

CNO REVIEW

July 2015

ACCESSING THE COURTS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The Ohio Supreme Court recently provided more than \$2.5 million in grants for more than 100 tech projects. (See story on page 6).

About Court News Ohio

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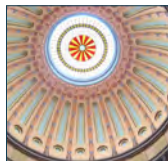
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Visit courtnesohio.gov for the most current decisions from the Ohio Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, and Court of Claims.

Supreme Court of Ohio

Heirs to Oil and Gas Below Eastern Ohio Property Filed Proper Documents to Keep Mineral Rights

On June 18, the Supreme Court concluded that the owners of land in Harrison County cannot declare that the oil and gas interests below their property have been abandoned because the holders of those interests properly filed documents to preserve their rights. State law allows a property owner to reclaim separately held oil and gas rights if those rights have been abandoned and the owner publishes notice of the intent to declare that abandonment. However, in a unanimous opinion written by Chief Justice **Maureen O'Connor**, the court ruled that a mineral rights holder's claim to maintain those rights, filed according to state law, prevents the loss of those interests if the claim is filed within 60 days after the surface owner publishes the notice. The decision affirmed the judgment of the Seventh District Court of Appeals only on the issue of the mineral rights holders' claim to preserve.

Dodd v. Croskey
Slip Opinion No. 2015-Ohio-2362

Officer Had No Authority to Make Traffic Stop Outside Jurisdiction

A traffic stop for a minor misdemeanor made by a township police officer without statutory jurisdiction or authority violates the protection against unreasonable searches and seizures in the state constitution, the Supreme Court ruled on June 23. In affirming the appeals court decision, the

Supreme Court concluded that a Lake Township police officer was not authorized by state law to enforce a marked-lane traffic law on an interstate highway and that the officer's subsequent stop and search of the vehicle were unreasonable. As a result, the appeals court properly suppressed the drug evidence found in the car, Justice **Terrence O'Donnell** wrote in the 5-2 decision.

State v. Brown
Slip Opinion No. 2015-Ohio-2438

Court Decides Allied Offenses Case

A defendant who fails to object to a sentence in the trial court forfeits all but plain error review of that sentence, including claims that the crimes sentenced were allied offenses and should have been merged, the Supreme Court ruled on June 24. Concluding that Frank Rogers forfeited the argument that he was sentenced for allied offenses, the Supreme Court stated that a trial court does not have a duty to inquire about whether the offenses may have been allied if the defense does not raise the issue at sentencing. To establish plain error in a case involving multiple offenses, a defendant has the burden to show a "reasonable probability" that his convictions were for allied offenses, Justice **Terrence O'Donnell**, writing for the court, stated. The court concluded that Rogers did not carry that burden. The court added that the trial court properly sentenced Rogers for two counts of receiving stolen property because the separate crimes involved two different victims. The decision affirmed in part and reversed in part the judgment of the Eighth District Court of Appeals.

The ruling also addressed a conflict among appellate courts in the state.

State v. Rogers
Slip Opinion No. 2015-Ohio-2459

Courts of Appeals

Eighth District: Most of Prison Sentence for Navy Charity Scammer Affirmed, But Not Veterans Day in Solitary Confinement

The mastermind of a scam to bilk an estimated \$100 million from donors to a fake national veteran's charity does not have to spend every Veterans Day in solitary confinement, and one year of his sentence should be reduced, an Ohio appeals court ruled. Still addressing him as Bobby Thompson, the Eighth District Court of Appeals affirmed on June 11 most of the 28-year sentence against the former founder of the U.S. Naval Veteran's Association, but reduced the sentence by 12 months. Ohio courts did not have jurisdiction over some of the identify-fraud charges against him. Thompson, whose real name is John Donald Cody, was convicted in November 2013. Along with prison time, Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Judge **Steven Gall** fined Thompson \$6.3 million and ordered him to spend every Veterans Day in solitary confinement.

State v. Thompson
2015-Ohio-2261

HappeningNow

News and Notes from Courthouses Across the Buckeye State



Judicial Symposium on Addiction & Child Welfare

The opiate crisis is impacting Ohio's families.

"Our abuse, neglect, and dependency docket is dominated by cases in which the parents have become involved with children's services agencies because they have problems, and at the moment predominately with heroin," Delaware County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge David Hejmanowski said.

The rate, according to Judge Hejmanowski, ranges from 80 to 90 percent of the juvenile and probate cases. While Delaware County has court and treatment programs to address the issue, the judge said there's more that can be learned from what other counties are doing. That's why he put together a team of community partners to attend the 2015 Judicial Symposium on Addiction and Child Welfare on June 23 in Columbus.

"Sitting in a room where we can discuss with other counties and other communities what they're doing, what they have found to be successful, so that we can share with them what has been successful for us, is incredibly important to us and incredibly helpful to us because it's that one-on-one communication about what works," Judge Hejmanowski said.

Judges from 56 Ohio counties and their community partners attended the one-day symposium presented by the Ohio Supreme Court, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and hosted by the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities.

Attendees heard from state and national leaders addressing the intersection of addiction, child welfare, and court systems. The event also highlighted promising practices and programs throughout Ohio where community partners are coming together to positively impact children and their parents.

A final request for the participants at the close of the symposium encouraged the countywide teams to continue the day's discussion and implement the action plans that were developed.

