award was announced at the annual Probation Association of New Jersey Conference held in Atlantic City last fall.

# Judicial Mentoring Program Encourages Young People in Morris/Sussex Vicinage

by Jacqueline Y. Reese, M.P.A.,  
Minority Concerns Liaison,  
Diana Gulick, Court Executive,  
Human Resources,  
John LaBarre,  
Criminal Division Manager

This year marks the sixth anniversary of the Judicial Mentoring Program for Young Minds of the Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns in the Morris/Sussex Vicinage. The program is dedicated to educating teens in Morris and Sussex Counties about the judicial system.

The program seeks to provide young people with accurate information about the Judiciary. The program takes place from September to December and includes six to seven segments. A selection committee, which consists of a diverse group of representatives from the minority community, chooses students according to established criteria. The Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns accepts nominations from teachers, counselors, parents and students.

Participants meet every other Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Following a briefing of the events for the day, they hear presentations from judges, court staff, agencies and others. The young people also visit local, state and federal agencies.

Court divisions and law enforcement agencies that have been supporters of the program from its inception volunteer their time to discuss their connection to the judicial system. Agency representatives share their experiences and speak passionately about their service to the community.

For example, a representative from the Victim Witness Program, which is an arm of the Morris County Prosecutor's Office, recently discussed how the criminal justice system has become sensitive to victims' rights and works toward improving the treatment of victims and witnesses.

A criminal division speaker discussed how the technological

advances through videoconferencing have improved service and reduced transportation costs for the county and state when defendants have court appearances in more than one county.

Students observed personally how law clerk mediation in the civil division helped litigants resolve disputes and eliminate hours spent in court. Probation division staff talked about juveniles and adults who are supervised by the courts.

To date, the Judicial Mentoring Program has gained local and state recognition due to the hard work and dedication of the Assignment Judge B. Theodore Bozonelis, Trial Court Administrator Michael J. Arnold, the Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns and staff members who share this vision.

Within the last six years, more than 30 students have embarked upon this wonderful experience. They have met and heard presentations from key figures in our New Jersey system of government such as retired Justice James H. Coleman Jr., the first African-American New Jersey State Supreme Court Justice; staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts; local municipal court judges; and a representative from the Commissioner of Corrections Office. Students also visited local municipal court and state female and juvenile corrections facilities.

Students already have begun to submit their requests to participate in the fall class. We anticipate that this will be an even more successful, fulfilling year.



**Learning How the Courts Work**—Judges, Judiciary staff and young people work together in the Judiciary Mentoring Program for Young Minds in the Morris/Sussex Vicinage. Shown left to right, first row are: Jairo Bentacourt, Anne Marie Robinson, Louada Ramsey, Lakia Holman, Kristen Jacobas, Elnora Walls, Judge Barbara Zucker-Zarett, Judge Reginald Stanton, Jacqueline Y. Reese; second row: Judge Susan Scott, Judge B. Theodore Bozonelis, Bette Simmons, Johnny Moore, Charles Roundtree, Kamal Kelly. (Photo by S. Woods)

# Vicinage 13 Volunteers Attend “A Lindbergh Trial Retrospective”

By Phyllis S. Pason  
Law Librarian, Somerset Courts

On May 5, volunteers from the Hunterdon/Somerset/Warren Vicinage (Vicinage 13) were honored at the historic Hunterdon County Courthouse in Flemington with “A Lindbergh Trial Retrospective.”

For the formal recognition ceremony, more than 100 volunteers, their guests and judiciary staff sat in Courtroom #1, the same courtroom where Bruno Richard Hauptmann went on trial in January 1935 for kidnapping and killing the 20-month-old son of Charles Lindbergh.

Also present in the audience were Judge Thomas H. Dilts, presiding judge, and Judge Stephen B. Rubin, both of the Family Division.

Judge Roger Mahon, presiding judge of General Equity spoke about the courthouse’s history in his opening remarks. Judge Mahon was the last judge to preside in the Ceremonial Courtroom of the Historic Courthouse.

Eugene Farkas, trial court administrator, presented a plaque to June Weissberg for 27 years of service to the Judiciary. Since her retirement, she volunteers in the Family Division.

Also recognized were Judiciary retirees Kathryn Mastice of Somerset County, who volunteers in the supervised visitation program, and Warren County’s Gayle Langner, who is a member of the Juvenile Conference Committee.

