



**NEW MEXICO**  
ANNUAL REPORT

**JUDICIARY**  
2008

**Cover: A few of New Mexico's older county courthouses.**

**Top, left to right:**

One of the WPA projects of the 30s, the Art Deco-style Roosevelt County Courthouse in Portales was built in 1939 with the designs of William M. Bickel.

The Luna County Courthouse in Deming was built in 1910 and was designed by W. E. Corwin. Deming's annual duck race takes place across the street in the city park.

Built in 1909, the Union County Courthouse in Clayton is New Mexico's oldest county courthouse in continuous use. It was designed by the architectural firm of D. P. Kaufman & Son.

**Middle, left to right:**

The Grant County Courthouse in Silver City was erected in 1930 with the designs of architect George Williamson.

The Chaves County Beaux-Arts-style courthouse in Roswell was completed in 1912, the year New Mexico became a state. It is just down the street from the International UFO Museum and the green dome is visible throughout the city.

The Mission-style Eddy County courthouse in Carlsbad was erected in 1891 and its appearance was altered to its current style in 1939. It has one of New Mexico's best town squares.

**Bottom, left to right:**

The Hidalgo County Courthouse in Lordsburg was built in 1926-1927 with Classical Revival elements. The firm of Thorman and Frazer designed it.

The Guadalupe County Courthouse in Santa Rosa was built in 1909 with Romanesque Revival elements. In 1946 an addition was added to the building's left.

The 1917 Rio Arriba County Courthouse in Tierra Amarilla hosted a shoot-out in the 1970s that resulted over a land rights quarrel.

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# A Message from the Chief Justice

Thanks to a collegial and collaborative working relationship between the three branches of New Mexico state government, the judiciary's budget has grown from \$98 million in FY04 to just under \$155 million in FY09.



Chief Justice Edward L. Chávez

This funding increase includes the addition of 23 new judgeships and additional support staff over the last five years. The increase in human resources has been essential as the judiciary strives to reach our goals of improving the efficiency of court operations and excellence in the fair and impartial administration of justice.

While much work remains to be done to accomplish our goals, I would like to thank both the legislature and Governor Bill Richardson for their support over the years. With the American economy spiraling downward, the approaching legislative session will be difficult for all three branches of government. The legislature will have to wrestle with budget cuts, the appropriation of reserves, and the roll-back of recent tax cuts to provide the people of New Mexico with a responsible and accountable government that is fair, just, and committed to the welfare

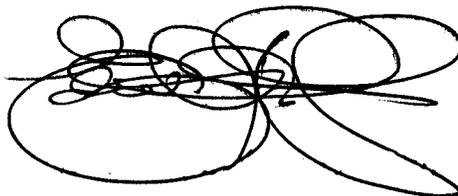
of all its citizens. The need for collaborative and frank discussions takes on even greater meaning when budget cuts are the topic of deliberation.

As the judiciary prepares to meet the challenges of a struggling economy, our top priority must be our continued support and full employment of our employees. The judiciary's workforce is 1,732 strong, and almost half of these employees earn less than \$30,000 per year. Judicial employees are vitally necessary to help us fulfill our constitutional responsibilities. The judiciary's employees have demonstrated their unwavering desire to be effective public servants by devoting their best efforts to ensure that the people of New Mexico receive efficient and quality services that will inspire their trust and confidence in the judiciary.

The 2008 Annual Report highlights the accomplishments of the New Mexico judiciary. These accomplishments were made possible by the hard work of our employees. Our caseload over the years has grown steadily from 392,415 new and reopened cases in FY04 to over 422,000 cases in FY07. Although that may appear to be a modest increase, the

task of handling these cases is made much more difficult by increased competition for limited state resources, greater case complexity, more diverse customers with differing needs, and a growing population of self-represented litigants. The judiciary has also added problem-solving courts and other innovative programs and services to our core responsibilities. As is true with other technological advancements, these programs are staff-intensive and require the application of different skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Simply stated, the judiciary needs more judges and staff. This statement is supported by a study undertaken by the National Center for State Court that demonstrates New Mexico's need for 24 additional district court judges, six metropolitan court judges, and six magistrate judges. However, even without these additional judges and staff, I remain confident that with the efforts of the judiciary's dedicated employees, we will continue to serve the public at a respectable level of performance until such time as the economy permits an increase in judgeships and staff. While the public will experience a delay in services given the demands on our employees and the anticipated growth in our caseload due to the struggling economy, the delays will be mitigated if we successfully keep all of our employees fully employed. We as a judiciary should embrace the challenges we will face as an opportunity to stand tall with our employees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Edward L. Chávez, Chief Justice

# A Message from the Court Administrator

The end of 2008 finds the Judiciary, and its Administrative Office of the Courts, celebrating some successes and facing extraordinary challenges ahead. The challenges will shape 2009 as the slowing economy results in budget issues to confront in the coming year. For the year just past, the AOC welcomed talented and dedicated employees in newly created positions providing support to courts in the more efficient use of jurors, qualification and employment of court interpreters, child welfare, juvenile justice, and access to justice. As some employees left we were fortunate to welcome some excellent new employees to continue the work of the AOC in the court improvement project, fiscal services, human resources and internal auditing. In addition, several additions to our Judicial Information Division have strengthened the delivery of information technology to the courts. The AOC also saw the retirement of Deputy Director Jeff Varela and the subsequent addition of the new Deputy Director, Patrick Simpson, who comes to us from successful work in several agencies and the Office of the Attorney General. The AOC gladly welcomes all these new employees to our agency.



Director Arthur W. Pepin

I continue to be extraordinarily grateful for the amazing level of dedication, knowledge, and effort applied by judicial employees throughout the state. I offer a heartfelt “thank you” to all those working in the courts each day to provide a fair, efficient and effective judicial system to the people of New Mexico.



Deputy Director  
Patrick T. Simpson

The Supreme Court welcomed its newest member, Justice Charles Daniels, to his first successful year in 2008 and enjoyed another year under the superb leadership of Chief Justice Edward Chávez. The Court of Appeals saw Judges Pickard, Alarid and Robinson leave and will welcome in 2009 as new members Judges Robert Robles, Linda Vanzi, and Tim Garcia. As a whole, the courts throughout the state continue to adjust to the implementation of the Odyssey case management system, which went “live” in the Fourth Judicial District Court in Las Vegas in November and will continue to be rolled out in courts during 2009. High praise is due the judges and employees of the Fourth as well as the team of the AOC’s Judicial Information Division, who have worked long, hard hours to get the first of our courts operating under the Odyssey system. I thank them, and the many employees and judges from other courts who have worked all year to prepare for successful implementation of the Odyssey system throughout the state.

The Judiciary went “green” in many areas in 2008. Among the ways we are being environmentally conscious is the Judicial Information Division’s plan to recycle all decommissioned computers, refurbish installed computers to increase usable lifespan, and increase the computer refresh rate for all judicial computers

to four to five years, rather than replace computers on a three year computer refresh cycle as was done in the past. In addition, all computers purchased during FY08 were “energy star” compliant and were configured prior to installation to minimize overall power consumption. At the same time, JID staff continued to convert older dedicated server applications to run on virtualized servers to reduce the server power needs and more efficiently take advantage of server processing power.

The judicial green computing initiative was undertaken to reduce overall amounts of environmental toxins such as heavy metals and flame retardants in New Mexico landfills, and to lower the Judiciary’s carbon footprint by reducing power consumption in courts throughout the State. All judicial computer recycling was done through certified vendors who pledged to handle equipment in a responsible fashion and reclaim or dispose of toxic components in a way that will not harm the environment or pose risk to populations in developing countries.

Pursuant to Executive Order 2005-049; Requiring the Increased Use of Renewable Fuels in New Mexico State Government, the Judiciary also purchased nine ‘flex fuel’ vehicles: five Chevy HHRs, one Ford Focus, two Ford Fusions and one Toyota Sienna Van.

Finally, the AOC is coordinating the annual Conference of State Court Administrators and Conference of Chief Justices, which will be hosted by Chief Justice Chávez in August of 2009. This joint conference has been held every year for more than fifty years and includes the leading court officials from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and the Virgin Islands.

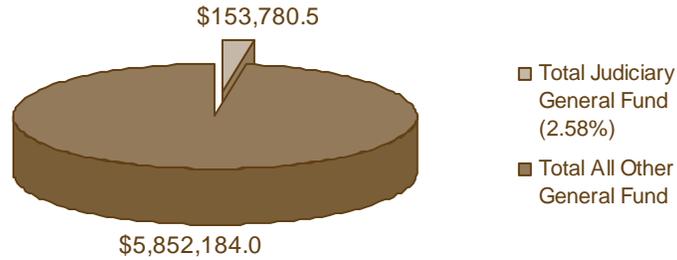
The Annual Report highlights only some of the exciting activities underway in the courts. I hope readers get a sense of the great work being done in courts every day by the dedicated, skilled judges and employees of the New Mexico judicial system.



