

THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

CIRCUIT COURIER

APRIL - JUNE 2024

Judge Robert Panse Retires



On June 12, at the Full Court meeting, the judges of the Circuit said farewell to County Court Judge Robert Panse. Judge Panse was appointed to the bench in 2011 by former Governor Rick Scott. Prior to his judgeship, Judge Panse was employed as an Assistant State Attorney followed by several years of private practice. He also served as in-house counsel at the South Florida Management District. In his capacity as County Judge, Judge Panse presided over both criminal and civil cases. He will be remembered for his diligence and his 35 years of public service, for the benefit of Palm Beach County citizens.



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Civility Award



Pictured above is Judge Burton with JA Mary Beardsley

The Hon. Charles Burton was honored with the Civility Award at the Project Nuremberg Lawyers Luncheon, held by Temple Beth El of Boca Raton on May 3. The Civility honor is given to someone who promotes professionalism, civility, and ethics in the practice of law.

South County Jurist of the Year

The Hon. Rosemarie Scher was named Distinguished Jurist of the Year by the South Palm Beach County Bar Association (SPBCBA), during the organization's 62nd Annual Installation Gala held on May 4. Newly installed SPBCBA President Wilnar Julmiste presented the award to Judge Scher.



Pictured above: Angelo Gasparri (brother), Wilnar Julmiste – SPBCBA President, Judge Rosemarie Scher and Nicole Gasparri (sister).

North County Jurist of the Year



The Hon. James Nutt was named Jurist of the Year by the North County Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association on May 23. The award was presented by North County Section President Matthew Okell and was accepted for Judge Nutt by Chief Judge Glenn Kelley, along with Judge Nutt's wife Cheryl Kempf and his Judicial Assistant, Millie Noonan. This award is among the most prestigious awards to be presented to the judiciary. Each year, nominees are reviewed & voted on via secret ballot by the Board of Directors.

Hon. Ashley Zuckerman



On April 3, members of the Boca Chamber Leadership group visited the Main Courthouse to observe the courtroom of Judge Ashley Zuckerman.

Hon. Darren Shull



On April 5, the Honorable Darren Shull had the pleasure of officiating the wedding of Alexandria Harris and Trey Kaufmann. Congratulations and best wishes to Alexandria and Trey.

Hon. Scott Kerner



Judge Scott Kerner welcomed students from Morikami Park Elementary to his courtroom April 15 through April 17. The students were able to ask questions, perform a mini mock trial and experience a K9 demonstration.

Hon. Sherri Collins



On April 17, Judge Sherri Collins administered the new attorney oath to Adam Bernstein and Derrick Gaiter.

Around the Circuit - Highlighting the Judiciary

Hon. Samantha Feuer



On April 18, Judge Samantha Schosberg Feuer administered the new attorney oath to Breeden Tesone and Luc Adeclat.

Hon. Sarah Willis



On April 19, Judge Sarah Willis presided over a mock trial with Classical Conversations homeschool group.

Hon. Darren Shull



On April 24, Judge Darren Shull presided over a mock trial with the Classical Conversations homeschool group of Lake Worth, Waverly, and Wellington.

Around the Circuit – Highlighting the Judiciary

On April 26, several judges and magistrates from the 15th Circuit participated in the Reading & Robes program at Pine Jog Elementary. The students were able to read along with the judges and magistrate to Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s book “Turning Pages.”

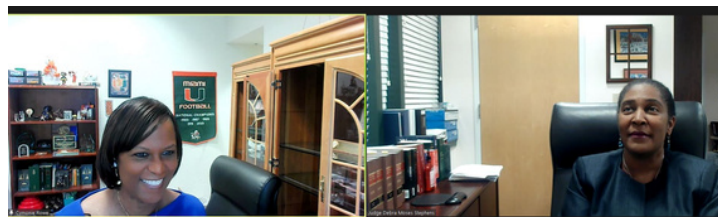


Pictured above (l to r): Judge Ori Silver, Judge Samantha Schosberg Feuer, Judge Laura Burkhart, Judge Danielle Sherriff, Magistrate Ilana Marcus, Judge Sherri Collins, Judge Lauren Burke, Judge Stephanie Tew, Judge April Bristow and Judge James Sherman.