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## Correction

In the Spring 2003 edition of *Judiciary Times*, the article titled, “Sussex Partners with Nonprofit to Offer Childcare to Customers,” the United Way agency listed in the body of the article should have been Sussex, not Essex. Also, Sharon Giacchino is the director of the Child and Family Resource Services of NORWESCAP.

Angela Pardo, operations manager, presented Barbara Kelshaw, the Vicinage 13 volunteer coordinator with a framed photograph of the vicinage’s three courthouses. Barbara retired May 30.

Undersheriff Peter Harcar of the Hunterdon County Sheriff’s Department led 15-minute tours prior to and following the ceremony, for guests interested in more information about Courtroom #1 and Bruno Hauptmann’s jail cell.

The guest speaker was Harry Kazman, who taught and directed theater at Hunterdon Central Regional High School for 33 years prior to his retirement in June 2001.

He spoke about trial strategies and evidence, using replicas of evidence from his production of *Lindbergh & Hauptmann: The Trial of The Century*, presented at the historic courthouse annually since 1990.

Using an exact replica of the ladder found at the kidnapping site, Kazman demonstrated why he believed that Hauptmann did not act alone.

Specifically, he cited the ladder’s construction that makes it difficult for one individual to hoist the ladder, climb it and return to the ground carrying a child.

Following the ceremony, attendees enjoyed a dinner buffet at the Union Hotel, across the street from the Hunterdon County Courthouse.

For seven weeks in the winter of 1935, the hotel was the communications center for the trial.

Among its guests were Jack Benny, writers Dorothy Kilgallen and Damon Runyon, and radio commentator Walter Winchell. The jury was housed in the hotel, too.

During extensive renovations to the hotel, the embossed metal ceiling and some of the original terra cotta flooring from 1935 were preserved.



**Accepting Honor**—Barbara Kelshaw, the Vicinage 13 volunteer coordinator, accepts a framed photograph from Angela Pardo, the vicinage operations manager, with TCA Eugene Farkas in the background. Kelshaw retired May 30. (Photo by P. Semenick)

# Christina P. Higgins Named Director Of Management and Administrative Services

Continued from page 3

“I was managing the state payroll at the time when the courts unified the state’s judicial system,” Higgins recalled. “For months, I was in regular meetings with Frank Farr, Brooks Durbin (assistant director of human resources) and Gene Howard (chief of personnel, payroll and benefits).”

She even received a certificate of appreciation from the courts for her contributions to the unification process. “When I got the certificate, I never suspected I’d be working at the Judiciary within the next four years!” Higgins said.

Frank Farr recalled the start of his business dealings with Chris, “I had known Chris for many years while she was at OMB, but I was first exposed to her leadership abilities when she was overseeing the enormous task of moving 9,000 employees from 21 county payrolls to the state payroll.

“From the start, I saw a strong leader, with a no-

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## Southern Counties Salute Volunteers

In the spring, Vicinage 15 (Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem) honored its volunteers with a recognition dinner at Masso’s Crystal Manor Banquet Hall restaurant in Glassboro.

The 150 attendees listened to words of appreciation from Assignment Judge George H. Stanger, Jr.; Judge Diane B. Cohen, presiding judge for the family part; Judge David E. Krell, presiding judge for municipal courts; and James R. Castagnoli, trial court administrator.

A highlight of the evening was remarks by two of the three selected outstanding volunteers, Rev. A. Glen Doughty of the Westville Community Dispute Resolution Committee and Kimberly McKown-Strait of the Cumberland County Child Placement Review Board. Wyleen Perry of the Salem County Juvenile Conference Committee also was selected as an outstanding volunteer but was unable to attend the event.

Vicinage 15 has 261 active volunteers serving on child placement review boards, juvenile conference committees, community dispute resolution boards and the Minority Concerns Committee.

nonsense way of doing business while having a real sense of how to work with people. That’s a rare combination, and I was impressed,” Farr said.

After the success of this transition, Higgins became a budget manager responsible for statewide programs including position control (balancing the dollars apportioned to salaries that constitute 85 percent of the state budget). This role gave Higgins a global perspective of government and state budgeting.