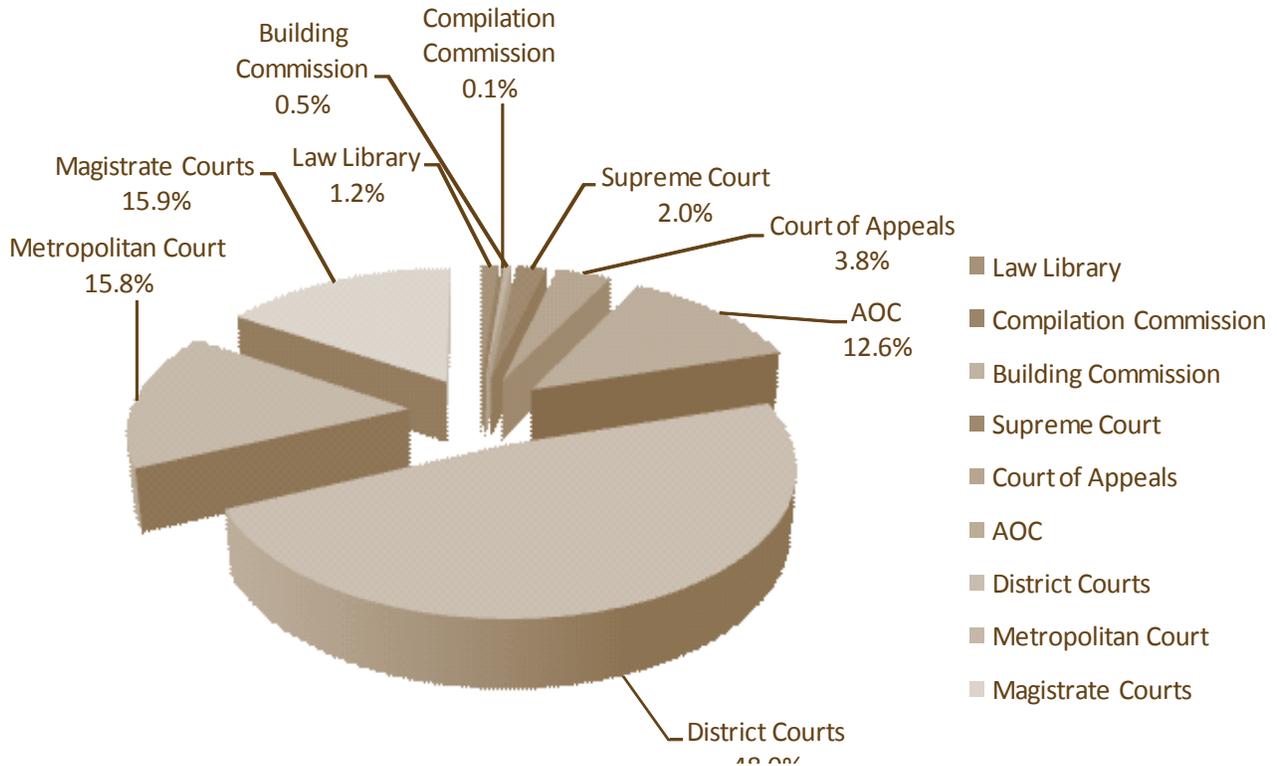
Arthur W. Pepin, Director

# Budget of the New Mexico Judiciary

**2009 Fiscal Year Recurring General Fund  
Appropriation Distribution (in thousands)**



**2009 Fiscal Year Recurring General  
Fund Appropriation Distribution  
by Court Type**



# Special Programs

## Judicial Performance Evaluation Program

The Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission (JPEC) released its sixth official election recommendations to the voters on one Supreme Court Justice, one Court of Appeals Judge, and 74 District Court Judges September 18, 2008.

JPEC uses an objective standard by which to make the overall recommendations to voters, but they report all of their findings in their narratives. The Commission includes both positive and negative results from the users of the courts, including high ratings, mixed ratings, generally positive ratings or low ratings. They also include whether a judge has expressed a desire to improve in any areas in which he or she received low ratings.

Supreme Court of New Mexico



Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission

Over the six elections in which the JPEC has evaluated judicial performance, they have continued to see improvement and have ‘raised the bar’. Judges and justices know they are being held accountable, and JPEC’s experience has been that most of the judges constantly strive to improve their performance on the bench.

JPEC shared the results of interim evaluations with three appellate judges and 16 Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court Judges. The Commission does not share the results of interim evaluations with the public since the primary objective of the interim evaluation is self-improvement.

The 2008 Legislature created the “Judicial Performance Evaluation Fund” to cover the costs of the judicial performance evaluation program from year-to-year. A majority of JPEC members are neither judges nor lawyers.

## Court Improvement Project

The Court Improvement Project (CIP) is an initiative to improve judicial proceedings related to child abuse and neglect, foster care, and adoption. Since 1995, the activities of the CIP have been directed by a Supreme Court appointed Task Force and accomplished by its working committees. Participants include children’s court judges, the Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and numerous other agencies and organizations. CIP works to improve the permanency, safety, and well being of children and youth in state custody.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Children’s Law Institute took place on January 9-11, 2008 with over 1,000 people in attendance, which was an increase by 400 registrants from the previous year. The theme was *Trauma: Impact, Response, and Resilience*.

The CIP Task Force conducted an assessment of the courts’ role, responsibilities and effectiveness in the interstate placement of children, together with recommendations on the best strategies to use to expedite these placements as required by the federal grant.

CIP participated in the federally mandated Child and Family Services Review, and New Mexico’s Program Improvement Plan was approved. Some of the activities to



be addressed next year are permanency plans, timely adjudication and hearings, timeliness of reunification, achieving permanency through reunification, adoption timeliness and placement stability.

The Judicial Information Division created an application on MyCourt that will allow judges to access outcome measures data related to hearings in child abuse and neglect cases. A Judge's Note Application was also developed to request and store new information such as parties present in the courtroom; provide information about the case retrieved in advance from the case file; provide reminders to judges regarding actions that could be taken at the hearing; and provide an area for the judge to record case-specific notes. Three districts pilot tested the Application and full roll-out of the Application is planned for 2009.

The Children's Law Center (CLC) and the Judicial Education Center published the New Mexico Child Welfare Handbook, a resource for judges and attorneys handling child welfare cases. CLC also developed training for judges and lawyers new to child welfare cases and held regional cross-training programs that focused on educational rights and needs of children in foster care.

CIP continues to produce booklets and Best Practice Bulletins on a number of topics.

### **Court Interpreter Program**

#### Conference

On Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 72 Certified Court Interpreters came together in Santa Fe at New Mexico's first Court Interpreters Conference. A first for New Mexico, the conference was one of the few in the country to address court interpreting in both signed and spoken languages. Welcomed by Justice Patricio Serna, whose heartfelt comments set the tone for the day, interpreters *learned from each other* through presentations, spirited question and answer sessions and networking.

Edward Chávez, Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court, shared his perspective on the tradition of language access in New Mexico's courts. He recognized the diversity of the interpreters attending this historic conference, asking them to stand by group. This was a powerful way to celebrate and acknowledge the growing cultural diversity of our state and the interpreter community: Arabic, Chinese Navajo, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Signed Languages, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Chief Justice Chávez applauded New Mexico's court interpreters for their important role in our justice system.

#### Program Enhancements

In keeping with the growing need for certified court interpreters in Spanish and languages other than Spanish, the AOC announced its 2009 training and exam schedule, which reflects efforts to ensure language access in New Mexico Courts by increasing the percentage of those taking the certification exams who actually pass and increasing the number of certified or qualified interpreters in languages other than Spanish.

Enhancements to the certification process developed this past year relate directly to these objectives:

- Increased geographic diversity of training and testing locations,
  - Increased number of Orientations, Skills-Building Workshops and exams,
- Language-neutral one-day orientation sessions,
- Skills-Building options for languages other than Spanish,
  - Mentored study groups as a follow-on for skills-building workshop participants,
  - Written Exam required prior to oral examinations (80% correct to pass), and
- Oral exams in languages other than Spanish at all sites, depending on demand.

#### New Mexico Justice System Interpreter Resource Partnership

The State Justice Institute approved the AOC's request for funding for the New Mexico Justice System Partnership beginning October 1, 2008. The Partnership's goal is to ensure that:

*Individuals with limited English proficiency who become involved with the New Mexico justice system (civil and criminal) have access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services.*

The Partnership hopes to reach this goal through targeted recruitment; skill-building opportunities in the community, in partnership with higher education; qualifying interpreters for work throughout the justice system while providing a foundation for advanced training in other specific areas e.g. juvenile justice, corrections or the courts; and creating a registry of qualified interpreters, recruited and trained based on regionally identified needs of partnership agencies. The partnership also plans to develop training for justice system agencies and court staff on the roles, responsibilities, and professional ethics of qualified interpreters and those who work with them.

With the New Mexico Supreme Court and the Administrative Office of the Courts providing leadership, the partners include the Administrative Office of the District Attorneys; the Corrections Department; the Police Chiefs Association; the State Police; the Public Defender's Office; the Children, Youth & Families Department; the Judicial Education Center; the state's Sheriffs Association; the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf; New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association; the University of New Mexico-Los Alamos; the Central New Mexico Community College; and the Doña Ana Community College.

#### **Jury Services**

##### Jury Orientation Video

In July, the Committee for the Improvement of Jury Service in New Mexico, under the guidance of the New Mexico Supreme Court, completed work on the first-ever statewide jury orientation video for New Mexico. All magistrate and district courts are incorporating the video into their new juror orientation to compliment and enrich



the juror selection process. The video has also been distributed to all high schools and libraries in the state and is being presented to middle and high school classes through the efforts of the Trial Lawyers Association, the Civil Lawyers Association, and the Committee for the Improvement of Jury Service.

The Committee and the Supreme Court believe the video is the best way to ensure that all jurors in all courts in New Mexico receive the same message about this most significant civic obligation. The video is intended to prepare New Mexico's jurors to make them more comfortable and ready for the courtroom process. The presentation features interviews with jurors across the state and visual images of all state courts. It has been designed to serve all state courts and to stand the test of time. The video includes a history of the jury system. Typical courtroom layout is covered along with a summary of the jury selection process and an explanation of courtroom procedures during criminal and civil trials. Because New Mexico is the only state currently allowing non-English speaking jurors to serve, the video features a Spanish-speaking juror and is closed-captioned in Spanish. The video can be viewed on-line at <http://www.nmcourts.gov/jury/juryvideo.html>.

#### Jurors Creed

The Committee for the Improvement of Jury Service approved the Juror's Creed at its meeting on February 28<sup>th</sup> after reviewing similar documents from other state courts. The Committee's action was prompted by discussion regarding a need to clarify juror expectations given the increased ability to access information through the Internet.

The Jurors Creed was adopted by the Supreme Court in October. It will be appropriately framed for hanging in all Jury Rooms and will be included in Juror Handbooks, which detail the rights and duties of New Mexico jurors.

#### Jury Management Workshops

The AOC sponsored three Jury Management Workshops in November and December. The workshops were conducted by Paula Hannaford, Director of the Center for Jury Studies with the National Center for State Courts. In the workshops, about 150 court administrators, chief clerks and jury staff focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of jury programs in Magistrate, District and Metropolitan Courts, while making jury service easier for prospective jurors. Workshop participants are using information from their own courts and jury programs to measure jury yield, jury utilization and cost per juror. From this baseline, they will be able to measure the effectiveness of program improvements on actual performance.