Judge Cymonie Rowe led the FAU Judicial Legacies Series, a six-week course for students at the FAU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. The purpose of the series was to delve into and discuss the impact and outcomes of landmark SCOTUS cases. Guest lecturers from around the state and nation participated including Retired Judge Matthew Stevenson, 4th DCA; Judge William Thomas, 11th Judicial Circuit; Bruce Jacob, Dean Emeritus, Stetson University Law; Robert Gordon, Assistant Public Defender - 15th Circuit; and Mary Beth Tinker, Petitioner in the 1969 Tinker v. Des Moines SCOTUS case. Other Judges from our Circuit participated as guest lecturers including Retired Judge Catherine Brunson, Judge Debra Moses Stephen, Judge Stephanie Tew, Judge Ashley Zukerman, and Judge Reid Scott II.



Pictured above is Mary Beth Tinker, Annette Boyd Pitts and Judge Cymonie Rowe



Pictured above is Judge Cymonie Rowe and Judge Debra Moses Stephens



Pictured above is Eleventh Circuit Judge William Thomas, Judge Cymonie Rowe, Judge Stephanie Tew, Judge Ashley Zuckerman and Retired Judge Catherine Brunson



Pictured above is Public Defender Robert Gordon, Bruce Jacob - Dean Emeritus, Stetson University Law (onscreen), Judge Reid Scott II and Judge Cymonie Rowe

Investiture of the Hon. Santo DiGangi



On May 10, the Circuit held the investiture ceremony for the Hon. Santo DiGangi, who was appointed to the County Court bench by Governor DeSantis. Judge DiGangi served as a staff attorney in the Circuit from 2009 to 2011. During the well-attended ceremony, many colleagues, family members, and friends presented gifts and spoke highly of Judge DiGangi's personality, community involvement and work ethic, as well as his love for his family.



Construction was recently completed on the 4th floor of the Main Courthouse, Juvenile Wing. At the request of Administrative Judge, Kathleen Kroll, and at least two Chief Judges (including Chief Judge Kelley), the County renovated space greatly improves the juvenile facilities. The renovation offers secure space, larger hearing rooms, and updated technology for use by the juvenile magistrate, senior judges, and court administration staff of the juvenile division. The juvenile magistrate uses one hearing room to preside over Review Hearings, while the other hearing room is available for TPRs and other court events. The space includes attorney/client rooms and a child-friendly room. The completed buildout comes years after its initial request because construction was stalled, in part, due to COVID closures and post-COVID supply chain delays. With this improved addition in the Juvenile wing of the Main Courthouse, the juvenile judges, magistrates, and court staff, can more effectively address challenges that impact children and families in our community.

Hon. Charles Burton and Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer



On April 26, Probate Judges Charles Burton and Samantha Schosberg Feuer, along with Court Operations Manager Tehera Smith, participated in a probate seminar, sponsored by the Broward County Bar Association. Other participants included probate judges from Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

Hon. Cymonie Rowe

On April 30, Judge Cymonie Rowe administered the new attorney oath to Julia Saldana and Christie Soule. Both are staff attorneys with the Circuit.



Hon. Cymonie Rowe and Hon. James Sherman



The Hon. Cymonie Rowe led the annual mock trial event at Carver Middle School on May 3. The group of 7th grade students were assigned roles and experienced serving in a judicial capacity. Judge James Sherman participated as the presiding judge.

Around the Circuit – Highlighting the Judiciary

On May 6, the Palm Beach County chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers and the 15th Circuit hosted thirty-five 8th graders from Pahokee Middle School, as well as their Dean and teachers. The students were greeted by Chief Judge Glenn Kelley. Students engaged in a tour of the Law Library, Jury Room, holding cells, a K9 Demonstration, and a panel discussion with Judges Burke, Harper, Rowe, and Sherriff. The students were able to ask questions of the panel and hear of the judicial progression from law student to judge.



Pictured above: PBC Fawl Event Chair Tori Whalen, Judge Cymonie Rowe, Judge Bradley Harper, Judge Lauren Burke, Judge Danielle Sherriff, JA Dionne Sybblis and PBC Fawl Immediate Past President Heather Stohlman

Hon. Lauren Burke



The Hon. Lauren Burke welcomed students from the St. Ann Catholic School's debate team to her courtroom on May 8. The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students participated in a mock trial. Judge Burke provided valuable feedback on their mock trial roles.

Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer and Hon. Daliah Weiss



The Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer and the Hon. Daliah Weiss served as guest speakers for South Palm Beach FAWL's May Meeting Luncheon, presenting before a group of members and sponsors. The May 16 meeting's theme was improving the mental health and wellness of legal professionals.

Magistrates



Pictured above is Magistrate James Williams, Magistrate Ilana Marcus, Administrative Magistrate Maxine Williams and Hearing Officer Jodi Cason.



Pictured above is Meghan Clary, Esq., Judge Laura Burkhart, Magistrate Maxine Williams and 9th Circuit Magistrate Lisa Bedwell

Magistrates James Williams and Ilana Marcus, Administrative Magistrate Maxine Williams, and Child Support Hearing Officer Jodi Cason, attended the 2nd annual General Magistrates and Child Support Hearing Officers' Educational Institute May 23-24 in Kissimmee, Florida.

The training included sessions on Evidence, Military Issues Impacting Child Support, and Parenting and Ethics. During the session on Evidence, Judge Laura Burkhart participated as a presenter, along with Lisa Bedwell, a magistrate from the Ninth Circuit.

Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer



On June 27, Judge Samantha Schosberg Feuer presided over a mock trial during FAU's College of Social Work and Criminal Justice's first week of their High School Summer Camp. The summer camp allows high school students the opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at how the justice system works.



On April 1 and April 3, Court Administration staff held training sessions for judicial and magistrate assistants. The half-day sessions included presentations from directors and managers of the Circuit’s various court programs such as Court Reporting, Court Interpreting, Finance, and Human Resources



On April 17, in the Main Courthouse, the Florida Bar Family Section, and the Office of State Courts Administrator, hosted a workshop as a part of the Trauma and Family Law series. The full day event covered many topics related to the impact of toxic stress, adverse childhood experiences, self-care technology, and guiding principles for family courts.



The Hon. Sherri Collins, Katherine Mullinax, General Counsel, and the Circuit’s Court Technology staff, hosted a lunch and learn event on April 18 entitled: “Technology in the 15th Circuit.” Christina Chappa, Computer Specialist II, and Macsson Etienne, Desktop Administrator, demonstrated the Circuit’s newest technology equipment, available to attorneys, for use during court proceedings.



On April 19, the Trial Court Administrator (“TCA”) and the Court Administration Directors held their Directors’ Training at Mounts Botanical Garden. This full day event, organized by Melissa Sotillo and William Hutchings, was led by professional trainer, Jay Caputo. Mr. Caputo addressed the theory of transformative coaching skills and implemented exercises for the group to conduct. The training was one of the annual trainings held by the TCA as a team building exercise for the Directors and training to equip sharpen their leadership skills.

Around the Circuit – News from Court Admin Staff

The Circuit hosted the annual, “Take Your Child to Work Day” on April 25. The day was full of activities and law-related exercises which provided the students a behind-the-scenes look at court operations. During breakfast, the Chief Judge kicked off the day’s festivities with an appearance and welcomed all the attendees. All joined in on a tour of the courthouse, jury room, court reporting, and other areas of the court. The attendees were treated to a K9 demonstration, mock trial, and a lunch visit from Joseph Abruzzo, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller. The day ended with breakout sessions that included games, crafts, and a discussion panel with court administration staff.



Chief Information Officer, Noel Chessman, and Clerk IT Director, Parik Chokshi, were invited to give a presentation on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the Minnesota Statewide Court Administration Conference. The conference, held May 1st in St. Cloud, Minnesota, brought together court administrators, directors, case managers, and clerk personnel for a two day workshop on AI. The presentation, entitled “AI & RPA to Benefit the Courts; a Judicial Perspective” tracks the “lights out” processes of docketing select pleadings, and generating the correct judicial orders without human intervention. Representatives from Minnesota’s Office of State Court Administrators reached out to Mr. Chessman after viewing this presentation in September 2023 at the National Center for State Court’s Court Technology Conference in Phoenix.