The late ‘90s were a time of hiring freezes and early retirements. Higgins was involved with the Executive Branch’s Employee Review Board and met with then-Attorney General Deborah T. Poritz (now New Jersey’s Chief Justice) on a range of hiring-freeze-related topics.

When interviews were held for the position of assistant director of management services, Higgins emerged as the best-qualified candidate for the job.

“When I got here, it was a culture shock!” admitted Higgins. “Things were done quite differently from the way they are done in other state environments. But it was a pleasant change as well as a learning experience.”

Higgins found that the Judiciary gave managers the freedom to take their own initiative in support of the mission and program goals. “It’s very rewarding,” she said. “There’s a lot of texture to the job.”

Despite the scope of her responsibilities, the new director makes time for family and personal interests. Higgins and her husband, John, reside in Yardley, Pa., with sons, Shannon, who will attend Temple University as a freshman this fall, and Garrett, who will be entering his senior year in high school in September.

Asked her philosophy as a manager, Higgins said she views staff as multifaceted individuals and values the different abilities and gifts they bring to their work.

“Managers need to help their staff see how they fit into the mission of the Judiciary,” she said. “Knowing that each of us plays an important, interconnected role adds meaning to our jobs and makes it more rewarding to us as individuals.

“We spend the best hours of day here,” she added. “It should be a good and uplifting place to work.”

--Linda Brown Holt

## Take Children to Work Day Informs as it Entertains

*Throughout the state, Judiciary staff participated in Take Our Children to Work Day this spring. The following are two accounts of this popular activity:*

**Camden Vicinage** (contributed by Dunia Lorena Quezada)

The Camden Vicinage participated in Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day in May. This year's focus was on helping the children explore their future and goals. Children learned about their parents' work place to boost their interest in education, to learn about career opportunities and to encourage them to think about career goals.

Students (ages 9 to 15) enthusiastically participated in a

mock trial with the help of Judge Mary Eva Colalillo and Judge Louise D. Donaldson, both of the civil division.

The Sheriff's Department also participated in this year's program. Sheriff's Officers Judith Key and Larry Robinson answered questions about their profession. The children found the K-9 Unit demonstration and the bomb squad presentation interesting. They learned that safety plays an important role in the workplace.

At the conclusion of Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, prizes were awarded to poster and essay contest winners. Certificates were also given to all children participating in this year's program.

**Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Vicinage** (contributed by Kelly Law)

Vicinage 15 (Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem) hosted what it calls "Take A Child to Work Day" in each of its counties on April 24. More than 100 children ages 9 to 15 participated in the half-day program. The day started with visits to the work sites of people who invited children.

After welcoming remarks by Judiciary staff, the young people were treated to a presentation by the sheriff's department which included fingerprinting and a visit with the ever-popular search dogs.

The children enjoyed a mock trial where they participated as co-counsel and jurors. The day ended with refreshments and certificates for the children.

### Staff in the News

#### New Administrative Law Judge and Humanitarian Award Recipient



**Administrative Law Judge**—Emille Cox is sworn in as an administrative law judge in April. With him is his wife, Elvia, and Judge Peter J. Calderone, chief judge and director of the central office management staff of the Division of Workers Compensation. Judge Cox previously served as clerk of the Appellate Division and manager of volunteer services in the Administrative Office of the Courts. (Photos by L. Holt)



**Humanitarian Award to Judiciary Supervisor**—Thomas Arey, administrative supervisor in the Office of Public Affairs, received The Humanitarian Award from The Chapel of Four Chaplains in Philadelphia on June 5. Arey, an ordained minister in the United Churches of Christ, received the honor for his service as a chaplain at Ground Zero in New York City. He is senior pastor of Holy Trinity U.C.C., Willingboro, and served as an Army chaplain for eight years including active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm.

## Law Day 2003 Focuses on Independent Courts...

*Editor's note: Instituted by the American Bar Association (ABA) 46 years ago, Law Day (May 1) is observed each year throughout New Jersey by the Judiciary in partnership with county bar associations. A special day set aside to focus on the American heritage of liberty under law, Law Day was officially designated by a joint resolution of Congress in 1961. The event has grown over the years, with many counties hosting activities throughout the month of May. This year's theme was "Celebrate Your Freedom—Independent Courts Protect Our Liberties." Agendas from many programs are listed on the InfoNet. The following articles provide details about celebrations in Bergen and Monmouth.*

### Bergen Vicinage

by Laura A. Simoldoni, Esq.  
Bergen Vicinage Minority Concerns Liaison

On May 1, the Bergen Vicinage Minority Concerns Committee hosted students from Dwight Morrow High School for Law Day activities.