#### Juror Source Data

The AOC has entered into an agreement to update the Personal Income Tax (PIT) Filer address verification program to identify tax filers by county. The PIT address will be the default address, considered the most reliable, when there is an address discrepancy. Juror source data is also drawn from motor vehicle records and voter registration.

### **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**

During fiscal year 2008, there were more than 4,500 children in foster care in New Mexico. Of those children, 2,997 were served by 776 Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteers. Local CASA programs train volunteers to advocate in court for the best interests of abused and neglected children. CASA volunteers, appointed directly by the judges, are involved in one-on-one personal relationships with children in foster care, their families, teachers, therapists, social workers and attorneys. The volunteers report to the judges on the most appropriate placement and services for the children.

The New Mexico CASA Network continues to focus on strengthening local programs' abilities to recruit, train, supervise and retain motivated, high quality volunteers.

- The number of children assigned to CASA programs increased by 7.4% in FY08 as compared with FY07.
- The number of cases assigned to CASA programs increased by .6% over the same period.
- The average number of children assigned to CASA programs per active volunteer was 3.86 in FY08, up 11.1% from FY07.
- Through the first three quarters of FY08, 69.1% of children in the custody of the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) had their case assigned to a CASA program.

### **Access and Supervised Visitation Program**

The Access and Supervised Visitation Program provides children and their parents with a safe, nurturing environment for supervised visitation and exchange between custodial and noncustodial parents in cases of separation, divorce, custody disputes and domestic violence. These services allow families in crisis to practice healthy interactions, and are designed around the needs and well being of the child or children. They allow the child to continue his or her relationship with the noncustodial parent without being in the middle of the parents' conflicts.

The services help families as they navigate difficult transitions, assist family courts in managing high-conflict cases, and ensure the safety of children, spouses, and partners when domestic violence or other harmful behaviors are a factor in a case. Supervision acts initially as intervention, and ultimately as prevention with regard to conflict between parents and their children, diminishing the child's exposure to more harmful, potentially life-threatening situations.

In Fiscal Year 2008, 11 contracted providers offered Access and Supervised Visitation services in 16 counties (Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Bernalillo, Doña Ana, Chaves, Eddy, Lea, Grant, Luna, Hidalgo, Curry, Roosevelt, Sandoval, Valencia and Cibola) with referrals from judges in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9, and 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Districts.

Highlights of the year's performance include:

- 10,289 visit and exchange services were provided to 1,713 clients, an increase



*Giving a  
voice,  
hope and  
a future  
to abused  
and  
neglected  
children.*

*Working with families facing long-term issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, poverty and mental illness to reach permanency solutions for their children.*



of 32% in services from FY 2007.

- An average of 456 visits and 401 exchanges were provided to 143 clients each month.

On average, cases received services 21 times, representing a 40% increase from FY 2007. These data suggest that providers are more successfully meeting the needs of the courts and the clients referred to them as families more fully engage in services.

### **Children’s Court Mediation Program**

Since March 2000, the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts has collaborated with CYFD to mediate child abuse and neglect cases. The Children’s Court mediation program currently provides mediation services in 11 judicial districts (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>) and will complete expansion to the Tenth Judicial District in 2008. The program also works closely with and provides support for the First Judicial District’s in-house child welfare mediation program.

Cases are mediated at all stages of an abuse and neglect case from investigation to reunification or termination of parental rights (TPR), including open adoption referrals. Referrals have steadily increased each year from 115 during the first full year of operation to 604 cases in 2007-2008. Over 2,800 cases have been mediated through the program since 2000.

The Children’s Court Mediation Program is a resource for families, CYFD staff and the Courts. Its primary purpose is to assist in meeting the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) goals of permanency, child safety and child well being. By providing a non-adversarial approach, the mediation program strives to help CYFD and the Courts work together with families facing long-term issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, poverty and mental illness to reach permanency solutions for their children.

The 2008 Evaluation Report included a review of program activities and a comparative study of mediated and non-mediated cases in several districts during 2004-2005. The evaluation results indicate that mediation continues to conserve both judicial and CYFD resources by reducing the time parties spend in post-mediation court hearings and improve the quality of and compliance with treatment plans. Mediation in abuse and neglect cases facilitates enhanced communication and problem solving by clarifying issues, exploring options, and providing opportunities for collaboration.

The FY 2008 budget enabled the program to contract with an independent evaluator, provide increased training for mediators and professionals, and expand to the Third and Ninth Judicial Districts and Eddy County in the Fifth District. In addition, several local programs explored expanded uses of mediation including mediating prior to the Initial Judicial Review (IJR) and increasing pre-permanency referrals.

The FY 2009 budget includes state general funds of \$209,400 and CYFD funds of \$160,000 from Title IV-B and E Funds for mediation services only. The total projected revenue of \$369,400 will provide for the complete expansion of the program to the 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, ongoing training and a formal assessment of all

mediators. Some of the local district courts and CYFD offices continue to contribute supplemental funding through direct funds or in-kind service.

The Children’s Court Mediation Program looks forward to the continued partnership with CYFD and the Courts in 2008-2009 as we complete the program expansion to the 10<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, fully implement the Best Practices including the formal assessment of all mediators and provide appropriate mentoring, streamline local coordination, and to develop a plan, including resources, for the development of web-based case management system.

### **Court Appointed Attorney Fees Fund**

The New Mexico legislature appropriated just over \$4.7 million dollars to the Court Appointed Attorney Fees Fund (CAAFF) in FY 09. Over 90% of the fund is used to provide statutorily mandated legal services to children, youth, and parents in child abuse and neglect cases. The remainder of the CAAFF is allocated for legal services in mental health and guardianship cases. There are currently over 125 contracted attorneys who are appointed to provide legal services in child abuse and neglect cases. “Non-contract” attorneys are also appointed, and paid from the CAAFF, when the local contract attorneys have a conflict or when there are an insufficient number of contract attorneys available to represent the parties in a case.

Efforts are currently underway to conduct a statewide assessment of the CAAFF. The AOC has hired a staff attorney to work with each district court to gather data regarding contracting and billing processes, attorney performance and evaluation measures, and the need for additional contract attorneys. Assessment data is also being collected directly from contract attorneys by way of an on-line web-based attorney log. The on-line attorney log was an initiative of the New Mexico Court Improvement Project’s Quality of Advocacy Committee sub-committee and is currently maintained by the Judicial Information Division. The on-line log allows attorneys to track time, mileage expenses, and client contact per case; and then print a monthly report that is submitted with their billing invoices. The on-line attorney log is an important step in collecting consistent statewide data from contract attorneys in abuse and neglect cases.

### **Access to Justice**

The Commission on Access to Justice created by the New Mexico Supreme Court develops methods to provide access to the courts for low-income persons with basic civil legal needs in areas such as family law, domestic violence, housing, consumer, employment, government benefits and other non-criminal legal matters. The Commission operates through working groups composed of commissioners and interested parties.

In 2007, the Supreme Court adopted the Commission’s State Plan for Providing Civil Legal Aid to Low Income New Mexicans, continued its support of the Ten Step Plan to improve access to justice (by, in part, *increasing pro bono attorney*

*Expanding and improving civil legal assistance to New Mexicans living in poverty.*



services throughout the state), and finally, accepted the Report of the Self Represented Litigant Working Group. In 2008, the Commission reported to the Supreme Court on its progress in implementing the recommendations of those documents and directives of the Court. *The State Plan* is currently under review and the Commission is preparing the Plan's required mechanism for peer review of legal service provider quality. The *local pro bono committees* submitted annual reports to the Commission, which were approved and presented to the Supreme Court. *Most districts express the need for standardized pro se forms and for training for volunteer attorneys.* Much progress was made by *Phase I committees.* The Commission recommended that the 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District expand its efforts beyond pro se clinics to develop a pro bono direct representation plan including intake, screening and referral processes, and to include non-domestic matters. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> District, Law Access New Mexico received Civil Legal Service Commission funding to administer the pro bono intake and referral process; recruitment letters to attorneys signed by judges have been delivered. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District has a strong pro se program in place. The Commission advised the committee to expand its focus beyond domestic relations, to determine who is willing to be in the attorney pool, to develop an intake and referral system that could include opting in to a statewide process, and to develop tracking mechanisms. The 8<sup>th</sup> District requested training from New Mexico Legal Aid (NMLA) regarding matters such as Unfair Debt Collection or housing issues so more attorneys can help. NMLA sponsored its first accredited CLE on "Fair Housing and New Mexico's Elders" on October 8<sup>th</sup>; other sessions are joint efforts of NMLA and UNM Law School. In the 11<sup>th</sup> District, the Commission found that San Juan County's attorney questionnaire assessing attorney interest and willingness to participate should be considered a best practice; it has been used or modified for use by several other judicial districts. In the 11<sup>th</sup>'s McKinley County, the committee continues to work with the UNM Paralegal Division in Gallup to establish a program enabling paralegals to assist pro se litigants with filling out forms, and to broaden the pro bono pool. The 13<sup>th</sup> District has developed court clinics using pro bono attorneys, but to fully implement the Ten Step Plan, the Commission recommended that the committee expand its efforts beyond clinics to develop a pro bono direct representation plan including screening, intake and referral processes. Ninety-seven attorneys in the 13<sup>th</sup> have stated a willingness to help. The District continues to schedule pro se dockets for divorce and parentage once a month in each county, with mediators present to help negotiate any conflict. The District is also exploring ways to secure malpractice insurance for court-appointed attorneys; the Pro Bono Working Group is also researching the malpractice insurance issue.

*Phase II committees* are also progressing. In the 4<sup>th</sup> District, volunteer attorneys continue to conduct a pro se clinic monthly in domestic matters, and might expand to include foreclosure and other debt collection matters. The 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> districts are evaluating attorney willingness to assist and in what areas. The *Phase III districts* (7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>) are forming their committees and will no doubt learn from the prior efforts of other districts.

*In other efforts to increase pro bono services*, the Supreme Court adopted the Commission's recommended revisions to Rules 16-601 and 24-108 NMRA regarding an attorney's pro bono obligations and mandating reporting of pro bono hours. The Court also adopted Rule 13-301.2, the Limited License Rule, which allows attorneys who come to New Mexico as employees of qualified legal service providers to be State Bar members for a reduced fee and without having to take the Bar exam. These changes should assist legal service providers to recruit staff attorneys, particularly in rural areas. On May 6, 2008, the Court adopted revisions to Rules 1-089, 2-108, 3-108, and 12-302 NMRA that clarify that attorney discrete task (limited) representation is authorized and set forth required procedures for entry of appearance, etc. The purpose of this type of representation is to limit attorney representation and fees to critical legal issues when full case representation is not possible or affordable.