On May 3, the Circuit’s Health and Wellness Committee hosted “Mental Health Day” in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month. Judges, JAs, and court administration staff were able to enjoy activities throughout the day including a Zen Room with a tea station, meditative coloring, journaling, mental health jeopardy, and interactions with the Circuit therapy dogs.



Director of Administrative Services, Melissa Sotillo, and Public Information Officer, Richalyn Miller, attended the Governor’s Hurricane Conference in West Palm Beach May 12-May 17. The event is the nation’s largest conference focusing on hurricane planning, preparedness, response and recovery. The event included numerous workshops and training sessions related to media relations and public information, emergency management, and projections on the 2024 hurricane season.



Around the Circuit – News from Court Admin Staff

The Office of State Courts Administrator’s Human Resources department held an Administrative Services Division training May 15 to May 17 in Orlando, FL. Several members of the Circuit’s court administration staff attended and several of our staff presented on Circuit innovations.

Chief of Personnel Services William Hutchings II presented on the Circuit’s Health and Wellness Initiative, Human Resources Manager Justin Forest showcased the Circuit’s Employee Appreciation Week, and Human Resources Analyst II Joi Lasnick presented on the Trial Court Judicial Assistant Incentive Plan.



Human Resources Events

Lunch & Learn Dates:

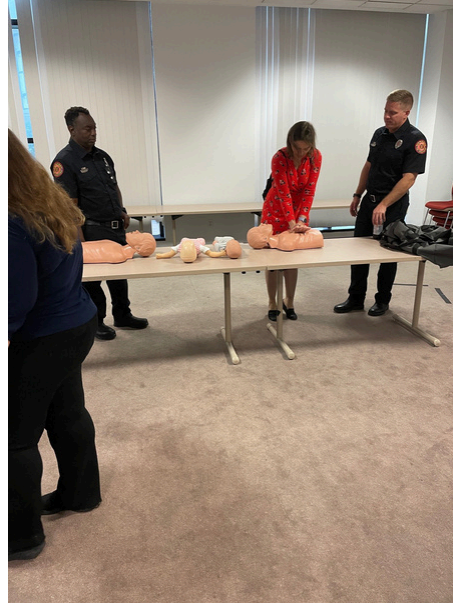
April 2024: On April 15, Allen Gray, Small Business Development Manager from the Office of Equal Business Opportunity provided information on “How to Start a Business.”

May 2024: On May 20, Amy and Rena Wang, graduates of Saint Andrews School, presented on the topic of “Financial Literacy 101: Investing and Starting a 501(c)(3).”



Around the Circuit – News from Court Admin Staff

June 2024: On June 17, Lieutenant Iris Hernandez of the West Palm Beach Fire Department led a CPR, AED and First Aid training.



New Employee Orientation



Several new Court employees attended the Circuit's employee orientation course. During the course, the employees were introduced to the Circuit's Mission and Vision, the Circuit's Core Competencies, the structure of the judicial branch, and their role as officers of the Court.

New Hires | Employees On the Move

Welcome to the Circuit's newest employees

April 2024

Ruth Piñero, Court Program Specialist II, Probate;
Tanysa McBurrows, Judicial Assistant to Judge Santo DiGangi;
Alessandra Valdes, Administrative Assistant III

May 2024

Torina Jenkins-Edwards, Judicial Assistant to Judge Debra Moses Stephens;
Gabriel Caballero Manzanares, Systems Administrator III

June 2024

Erica Alter, Civil Court Program Specialist II;
Jordan Bonnet, Student Technologist;
Iman De Abreu, Administrative Assistant II, Human Resources;
Joel Figueras, Criminal Court Program Specialist II;
Brenda Trim, Civil Program Coordinator;

Employees on the Move

May 2024

Kerby Pierre, Systems Administrator II

June 2024

Renee Ward, Judicial Assistant to Judge Cymonie Rowe

Administrative Orders

The following AOs were updated or entered April - June 2024 (most recent to oldest):

06-28-2024	11.106	Alternate Assignments	
06-28-2024	11.101	Assignment of Judges	
06-28-2024	5.104	UFC Magistrates	
05-09-2024	4.109	Redacted Probable Cause Affidavits	
05-09-2024	11.102	Assignment of Administrative Judges and Executive Committee	
05-03-2024	5.101	Assignment of Unified Family Court Cases	



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