Megan Fernandez, a student at Tenafly Middle School, was selected the first-place winner of the 2003 Bergen Vicinage Minority Concerns Law Day Essay Contest. The theme of the essay contest was, "Be A Hero; Stop A Bully."

The program began in the courtroom of Bergen Vicinage Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses. Chairperson Betty Williams and Vice Chair Margaret Mc Laughlin welcomed the students. The students observed a video presentation from Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz regarding the Law Day theme of judicial independence.

Nola Steele, vicinage training coordinator, discussed the various divisions that encompass the vicinage and showed a video regarding the Bergen Vicinage. After, a presentation by Bergen County Sheriff Joel Trella de-

scribed the role of the sheriff's department. The students then observed a presentation by the sheriff's K-9 unit.

The students spoke with Law Day chairman the Hon. Joseph S. Conte about the criminal courts



**Megan Fernandez** reads her award-winning essay at the Bergen Law Day program as Appellate Presiding Judge Sylvia Pressler (left) and Betty Williams (right), minority concerns chair, look on. (Photo by V. Peterson)

### Vicinage 13 Holds Domestic Violence Forum

Continued from page 20

Porcaro and Winchatz provided information regarding family crisis intervention, risk assessments and domestic violence response teams. Sharing some of his experience as an officer called to hundreds of domestic violence scenes, Lt. Lombardo stated that, "The children often are not scared for themselves, but scared for their parents."

Clark explained the residential and non-residential services available to parents and child victims of domestic violence in Hunterdon County. She stated that the programs for children include shelter placement, temporary relocation and assisting children in adapting to changing schools.

They also include workshops on how to deal with the crisis in which the children have been placed, as well as physical and artistic outlets for them.

During an open discussion, speakers and the audience expressed a high level of frustration regarding the lack of legislation in place needed to protect children from exposure to systematic domestic violence, regardless of whether the victim parent chooses to avail him- or herself of social services.

More than 140 people attended the forum. The audience included judges, court personnel, teachers, police officers, prosecutors, social workers, child victim advocates and members of the public.

and a question and answer session followed. The students were then provided with informational booklets about the courts as well as law day pencils, bookmarks, stickers, and red white and blue flower seeds.

The students took a walking tour of the historical courthouse led by members of the Vicinage Minority Concerns Committee and the Vicinage EEO/AA Advisory Committee.

Continued on page 19

## ...Students Statewide Celebrate and Learn

Continued from page 18

At 3 p.m., the students assembled outside the courthouse for the formal Law Day ceremony. The Bergen County Sheriff's Department Honor Guard began the program with the presentation of colors, and the National Anthem was sung by Judge Donald R. Venezia. Prosecutor John L. Molinelli led the pledge of allegiance. Law Day Chairman, Judge Joseph S. Conte welcomed the public to Law Day. The keynote speaker was the Appellate Division Presiding Judge Sylvia B. Pressler, followed by remarks by Bergen County Bar President Robert B. Hille and Bergen County Executive Dennis McNerney.

The Ridgefield Park High School Chorus sang patriotic songs and the Dwight Morrow High School Band provided music for the event. The Minority Concerns Essay Contest winner Megan Fernandez read her essay and received an award from the Minority Concerns Committee Chairperson Betty Williams. The county clerk and a representative from the Bergen County Bar Foundation gave various other honors. Judge Moses then presided over the swearing-in of new citizens.

The students remarked that they enjoyed their day at the courthouse and a number asked if they could attend the 2004 Law Day program.

### Monmouth Vicinage

The Monmouth Vicinage and the Monmouth Bar Association held their annual Law Day celebration May 1 in the restored, historical General Equity Court Room located at the Hall of Records in Freehold Borough.

Judge Michael D. Farren, presiding judge of the criminal division, delivered remarks on the meaning and importance of Law Day on behalf of Assignment Judge Lawrence M. Lawson. The program included a videotape presentation by Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz and the dedication of a portrait of former Monmouth County Assignment Judge Alvin Yale Milberg. The event featured the presentation of the annual Monmouth Bar Association Abraham J. Zager Award for Professionalism to Richard J. Fay, a Monmouth County attorney.