*The Commission's Resource Development Group seeks to increase funding for civil legal services for low income people.* In 2004, New Mexico legal service providers turned away two people with valid legal issues for every one case they were able to handle with current resources. Although funding has increased over the past two years, providers in New Mexico still cannot meet the need for legal services when one quarter of people in this state live at or below 125% of the poverty level. In 2008, the Supreme Court adopted Rule 24-109 NMRA establishing mandatory IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts) participation for attorneys and comparability (of earned interest rates) requirements for banks. National studies show that this requirement will significantly increase IOLTA revenues. The Center for Civic Values is conducting ongoing training and notification for attorneys and banks in view of the effective date of January, 2009. Commission members and participants also recently helped avert possible exclusion of IOLTA funds from FDIC insurance due to federal law changes in response to the current financial markets and lending industry crisis by submitting urgent comments to the FDIC. The Resource Group is also exploring the possibility of "cy pres" or residual class action funds as a resource for legal service providers.

*The Self Represented Litigant Working Group* is revising a rule and guidelines ("best practices") for self help centers in courts statewide. On January 22, 2008, the Supreme Court adopted Rule 23-113 that defines the role of court staff working with self represented litigants. The Court also approved a companion notice to the public which is to be posted in all courts. Along with the AOC staff attorney assigned to the access to justice program, the Working Group continues to work with the Judicial Education Center to improve ongoing standardized training for court staff on what types of information they are obligated to provide the public under Rule 23-113. This training will also be available to library staff as additional resources to which the public goes to obtain legal information. This Group has proposed standardized plain language family law forms which are being circulated to the required consultant agencies and groups. When approved, English/Spanish forms should be available through the internet, as well as through courts and legal service providers.



*Supporting and facilitating communication and awareness among the State, Tribes and Pueblos.*

This Group is also exploring methods through which to increase the level of understanding of and compliance with court orders by self represented litigants.

An Access to Justice committee has been formed in **Chaves, Eddy and Lea counties**. Court staff have been trained to follow the guidelines approved by the Supreme Court in providing adequate access to justice in a fair and equitable manner.

### **New Mexico Tribal-State Judicial Consortium**

Working as an advisory committee of the Supreme Court of New Mexico, the Tribal-State Judicial Consortium had an active year in developing and strengthening relationships and communications between State and Tribal Court Judges. The Consortium extended its reach to additional State and Tribal Judges and Court staff, while commencing to work with law enforcement, advocates, and others involved in the criminal justice system primarily through three mechanisms. Most of these efforts focused on promoting Project Passport, an initiative begun in 2007 to create a uniform first page on protection orders in cases of domestic violence.

First, the Consortium continued to promote Project Passport, which would further implement the full faith and credit provision of the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). A stakeholders meeting of State and Tribal Judges, Court staff, law enforcement, and others was conducted during the winter to educate a broad cross-section of individuals about the initiative. The Consortium reported the feedback from the meeting to the Supreme Court to help inform its decision to move forward with the proposal. Approximately sixty people attended the event.

Second, the Consortium provided scholarships for Tribal Judges to participate in the 2008 Judicial Conclave. The awards cover the registration fees and travel costs of one Tribal Judge from each Pueblo or Tribe to attend the conference; and sixteen of the twenty-two Tribal Courts located within the State were represented, an increase from the prior year. The Consortium also helped the Judicial Education Center design break-out sessions of interest to both State and Tribal Judges, including a workshop on Native youth gangs and drug trafficking, and another updating Judges on the status of the Passport initiative for State Court usage.

Finally, in the spring and summer of 2008, a series of three Regional Meetings were conducted at Santa Clara and Zuni Pueblos and in Farmington, gathering together about one hundred and eighty Tribal and State judges, Court staff, law enforcement, attorneys, advocates and others to strengthen relationships and communications. These meetings also served as a vehicle by which Tribal leadership could learn about Project Passport through presentations by expert speakers. By means of small group discussions, participants considered the benefits and challenges of implementing a common first page for their own orders of protection. Law enforcement officials support using the form, because it will make residents safer, and help keep officers out of harm's way. Meeting participants requested additional opportunities to

continue developing relationships and working on solutions to problems common in both State and Tribal Courts.

### **State Stream Adjudication**

#### **State Water Courts**

In an effort to develop judicial expertise in the area of water law, a single water judge has been designated in each of the thirteen judicial districts. The AOC has also created a new water staff attorney position to provide support to the water judges and assist with the three active state adjudications. This year's educational seminar for the water judges focused upon the science of hydrology, hydrologic conditions in different parts of the state, and the administrative appeals process through the Office of the State Engineer (OSE).

#### **State Stream Adjudications**

Three active stream adjudications continue in the state. In the Lower Rio Grande adjudication, presided over by District Judge Jerald Valentine, over 15,000 water right claimants have been joined. In the Pecos, spanning from Carlsbad up to Las Vegas, presided over by Judge *Pro Tempore* William Bonem, adjudication activity has focused on the Carlsbad Irrigation District, the Pecos Valley Conservancy District, and in the Las Vegas area. The San Juan stream adjudication, presided over by Judge *Pro Tempore* Rozier Sanchez, has progressed substantially through the water rights within the La Plata section of the larger San Juan Basin.

The Administrative Office of the Courts has continued its work to develop new adjudication procedures and improve the practices that govern stream adjudications. The goal of improved procedures is to positively impact the progress of adjudications. Over the past year, AOC staff worked collaboratively with staff from the OSE to study the procedures employed by other western states, and discuss possible alternatives that may improve adjudications in New Mexico.

*The Rio Grande: A river whose waters are vital to its dry basin.*



# New Mexico Supreme Court

In Fiscal Year 2008, 701 new cases and 59 re-opened cases were filed in the New Mexico Supreme Court. Within the Court's discretionary jurisdiction (those cases not requiring automatic review), petitions for writ of certiorari, certification requests, interlocutory appeal application, and petitions for writ of habeas corpus are submitted to the full court. In FY08, 650 new cases and 35 re-opened cases were filed within the Court's discretionary jurisdiction. Extraordinary petitions for writ of mandamus, prohibition, and superintending control are submitted to a rotating panel of three associate justices. As necessary, submission to the Full Court may occur upon direction of the panel. In FY08, 75 extraordinary writ cases were filed.



Cases within the Court's mandatory jurisdiction are automatically reviewed by the Full Court. Cases within the Court's mandatory jurisdiction include criminal appeals in which life or death sentence is imposed, disciplinary cases involving judges and attorneys, appeals from the Public Regulation Commission, and election challenges. In FY08, 51 new mandatory jurisdiction cases were filed.

Each Justice reviewed and voted on approximately 632 cases in FY08.

Of the total number of cases filed in FY08, 134 were disposed of by written opinion, decision, dispositional order, or order quashing a writ of certiorari (dismissed without comment). The Court published 61 majority opinions, 11 unpublished decisions, 15 dispositional orders, and quashed certiorari 40 times. The Court's clearance rate for FY08 was 99%, which represents the cases disposed of as a percentage of cases filed.

Petitions for extension of the six-month rule to begin trial and other miscellaneous motions are rotated on a monthly basis among the associate justices for a ruling. In FY08, the Court decided 1,807 rule extension petitions. In addition, the Court ruled on 49 motions for rehearing or for reconsideration.

The Supreme Court oversees 28 committees, boards, commissions, and task forces. The process for the promulgation of new rules of procedure and amendment of existing rules begins with proposals submitted to the Court by individual rules committees and boards. The committees make recommendations after reviewing suggestion submitted by judges, attorneys, or the Court's staff attorneys. Proposed amendments and new rules are published

for comment in the *Bar Bulletin*, after which comments are summarized by the respective committee or board. A package containing the proposed amendments, new rules, comments, and committee summary are submitted to the Court for review and final action. In FY08, approximately 270 proposed amendments and new rules were processed. The staff attorney division assists the Court to move forward in adopting rules that are essential to a just, speedy, and inexpensive system of justice. The Legislature's approval of a paralegal position for the staff attorneys occurred in the 2008 session, and now with a total of three staff attorneys, the Court is closer to its goal of full staffing of five attorneys and one paralegal to be on par with other courts of last resort.



### **Supreme Court Building Commission**

The fiscal year 2008 capital improvement project legislation included funding for Phase I of a three-phased fire suppression system for the historic Supreme Court Building. The wet system (Phase I) will be installed in most common areas of the building. Gas and dry pipe systems (Phases II and III) will be installed in the Law Library when additional capital funding is approved. In addition, exterior surveillance cameras capable of 24-hour monitoring and retrieval have been installed. Security and protection of the nationally recognized Supreme Court Building is a top priority for the Building Commission.

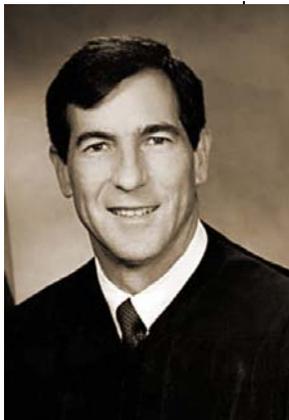
# New Mexico Court of Appeals



Judge Robert E. Robles



Judge Linda M. Vanzi



Judge Timothy L. Garcia

The Court of Appeals experienced major changes in 2008. Three of the ten Court of Appeals judges retired in 2008: Judge Ira Robinson retired in September 2008, Judge Lynn Pickard retired in October 2008 and Judge A. Joseph Alarid retired at the end of December 2008. Judge Robinson served for eight years as a Court of Appeals judge. Both Judge Pickard and Judge Alarid served the Judiciary for over 25 years. Judge Pickard was a law clerk for Court of Appeals Judge William Hendley from 1974 to 1975. She was Chief Staff Attorney for the Court of Appeals from 1981-91, and served as a judge on the Court of Appeals from 1991 to 2008, serving as chief judge from 1999 to 2001. Judge Alarid served as a judge on the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court from 1980 to 1981 and as a judge on the Second Judicial District Court from 1981 to 1983. He served as a Court of Appeals judge from 1983 through 2008, serving as chief judge from November 1990 to January 1993.

While the Court of Appeals will experience a loss with the retirement of two of its most experienced judges, it is pleased to welcome three new judges to the Court. Judge Robert E. Robles, of the Third Judicial District Court, was appointed to replace Judge Robinson. Judge Linda M. Vanzi, of the Second Judicial District Court, was appointed to replace Judge Pickard. Judge Timothy L. Garcia, of the First Judicial District Court, was appointed to replace Judge Alarid.

The Court of Appeals is also in the process of constructing a building in Albuquerque that will provide much needed additional office space to supplement the Court's main offices in Santa Fe. Construction of the Court of Appeals Annex, Pamela B. Minzner Law Center, began in July 2008 and is progressing on schedule. The building will be a three-story, 33,000 square foot building, consisting of office space and a courtroom. Plans are to achieve silver LEED certification.

The building is located southwest of the University of New Mexico School of Law, enabling law students to observe and become more familiar with appellate court processes and procedures. The courtroom will be constructed to allow classes to observe oral argument from a room adjacent to the courtroom where class may be conducted without discussions being heard in the courtroom. It is anticipated that construction of this building will be completed in September 2009.

# Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court

## **Background Investigations**

This division is responsible for providing judges with criminal history background investigations for incarcerated defendants. In FY 08, the division conducted 19,147 intake interviews. Of those, 3,763 defendants were released on their own recognizance; investigators placed 2,201 pre-trial service holds and performed 15,503 investigations for felony first appearances. The division also completed 25,670 NCIC criminal history reports.

## **Case Initiation/File Maintenance Division**

The division began using new software to image citations and case file information, which enabled more timely imaging. The staff will be participating with the courts' Information Technology division and the Albuquerque Police Department's (APD) pilot project to test an electronic citation transfer program. This program will upload citations issued by APD to the court's citation program and will benefit the court in numerous ways, primarily freeing up staff time, which will enable them to complete additional duties. Staff currently assigned to enter the citations may be used in other sections in this division. The first testing of this pilot will begin with the Albuquerque Police Department in FY 09.

The court initiated over 126,000 cases in FY08. Staff in this division continues to ensure the integrity of all case files is maintained. Clerks make sure all files are scanned to the proper location when picking up and delivering case files. The staff uses a laptop with wireless connection to insure files are immediately scanned upon receipt. This saves staff time as case files are easier to locate. The staff also continues to pull and prepare the docket for the 19 judicial divisions.

## **Community Outreach Office:**

In addition to handling daily news media and public inquiries, the outreach office provided dozens of tours to school groups from all levels, special education to college-level. The office arranged for mock trials, coordinated activities of court volunteers and handled special events for the court including Valentine's Day weddings and investitures and directed the re-design and implementation of, and continues to manage, the court's internal and Internet websites.

## **Compliance Division:**

The Docketing Review Unit of Compliance continues its high volume of case reviews, now managing approximately 2400-3000 files per week.

- Failure to Pay Summonses: 29,698;
- Failure to Comply Summonses: 19,217;
- Failure to Pay Bench Warrants: 9,464;
- Failure to Comply Bench Warrants: 12,329;
- Docketing Review: 157,664;
- Closed out files: 702 boxes containing 80-120 files; and
- Review of files to ensure proper adjudication of sentences prior to close out: 198,000.

Compliance also coordinated four successful Operation Warrant Enforcement operations with local law enforcement agencies. Not only did officers bring in offenders who have failed to comply with the orders of the court, but OWE efforts also resulted in an increase in the number of defendants who came in the clear up their cases at the Customer Service counters.

#### **Courtroom Support Division**

CRSS's new month-long training module continues to provide top level training opportunities for staff. The written materials cover in- and out-of-courtroom skills and the training simulators provide docketing skill practice.

#### **Customer Service Division**

This division continues to handle a high level of traffic for the court, with approximately 750 customer visits per day at the counters and more than 800 calls per day that come into the phone bank.

The division has put a renewed focus on cross-training to enhance court efficiency. Eight clerks have been cross-trained in Traffic Arraignment/Check-in. In addition, five staff members are cross-trained for Criminal/Civil areas. One lead worker and one supervisor are in the process of training another lead worker in civil procedures.

Continued cross-training and setting structured daily goals or tasks has allowed Customer Service to be more efficient in assisting clients and has given the supervisory staff flexibility to reassign individuals to areas within the division lacking coverage. The clerks of the Customer Service Division continue to assist other divisions on the first floor when they are short-staffed or need assistance.

Customer Service eliminated one daily cash register balancing/closing at civil and phone bank areas, allowing staff to provide efficient customer service.

#### **Educational Services Division**

The division organized and executed the 2008 Annual Mandatory Meeting with all 81 non-profit community service agencies in Albuquerque working with Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court.

The division participated in the formalization of the new school, Alcohol Community Education (ACE) for defendants found guilty of a Minor in Possession charge.

The division assisted the Community Outreach Division by preparing the Educational Services Division description of the 10 educational programs for the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court external website.

The division handled the process and submittal of documentation for the 2008-09 Recertification of the DWI and DI Schools required by the Traffic Safety Bureau.

The division manager was instrumental in the development of a standard format for Court Divisions' Policies and Procedures, preparing the proposal for approval by Administration and presenting it to the other Court Divisions at a quarterly Division Managers meeting.

### **Facility Management Division**

In FY 08, the Facilities Division moved office locations to the retail space in the parking garage. The division also started a green initiative to conserve energy and maintain cost effectiveness.

### **Finance Division**

The Finance Division continues to challenge its staff in executing its fiduciary responsibility to record, reconcile, report and analyze all financial transactions of the court. This is no small task considering the numbers in Fiscal Year 2008:

- Approximately 24,500 individual bail bonds (cash, misdemeanor and felony) totaling over \$64M
- Deposits of over \$9M in cash receipts for various fines, fees and court costs collected on behalf of, and transferred to, the State Treasurer, AOC, and State and Local Governments
- The preparation and processing of over 2,200 payment vouchers totaling more than \$6.6M.

### **Human Resources Division**

The Human Resource Division supports the day-to-day operations of the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court. Services include employee recruitment, employment, compensation, employee relations and administration of employee benefits and payroll, training and staff development.

The division is committed to providing the highest quality customer services. It partners with management to recruit and retain a highly qualified, diverse staff; facilitate positive employee relations; and coordinate training to enhance employee skills, performance and job satisfaction. A primary focus of the Human Resource Division is to provide management and its employees with a comprehensive and supportive human resource system based on integrity and sound management principles. This includes the development of policies, procedures, information and training in support of the agency's missions and management objectives.

### **Information Technology**

#### ***Software Development***

In FY 2008 the IT division continued migration to, and expanded use, of web technology. The division continues to create new applications, and to replace applications developed in proprietary languages to applications developed in the open source JAVA language. Significant upgrades and enhancements were made to:

- External Website - Redesigned and implemented Metro External Website;
- Internal Website - Redesigned and implemented Metro Internal Website;
- Failure To Appear (FTA) MVD Reporting;
- Extensive changes were made in data transmission. Extended statute table created to accommodate MVD requirement;
- Leave Request System - Aestiva leave request system evaluation, purchase and implementation;
- Jury Management System – major software upgrades;
- Traffic Arraignment - Designed and development of new Traffic Arraignment software;
- Officer Check-in – major software upgrades;
- Numerous Java utility programs were written to support current and future development; and
- Xreated a library to capture the image of all databases on a certain date which will allows running statistical reports as of that date.

#### ***Infrastructure and Technical Support***

- More than 2100 Help Desk requests were handled in the fiscal year;
- Deployed the Aestiva Leave Accounting Server and Application install;
- Installed the Jitterbit Message Broker Server and Application;
- LANdesk patch management and remote administration server upgrade;
- Replacement of Core Cisco 4000 switch on 1st floor;
- Major Storage Area Network upgrades;
- New Internet Service Provider Network Configuration;
- Deployment of new PCs though out the court;
- Degaussing of over 500 Hard Drives for security compliance;
- Deployed Nagios network monitoring configuration; and
- VMware server installation.

#### **Interpreters**

Staff Court Interpreters provided services for 12,618 cases in FY08, a 5% increase over FY07. Additionally, contract interpreters provided services for languages the court cannot support as well as the Spanish-speaking cases beyond its capacity to support.

#### **Jury Management**

The division coordinated the selection and training of over 4,000 potential jurors who supported 146 jury trials.

#### **Probation Supervision Division**

The Standard Supervision Unit provides pre-adjudication and probation supervision services for approximately 1,600 defendants and offenders each month.

The DWI First Offender Enhanced Supervision Unit provided supervision for "true first offenders" determined to be at high risk of re-offending. Currently this program is supervising 621 high-risk supervised offenders and 1,995 unsupervised offenders.

In July 2008, The National Association for Court Management presented the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court with a Justice Achievement Award, Honorable Mention for its DWI First Offender Enhanced Supervision Program. The Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court award was one of only two presented this year.

The division continued monitoring for Ignition Interlock compliance on all DWI offenders/defendants ordered as a condition of release. Currently there are over 317 defendants being monitored for ignition interlock compliance only within the Probation Supervision Division.

#### **Mediation Division**

The Mediation Division/Program is in its 22nd year of operation. The program began as a pilot program July 1, 1986 and became an official division of the court in 1996. The division resolved approximately 625 cases (primarily civil complaints including landlord/tenant, debt collection and consumer complaints). The division mediated a limited number of criminal cases involving private criminal complaints, including neighbor disputes, zoning issues. 1167 cases were brought into Mediation with 763 mediations held.

The division also conducted numerous telephone mediations for out of town/out of state litigants and held two advanced training workshops for volunteer mediators in an effort to build their skills.

#### **Self-Help Center**

Employees assisted 6,652 individuals during FY08, a 52% increase over FY07. 4,362 contacts were in person and the rest were via telephone.

The center also provided a wide array of literature and materials for those seeking information on civil and legal cases at Metropolitan Court where they are self-represented.