In addition, a presentation was made of the Honorable Daniel J. O'Hern Mock Trial Award to this year's county mock trial champions, Howell High School. Retired Supreme Court Justice O'Hern presented the award to the winning team, whose members were accompanied by Marie A. Accardi, Lynn E. Staufenberg and Ronald T. Catelli, mock trial committee chairs, and J. Patrick McMorrow, the team's coach. A representative from each participating school received a certificate of honor.

The Monmouth Vicinage Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns sponsored essay and poster contests for students from throughout Monmouth County. High school students wrote on the topic, "What Justice Means to Me," while middle school students wrote about, "What is the Benefit of Rules or Behavior Codes in Schools."

The topic for second- through third-grade students was, "Why is it Important to Have Laws in Our Community?" while the subject for Kindergarten through second grades was, "Why Do We Have Rules in School and Our Classroom?"

**Essay and Poster Winners**—Judge Michael D. Farren, presiding judge of the criminal division, Monmouth Vicinage, joins students who won Law Day awards this spring. First row left to right are: Matthew O'Connor, O'Shea Forrest, Alexis Pineda; second row, left to right are: Nicolette Caprio, Elizabeth Luick, Jennifer Therrien, Judge Michael D. Farren, Ericka LeBron, Katelyn Oakes, Kelly Cassidy. (Photo by C. Flores)



## Vicinity 13 Holds Domestic Violence Forum On Theme, “What Happens to the Children?”

by Adriana M. Calderon, Vicinity EEO/AAO Officer,  
and Christine L. Seminski, Judiciary Clerk 3

The child was heard screaming and shrieking, “Stop it! Stop It!” on the 911 tape.

“This is the hardcore reality for children living with domestic violence,” said Debra Chatman-Finley, guest speaker at a domestic violence forum hosted by the Minority Concerns Committee of Hunterdon/Somerset/Warren Vicinity (Vicinity 13) in Somerville this spring.

Chatman-Finley, who is coordinator of Counseling Services at the Resource Center for Women and their Families in Somerset County, opened the forum which was titled “What Happens to the Children?” The program featured experts who discussed the effects domestic violence has on young people. It was co-sponsored by the Somerset County Youth Services Commission, Friends of Somerset County Youth and the Somerset County Commission on Child Abuse and Missing Children.

Following a welcome from Superior Court Assignment Judge Graham T. Ross and Judge Paul W. Armstrong, chair of the Vicinity Minority Concerns Committee, Chatman-Finley opened the program by playing an actual 911

tape of a six-year-old child witnessing an act of domestic violence.

Later in the program, speakers on a panel discussing the psychological effects domestic violence has on children included: Isle Polonko, youth program provider at the Domestic Abuse and Rape Crisis Center of Warren County; Rita Basile, bilingual children case



**What Happens to the Children?**— Judge Paul W. Armstrong, chair of the Minority Concerns Committee of the Hunterdon/Somerset/Warren Vicinity, greets participants in “What Happens to the Children?”, a domestic violence forum held this spring in Somerville. Looking on (right) is Assignment Judge Graham T. Ross. (Photo by C. Seminski)

manager; and Amy Sutter, supervisor of children’s services, both with the Resource Center for Women & their Families.

“Every 15 seconds a woman is being abused,” Basile stated.

Expanding upon this, Polonko pointed out that when children witness such abuse, “We are teaching our children to be abusers. We are teaching our daughters to be victims.”

Polonko also relayed that, at times, cultural differences may hamper crisis intervention. Some victims may not understand their rights due to a language barrier or because certain cultures encourage a woman’s tolerance in abusive situations, she said.

Family Presiding Judge Thomas H. Dilts moderated a second panel that explored the laws and procedures in place to assist domestic violence victims. The speakers included: Linda Porcaro, administrator at the Somerset County Office of Youth Services; Anthony Winchatz, domestic violence response team coordinator at the Resource Center for Women and their Families; Lt. Joseph Lombardo of the Franklin Township Police Department; and Alison Clark, residential coordinator at Women’s Crisis Services in Hunterdon County.

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**NEW JERSEY  
JUDICIARY**



Integrity • Independence  
Fairness • Quality Service

### Mission Statement of the New Jersey Court System

*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.*