# Problem Solving Courts



## Drug Courts in Fiscal Year 2008

- The New Mexico Supreme Court approved the Drug Court Advisory Committee’s “5-Year Plan for Growth of New Mexico’s Drug Court Programs” on January 18, 2006, just prior to the 2006 legislative session. The plan aims to implement a drug court in every county in the state over the five-year period of FY07-FY11, while providing a reasonably stable and predictable level of funding requests to the legislature each legislative session. The plan has met with considerable success in its first three years.
  - The 2006 Legislature replaced lapsing federal funds at eight drug court programs, institutionalizing them with recurring state funds; and provided funding to start two new adult drug courts in counties lacking a drug court program of any kind.
  - The 2007 Legislature provided funding for three more adult drug courts, again in counties lacking a drug court program of any kind, while also funding expansion and planning of several more programs.
  - The 2008 Legislature provided funding for three new drug courts, expansion of nine others, while also institutionalizing three mental health court programs with recurring state funds; the AOC also entered into a three-year project agreement with the New Mexico Traffic Safety Bureau enabling expansion of four DWI Drug Courts in Dona Ana, Eddy, McKinley, and Valencia counties, and implementation of a new DWI Drug Court in Santa Fe county.
  - Heading into FY10, that results in 40 active drug courts in 24 of the state’s 33 counties, leaving nine counties without a drug court.
  - The state’s five mental health court programs have helped draft the New Mexico Judiciary Treatment Court Standards, the first such set of standards for mental health court programs in the country; the draft is under review by the state’s Supreme Court for final approval.
  - The judiciary has also come to recognize the significant problem of drug court program participants with co-occurring disorders, such as severe depression, schizophrenia, or bipolar disorder. Many such participants abuse drugs in order to self-medicate for their mental illness and require additional treatment beyond that already provided for their substance abuse. Several programs pursued training in 2008 to develop co-occurring disorder tracks within their existing programs, based on the successful model already in place at Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court.
- The state’s drug courts graduated another 692 participants in FY08 (moving past 4,600 total graduates since drug courts started in New Mexico in 1994), and continued to post excellent outcome measures.
  - Recidivism of graduates averaged 9.5% in the three-year period post-graduation
- National drug court recidivism average, based on 95 of the country’s largest drug courts, is 27.5% two-years post-graduation.

- Cost-per-client-per-day averaged \$24.75 per day, a substantial savings over the daily cost of incarceration of \$85.59.
- Retention of program participants (an important measure as studies show the longer the substance abuse treatment the better the outcomes) averaged an excellent 87.9%.
- Graduation rate remained high at just above 60%.
- The Court to Schools Program of Valencia County Magistrate Judge Danny Hawkes gained national media attention when it held an actual DWI sentencing hearing at Belen High School in March 2008. The high school's senior and junior classes were both in attendance as defendants were sentenced for their DWI offenses, and each defendant addressed the student body describing how drinking and driving had affected the defendant's life. The Supreme Court supports expansion of the Court to Schools Program to other magistrate courts, and Judge Warren Walton, Colfax County Magistrate Court, held a similar sentencing hearing at Raton High School in May.
- Approximately 260 drug court professionals from around the state attended the 11th Annual New Mexico Association of Drug Court Professionals (NMADCP) Conference, held on November 13-14, 2008 in Albuquerque. The largest NMADCP conference to date, it featured a presentation on the Psychopharmacology of Addiction, with workshops on Working with Clients with Mental Illness, Motivational Interviewing, Drug Testing, Stress Management, and Working with the Media.

### **Judges' Weighted Caseload Study**

The New Mexico Sentencing Commission received general appropriation funds to conduct a workload study to analyze and make recommendations regarding equitable statewide resource needs of the public defender department, offices of the district attorneys and the state courts. The study was completed in June 2007, finding that a significant number of additional judges were needed across all three court levels: 33 additional district court judges, five metro court, and seven magistrate court judges. The judiciary cites the study in its unified budget proposal, but recognizes the significant shortage of judges cannot be rectified in a single legislative session and will only ask for those where need is greatest and space already exists to house them. Similar staff shortages were identified in the report for the public defender department and offices of the district attorneys.

### **First Judicial District**

#### ***Adult Drug Court***

The First Judicial District Adult Drug Court Program is in its 11th year of working with felony-level offenders in Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Los Alamos Counties. In FY08 the program served 131 clients and 30 clients graduated from the program.

#### ***Juvenile Drug Court***

The First Judicial District Juvenile Drug Court continues to have a significant impact on the truancy rate among clients participating in the program and reduces the number of out-of-home placements due to substance abuse problems. The Early

Intervention Program continues to operate in Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties contributing to the number of successful graduates; 107 since inception of the program.

#### ***Treatment Court***

The First Judicial District Adult Treatment Court program has seen a dramatic increase in the number of defendants referred and accepted into the program over the last three years. Originally, the Treatment Court Program began treating 10 defendants, but because of the need for mental health counseling within the First Judicial District, the program was expanded and is currently working with 23 defendants. Eighteen defendants have graduated since inception of the program.

The Treatment Court has dramatically reduced the number of days a defendant spends either hospitalized for his/her mental illness or incarcerated. The average jail stay for defendants in the First Judicial District's Treatment Court program is two days and, to date, only seven defendants have required hospitalization while in the program. The Treatment Court program has proven to be highly effective for individuals afflicted with a co-occurring disorder. The most important aspect of the program is that it provides defendants with the opportunity to gain control of their lives and develop a better understanding of their illness.

#### ***Domestic Violence Division in FY08***

From July 2007 through June 2008, the First Judicial District Domestic Relations Hearing Office/Domestic Violence Division conducted 3,001 hearings. Of those, 2,104 were domestic violence matters, 29 were child support matters, 635 involved divorce or paternity matters, 195 involved juvenile delinquency or abuse/neglect matters, and 38 were mental health commitments.

#### ***Jury Division in FY08***

Jury pool numbers increased by 50 potential jurors with 250 to 350 summonses sent out. An additional Rio Arriba panel was added because of the growing Rio Arriba caseload. In FY08, there were 119 jury trials, 28 of which were civil cases and 91 were criminal cases. From January through June 2008, there was an increase of 15 cases compared to early FY08.

#### ***Fourth Judicial District***

The Fourth Judicial District implemented a new pilot adult drug court program, which has met with great success. The court hopes to acquire additional funding in FY09 to support a full-blown adult drug court program, which will complement their existing juvenile drug court program. The court continues to provide children's court mediation services for the benefit of children and their families in their district.

#### ***Fifth Judicial District***

A Unified Children's Court has been established in **Lea County District Court**, which has expanded Lea County Family Drug services to include Juvenile Drug Court. Sharing Family Drug Court staff between the family and juvenile divisions has provided the oversight needed to increase accountability and reduce recidivism among the juvenile population.

In 2006, the **Chaves County Juvenile Court** observed an increase of repeat juvenile offenders in juvenile delinquent cases. Due to a lack of funding, a volunteer Juvenile Drug team was formed and attended training in Los Angeles, California. During the next few months, this team created the procedures manual and all documents necessary for the volunteer Juvenile Drug Program. In May of 2007 statistics showed 33% of the referrals to the Juvenile Probation and Parole office involved drugs and/or alcohol. The court is moving forward and working diligently to reduce the percentage of juveniles who have continuous contacts with law enforcement and the juvenile justice system. Funds to continue the work and growth of the Juvenile Drug Court were requested in 2008 and approved for FY09.

#### **Seventh Judicial District**

The court has three adult drug court programs that operate in Sierra, Socorro, and Tarrant Counties.

#### **Eighth Judicial District**

The court implemented an Adult Drug Court Program in Colfax County.

#### **Thirteenth Judicial District**

The court continued growth in specialty courts throughout the district with strong legislative support. The court initiated a Family Dependency Drug Court in Cibola County under the direction of Judge Olguin, a mental health court in Sandoval County under the direction of Judge Davis, and a pretrial services program in Valencia County under the direction of Judge Sanchez. Additional grants have been obtained to support the operations.

#### **Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court**

There are six specialty court programs within the court. The following statistical information is for FY08.

- DWI/Drug Court enrolled a total of 387 new participants;
- Co-Occurring Disorders Drug Court Track enrolled 22 participants;
- The Urban Native American Track enrolled 47 participants;
- The Domestic Violence Early Intervention enrolled 425 participants;
- The Domestic Violence Repeat Offender Program enrolled 29 participants;
- Homeless Court enrolled 59 participants;
- Mental Health Court enrolled 232 participants;
- Competency Court monitored and scheduled 508 competency cases; and
- In-house screening unit performed 4,164 ADE screenings in FY08.

The division expanded and improved services for defendants with mental health and co-occurring disorders through The Mental Health Enhancement Project funded by a grant through the U.S. Department of Justice. Probation continues to serve persons with Mental Health issues by providing additional case management and other services to enhance individuals' quality of life and chances for success in the community.

# 2008 Highlights

## **District Courts**

### **Second Judicial District**

Fiscal year 2007-2008 was a dynamic year for the Second Judicial District Court (SJDC), its 382 employees, 26 judges, and 10 hearing officers. The SJDC consists of four specialty courts: Criminal, Civil, Children's and Family. Many diverse divisions, problem-solving programs and support services sustain the functioning of these four courts.

This was a year of technological advances, community partnering, and process streamlining for SJDC. The SJDC is ahead of the curve in its preparation for the future, and stands ready to meet the changing legal needs of the residents of Bernalillo County. Our court also recognizes the financial impact of the fluctuating U.S. economy and will persist in its quest to provide cost-effective access to fair and impartial justice for all.

Once again the Information Technology (IT) Department of the SJDC has proven to be critical in advancing the delivery of justice. In addition to accessing, servicing and maintaining the wide variety of servers and operating systems that form the technological infrastructure of our massive court, the division's 11 employees also average 2400 Help Desk service calls per year, while supporting 70 different applications, and computers at three different work facilities. Through the impressive expertise of the SJDC's information technology department employees, ever-advancing IT programs are written and implemented which continually improve the cost-effective delivery of court services locally and statewide which contribute to the court's commitment to fiscal responsibility. An exciting example of their important work stands at the information desk of the SJDC. The IT Department implemented a scrolling computerized calendar of all court hearings to help the public quickly determine where and when their case will be heard. Working closely with IT, the court's Administrative office has moved forward in acquiring and implementing a new and much improved, electronic case management system designed to modernize and streamline the day to day operations of the court, which will provide improved and user--friendly public access to the court's dockets.

Under the direction of Administration, our Fiscal division secures the court's financial integrity and is actively applying cost cutting measures that will ensure the continued high quality delivery of the court's core services. The Fiscal division provides the financial oversight of a 24 million dollar annual budget.

The creativity of our Chief Executive Officer and our Administrative office forecasts an efficient and effective future for the SJDC through acquisition of forward-thinking projects such as the electronic document management system; and, through the criminal clerks office, a computer-based judgment and sentencing program for the criminal courtrooms.

In its efforts to identify and serve both the legal needs and related societal needs of the customers we serve, the SJDC has entered into a variety of partnerships with local community agencies and organizations. An example includes the Judicial Supervision Program, administered by the Pretrial Services Division, which partners with the District Attorneys Office, the Public Defenders Office and a wide variety of health and mental health providers in the community to provide services to defendants who suffer from mental health disorders with the goal of reducing repeat criminal activity thereby improving public safety while also enhancing the quality of life of these litigants.

The SJDC continues to provide life improving programs such as the Youth and Family Counseling program at Children's Court, which provides therapeutic intervention to families with juvenile offenders, the PEG program (Programs for the Empowerment of Girls), and the Juvenile Drug Court which aims to reduce substance abuse and delinquency by the children of our county. The Family Court also addresses these often veiled social needs of our litigants by pursuing the cutting-edge F.A.I.R program (Family Assessment and Intervention Resources). This no fee program is another community partnership which collaborates with the University of New Mexico's Psychology Department to deliver assessment and treatment for domestic violence offenders and education to victims of domestic violence, through a 12 week group session program focused on parenting education and conflict reduction skill-building for co-parents who have experienced family violence in order to stop destructive interpersonal behaviors, reduce continuing violence and prevent the next generation of domestic violence. The Court Clinic of the Family Court also provides no fee mediation services to separating and divorcing families, evaluation, and other dispute resolution alternatives with a primary goal of empowering parents to resolve conflicts.

The Criminal and Civil courts and their related Clerks' offices have been impressively proactive in streamlining processes that improve both the internal functioning of the court as a whole and the delivery of customer services. The civil, domestic relations and criminal clerks offices have joined forces to restructure their service delivery into a team based approach that will provide comprehensive, standardized services to save time and reduce costs. Without the highly skilled and knowledgeable clerks who perform the core day to day functions of the court, the SJDC would not be able to process the nearly 6,000 new criminal cases filed this year, the 15,651 new civil cases filed and processed this year, and the estimated 12,000 family court caseload handled by the domestic relations clerks office this year.

Finally, our court is always vigilant of the safety and security of those it serves. To that end, in conjunction with the County of Bernalillo, the SJDC completely remodeled the front entrance of the court and its security system to enhance the safety of those entering the court. The Court Security Division also conducted

safety and security training for all court personnel this year as well as emergency evacuation training for all Emergency evacuation monitors. The Court Security Division, through a grant from the Department of Homeland Security, is partnering with the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy to develop a protocol for court security training which could be used statewide. This Division is also responsible for overseeing and coordinating our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) which will provide the SJDC with a blueprint for the immediate and seamless delivery of services at an alternate location in the event of a disaster.

The Second Judicial District Court is dedicated to proactive, innovative and cost-effective assistance to those it serves and will remain steadfast in this commitment to the public, its employees and access to the fair and impartial administration of justice.

#### **Fourth Judicial District**

The Fourth Judicial District Court welcomed the addition of a third judgeship this past year, along with much needed security staff. Additionally, the Fourth Judicial District Court was designated the first pilot site for the state's new judicial case management software. Odyssey, which replaces the older, less robust case management system, is produced by Tyler Technologies, a Texas-based software company; statewide implementation began in November 2008.

A statewide committee, consisting of various judges, technology and court staff, chose the Fourth Judicial District in large part because its commitment to data integrity and efficient use of the existing case management system. The size of the court, as well as its proximity to Santa Fe, was also taken into consideration.

#### **Sixth Judicial District**

##### *SHARE*

As our competencies improved tremendously, our agency began to gain operating confidence and dexterity with the SHARE system. There was a good feeling that the system would soon be mastered and the agency's financial statements would again become a routine chore. About mid to late April, 2008 the Monthly Budget Status Reports around which the agency had developed its accounting system was no longer available or was replaced by the new CAFR reports, which no longer provided the necessary monthly expenditures or a beginning and ending balance. This change challenged the court to start over on the development of a reporting system that would provide the necessary financial information to properly and timely manage our operations. While the system that has been implemented gives an adequate snapshot of what has already happened, it is difficult to use the reports currently available to do analysis or projections.

##### *New Judgeship*

The Division IV judgeship was instituted during fiscal year 07-08. While there

were some challenges, the overall benefits and services provided were outstanding. The abilities demonstrated by Judge G. Daniel Viramontes provided more timely service to the district's constituency while contributing to a reduction in the workload of the district's other judges. The Division IV Judgeship has also contributed to the district's expansion of services as Judge Viramontes participates in the new Adult Drug Court Program in Hidalgo County. The only misfortune is that the additional services provided by all the district courts are greatly outpaced by the demand and need for even more adjudication and other alternative judicial services.

### **Magistrate Courts**

*Accomplishments relating to facilities included:*

- Completion of the Española courthouse
- Award of construction contract and beginning construction for Las Cruces courthouse
- Civil division retrofit in Farmington
- Phase I retrofit in Gallup
- Phase I retrofit in Bernalillo
- Security retrofit in Lovington
- Collaboration with Los Alamos County and Taos County for judicial complexes housing magistrate courts, district courts, jails, and law enforcement agencies

Shari Weinstein, a new staff attorney whose position was authorized at the AOC by the 2008 Legislature, is providing much needed assistance to the magistrate courts. The National Judicial College provided the annual training to the judges, who unanimously reported the training was quite beneficial. The warrant enforcement program increased collection of outstanding fines, fees, and costs by increasing educational and training opportunities for magistrate clerks, and promoting law enforcement participation. The magistrate courts continue to focus on providing justice and serving the people of New Mexico through increased training, professionalism, and attention to accuracy.

### **Judicial Information Division**

The Judicial Information Division (JID) of the Administrative Office of the Courts provides a full range of information technology services and technology planning to the Judicial Branch in New Mexico.

#### ***Software Application Support and Application Development***

JID supports a number of off-the-shelf office productivity software tools for the Judiciary and has developed and supports many custom software applications for specialized purposes for courts. JID is responsible for supporting the statewide case management system and is now in the process of a multi-year transition from its existing case management application, FACTS, to a new application, Odyssey, which will provide much more flexibility and functionality to courts.

JID is also provides support and enhancements for the statewide jury management application. In addition, JID supports an online public information system, Case Lookup, which provides docket and disposition information to the public, via the Internet, for all magistrate and district court cases.

#### ***Network Management and Support***

JID provides the network infrastructure for courts and supports Internet/intranet and e-mail services to courts, statewide. JID also supports the Judiciary's primary website, [www.nmcourts.gov](http://www.nmcourts.gov), and all of its many subsidiary sites. In addition, JID staff members manage and monitor the statewide judicial communications infrastructure, which operates over dedicated commercial circuits, digital microwave and DSL. This network supports data communications including video services for courts throughout the State.

#### ***Help Desk***

JID provides help desk services to approximately 2000 court users for the purpose of quickly resolving computer hardware, Internet, e-mail and case management problems and other information technology problems. JID also responds to members of the public regarding case information and statistics and assists with problems that public users might have with the online public Case Lookup Internet site.

#### ***Information Technology Training***

JID provides information technology training services to court employees throughout the State and recently designed training for new users of the Odyssey case management application. JID also provides training on off-the-shelf productivity software and the statewide jury management application.

#### ***New Case Management System for Courts Statewide***

JID's preparations for the statewide implementation of the Judiciary's new case management system (CMS) was the most important JID task for FY2008. The FY2008 activities leading up to the first pilot court installation involved all Judicial Information Division units and employees.

These extensive preparations paid off when the Fourth Judicial District, one of the selected pilot courts, implemented the new CMS on November 17, 2008. Other pilot court installations are planned during calendar year 2008 and all courts, statewide, should be completely converted to the new CMS within a few years.

The Fourth District implementation included three courts, Las Vegas, Santa Rosa and Mora. The next Odyssey implementation, scheduled for the first quarter of calendar year 2009, will include two magistrate courts, Moriarty and Estancia. Many of the expected conversion issues will be similar, but there could be significant new issues, due to differences between general and limited jurisdiction courts in New Mexico. Once the two magistrate courts are running

and stable on the new CMS, new court implementations should become somewhat more predictable.

Perhaps the most important lesson learned by management from the Las Vegas rollout was that the entire team, which was made up of court staff, Tyler staff, subject matter experts, JID staff and Las Vegas court staff, could be depended upon to take care of any contingency, no matter how difficult. The team made this implementation a success.

Many JID activities related to the new case management implementation took place during FY2008, and beyond, that led up to the first successful court implementation, including the following:

- An analysis of case management needs for the Odyssey product, was completed in December 2007
- Court subject matter experts (SMEs) from courts across the State participated in court business configuration sessions during April, May and June of 2008.
- Tyler Technologies and JID customized Odyssey for New Mexico courts from January until June of 2008.
- A preliminary fit assessment (case management needs analysis) for the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court took place in May 2008.
- All new hardware to accommodate the statewide Odyssey system was installed in the JID data center during February 2008 through July of 2008
- Scripts were developed for user acceptance testing during May, June and July of 2008
- The newly customized New Mexico Odyssey release was installed at JID on July 21, 2008
- Last minute system configurations for the Fourth Judicial District were completed during September of 2008. These include creation of code tables, court calendars, court financial tracking programs, and much more.
- Odyssey training materials were developed for district courts for the Fourth District rollout and magistrate training development is now underway.
- Delivery of Odyssey training to Fourth Judicial District staff took place during October, 2008, at Highlands University in Las Vegas.
- The final Fourth Judicial District data conversion took place on three successive weekends in November of 2008.
- The Fourth Judicial Courts went live on November 17, 2008.

### ***JID Data Center Upgrades***

A complete upgrade of the JID Data Center began in FY2008, and will continue

through the first quarter of calendar year 2009. Upgrades include an new dedicated uninterruptible power supply (UPS) room, enhanced data center cooling and data center power conditioning. These upgrades were necessitated by new CMS equipment installed in the Data Center, which has approximately doubled the number of computing devices and has significantly increased the load on the Data Center's cooling and UPS systems.

#### ***Application Development***

During FY2008, JID programmers developed several new court applications including a judges' notes application, an abuse and neglect case performance dashboard, an attorney logs application, and a new employee performance evaluation application. Programmers also substantially revised or expanded the existing MyCourt, Case Lookup, Protective Order and Help Desk applications. They also maintained and supported the new Judicial Directory and Web Forms applications. All of these software applications are browser-based and centralized at JID.

JID programmers were heavily involved in the case management implementation project due to the need to integrate all existing custom court applications with the new Odyssey system. The most significant integration tasks created interfaces between Odyssey and Case Lookup and MyCourt so that these systems could continue to operate with data from both FACTS and Odyssey. The programmers also developed a completely new district and magistrate court forms application that works with Odyssey to generate needed court forms and reports.

#### ***Network and Internet***

During FY2008, the JID Systems Team continued the process of installing commercial DSL for thirty courts to provide greater bandwidth. JID Systems staff also switched the Judiciary's Internet service to a private vendor with great throughput capacity and initiated a pilot for new groupware and e-mail software that provides needed support for remote wireless devices. Staff also implemented improved network monitoring, which allows them to respond proactively to outages throughout the State rather than waiting for a call from the court to report an outage.

#### ***Staff Support for IT Governance Council and its Subcommittees***

During FY2008, the Judicial Information Division provided staff support for the Judicial Information Systems Council and its subcommittees, which provide stakeholder-based governance for all judicial technology initiatives. New subcommittees created in FY08 include the Odyssey Steering Subcommittee to oversee the CMS effort, the E-Filing Subcommittee to plan for court e-filing in New Mexico, and the Public Access Subcommittee, which is charged with developing policy recommendations for public access to online court information. Committee support by JID staff included creation of meeting

agendas, meeting minutes, project plans, position papers, information papers, presentations, and meeting schedules.

***Video Conferencing, Video Arraignment and Video Distance Learning***

During FY08, the Video Arraignment program reached a major milestone by installing its one hundredth video site. The statewide network now includes 37 magistrate courts, 17 district courts, 11 municipal courts, 30 detention centers and 5 administrative offices, which are all connected statewide through a video bridge application. JID is now responsible for supporting 150 video endpoints throughout the State with the capability of communicating throughout 31 New Mexico counties. The video arraignment program continues to schedule and manage cross-county arraignments and expert witness testimony, in collaboration with other state agencies such as Department of Corrections, Department of Public Safety and Department of Health.

***Training and Development***

During FY08, the Judicial Information Division overhauled its training center to allow for video conferencing and distance training of court staff. The training center now has the capacity to train a class of up to thirty students onsite using instructor-led training or video instruction. Training can also be delivered, via video, to remote court sites.

JID conducted training on a variety of IT-related topics, both at its training center and offsite. One of the most important technical training initiatives was two weeks of instructor-led training on business analysis for all JID developers, managers and analysts. This training resulted in these JID staff members earning business analysis and requirements development certifications.

***Help Desk***

During FY2008, the JID Help Desk responded to 4,510 calls for service from judges and/or staff and fielded 4,000 inquiries or requests from companies, government agencies and members of the general public. During FY2008, JID implemented a new help desk ticket tracking system that automatically solicits immediate feedback, via e-mail, from service requestors at the time a help desk repair ticket is closed. This feedback on timeliness and quality of performance allows JID staff to receive timely comments from customers on how service can be improved.

# Judicial Branch Strategic Goals

## ***Goal 1: Improve Case Flow Management to provide timely and fair proceedings***

### **First Judicial District**

The Administrative Assistants in the Domestic Relations Hearing Office implemented several new procedures in order to improve customer service. Procedures were set in place to ensure that all Orders of Protection are entered into NCIC, and the office continues to arrange for service of process on all Petitions and Orders of Protection. In addition, two Administrative Assistants have received training to allow them to perform more duties previously performed by the Clerk's Office, including opening new cases, filing and conforming copies of all pleadings filed in our office, allowing staff to process urgent cases much more efficiently and the customers are very happy to avoid standing in long lines at the Clerk's Office.

### **Seventh Judicial District**

The Seventh District Court directs self-represented litigants to the available resources. Socorro has a local legal aid office that provides assistance to self-represented litigants. The district provides mediation services in domestic relations cases and neglect and abuse cases in all four counties.

### **Eighth Judicial District**

The Eighth Judicial District continues to work with the case flow management system in civil cases and to provide services to self-represented litigants.

### **Twelfth Judicial District**

The Court closely monitors its cases by using the case management system whereby staff tracks due dates and case status, and closes cases for failure to pursue according to the rule date. Internal data quality reports allow the correction of docketing errors and reorganizing the maintenance system has resulted in providing timely and efficient information to the judges and the general public.

## ***Goal 2: Provide training to enhance the skills of judges and court staff***

### **First Judicial District**

The First Judicial District Clerk's Office developed and implemented a revised training plan for new employees., which has allowed clerks to become familiar with functions of the case management system prior to direct interaction with customers, improved the timeliness of customer service and decreased errors.

The Domestic Relations Hearing Officer/Domestic Violence Commissioner for the First Judicial District Court presented training regarding statutory updates to all law enforcement agencies in the First Judicial District Court to Domestic Violence Commissioners statewide, to victims advocates at a statewide training presented by Crime Victims Reparation, and to law enforcement officers at the Law Enforcement Academy.

The Domestic Relations Administrative Assistants received training presented by the Coalition Against Domestic Violence and attended both the Law Enforcement Domestic Violence Summit and the Rio Arriba County Criminal Justice Summit. These two Administrative Assistants helped more than 6,000 customers in FY08.

### **Seventh Judicial District**

Court staff attended the annual district court conference held in Las Cruces and supervisors attended a supervisor training hosted by the Judicial Education Center.

**Eighth Judicial District**

The Eighth Judicial District continues its program of cross- training staff in all divisions of the Court. Employees have attended workshops on Domestic Violence, National Drug Court Programs and National Court Administration training.

**Twelfth Judicial District**

The staff attend trainings such as the JEC Supervisor's Workshop, FTR monitor training, financial training, and the annual and regional District Court Staff Conferences. District Judges participate annually in the Judicial Conclave and the annual state and national Drug Court Conferences. Monthly training is provided to clerk staff and staff continue cross-training in an effort to maintain continuity in services provided to court users.

***Goal 3: Provide reasonable and affordable access to justice in safe and adequate facilities*****First Judicial District**

The First Judicial District Domestic Relations Hearing Officer/Domestic Violence Commissioner served on the Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Coordinated Community Response Teams.

In conjunction with the Santa Fe Sheriff's Department and the Response Emergency Communication Center (RECC), the First District Court implemented a reverse 911 system that will alert employees of emergencies via their office phones or cell phones.

**Seventh Judicial District**

Sierra County began renovating the courthouse in Truth or Consequences, which will provide an increase in office space for staff as well as better public access to the facility.

**Eighth Judicial District**

The Eighth Judicial District has worked closely with county government in Taos and Colfax regarding the new Judicial Courthouse Complex, which is in the planning stage and in Taos and Raton should be completed by 2010 .

**Twelfth Judicial District**

The Court continues its collaboration with the county to ensure the safety of the judges, court staff and the public. Great strides have been made this year with the installation of security equipment and the addition of security personnel. The Court received an appropriation to replace broken and worn out chairs in two of its courtrooms and upgraded the sound system in a third courtroom.

***Goal 4: Obtain adequate funding and resources for court operations*****First Judicial District**

In FY08, the Court's Jury Management Division was placed under the oversight of the Court Executive Officer. A Program Manager oversees all aspects of the jury division for Santa Fe, Los Alamos, and Rio Arriba Counties, which improved the flow of jury activities.

In FY08, the Treatment Court obtained a grant from the City of Santa Fe to provide counseling to clients.

**Seventh Judicial District**

The Seventh Judicial District Court replaced the public address systems in Socorro and purchased new audio/visual equipment to assist jurors and witnesses during trial.

**Twelfth Judicial District**

The Court continues to seek funding to meet its needs while keeping expenditures within the limits and constraints of its budget.

***Goal 5: Obtain and use technology to collect, process, and share information needed to process cases and manage resources*****First Judicial District**

In FY08, the Jury Division added a convenience feature for empanelled jurors to enable them to view the next week's schedule via the Internet. The web page includes the weekly panel and orientation information.

The Records Division of the First Judicial District Court purchased and initiated the use of a case file and evidence tracking system that utilizes bar coding to label and scan files and evidence. This system provides a more efficient system to inventory case files and evidence.

The Court created an Imaging Division to convert case files to digital format using digitizing scanners and software. The digitized versions of the case files meet permanent retention requirements (as microfilm versions currently do) and are readily available to the public within the courthouse. Anticipated utility in the future includes the accessibility of case files for Judges' computers on the bench during hearings.

The First Judicial District Court formed a team of court staff to inventory and prep all cassette tapes for digitization. The FJDC has contracted with a vendor to convert all taped proceedings from cassette tape to MP3 format. Currently, the Court is in the fourth phase of the project with approximately 24,107 tapes already digitized and delivered to the Court on hard drives. The total number of tapes that will be digitized through December 2008 is 60,000. Approximately 78,000 tapes will need to be digitized after this phase is complete, with 21,873 inventoried and pending digitization.

**Eighth Judicial District**

The Eighth Judicial District continues to expand its knowledge of the SHARE System to manage Human Resources and finance. The Clerk's Office has worked with the development and testing of the Odyssey Program, which will eventually replace the FACTS system.

**Twelfth Judicial District**

The Court continues to obtain and use technology to collect, process and share information needed to process cases and manage resources, and to enhance its website to provide up-to-date information for jurors and to provide procedural information for the general public.

The Court continues to maintain and expand the use of its video arraignment and video conferencing equipment.



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