"Without a commitment from each of us, the addiction battle will be lost. This fight will only be as successful as our local leaders on the frontlines make it," Ohio Supreme Court Judicial Services Director Milt Nuzum said.

Study Shows That Veterans Courts Work

Andrew Armstrong recently graduated from the Veterans Treatment Court in Mansfield. The 27-year-old U.S. Marine sergeant started his military training in 2007 and served in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011. His life changed when he came back home. He became depressed and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

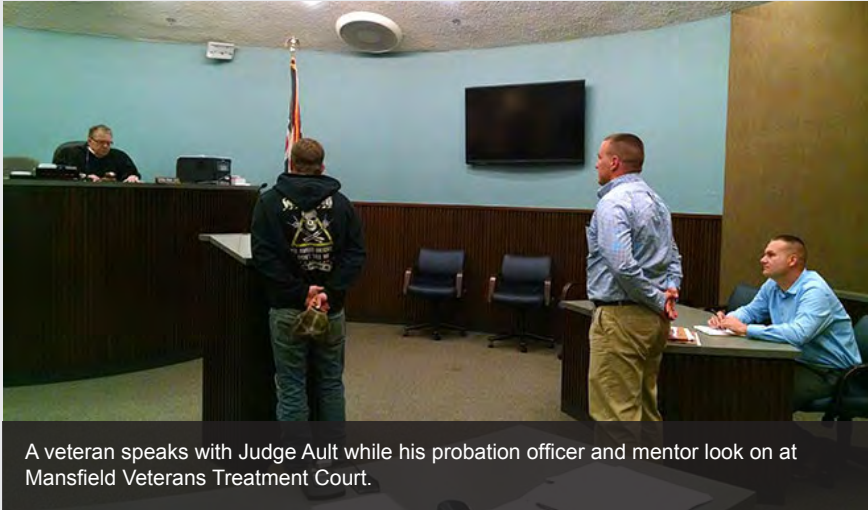
Two years later in 2013, Armstrong got in trouble with the law when he shot a gun and threatened suicide. He got help, though, thanks to the Veterans Treatment Court, led by Judge **Jerry Ault** at Mansfield Municipal Court.

"While in the program, they focused on keeping me in line and on the right track to getting back to where I should be – not only in life, but as a person as well," Armstrong said. "It opened my eyes to the fact that I am not alone, but that people before me, as well as after, have succeeded in coping and getting on with this new life."

For Armstrong, the program transformed his future. To help determine whether Veterans Treatment Court is successful for a majority of military personnel like Armstrong, Mansfield Municipal Court, and Hamilton County Municipal Court in Cincinnati recently took part in a study.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration gave a grant to Craig Knudsen and Scott Wingenfeld so the two could evaluate the effectiveness of Veterans Treatment Courts. The two work at the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in Columbus.

The study followed about 90 veterans to examine the efficacy of the courts. Knudsen and Wingenfeld wanted to see if the specialized docket court improved jail recidivism, depression, quality



A veteran speaks with Judge Ault while his probation officer and mentor look on at Mansfield Veterans Treatment Court.

of life, and recovery for the veterans. The participants, who ranged in age from 21 to 73, were interviewed at the beginning of treatment and then again at six months and 12 months into the program.

Knudsen said he was surprised by the overwhelmingly positive results. Of the 86 veterans, only nine veterans were rearrested during the 12-month study and four were arrested after the program.

“When factoring in overall functioning, the results were equally impressive,” Knudsen said. “Only 10 percent were re-arrested, 21 percent gained full-time employment during the program, 31 percent went from living in unstable housing situations to stable housing, and 16 percent enrolled in school or training programs.”

Knudsen also noted that the veterans’ mental health improved greatly.

“The mental health treatment was so successful that while all participants started the program meeting diagnostic criteria for PTSD, only 25 percent exiting the program did,” Knudsen said.

The study stated that 200,000 veterans are in U.S. jails or prison, which is about 10 percent of the total inmate population, and that 18 percent of veterans experience

some type of PTSD and depression symptoms.

Knudsen said the pilot study “grew out of a need to understand whether implementing the treatment court would result in improved quality of life and treatment outcomes.”

“This program provided the support they needed to recover, rehabilitate, and become productive again,” Knudsen said. “Veterans often feel very isolated when being re-integrated into civilian life, and the peer mentors provided guidance, social connections, and hope for these individuals.”

The Ohio Supreme Court has 17 Veterans Treatment Courts across Ohio in the certification process. Michele Worobiec, specialized dockets counsel with the Supreme Court, said the study is an “important first step in providing data that substantiates the success of these dockets.”

“A Veterans Treatment Court understands the way justice-involved veterans struggle with issues such as substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma,” Worobiec said. “We look forward to learning more about how veterans courts can continue to serve as an effective resource.”

Story continues on page 11.



Ohio Court Managers Earn Fellows Credentials

Six Ohio court managers became Fellows of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) in Washington, D.C., in May. ICM, a division of the National Center for State Courts, created the fellows program more than 45 years ago to improve administration management. Its 16-month curriculum prepares professionals for leadership and management development. More than 1,200 court personnel have graduated from the ICM Fellows Program since its inception.



Adult Guardianship Education Courses Underway

The first adult guardian education courses offered through the Ohio Supreme Court Judicial College were held June 24 and 25 at the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center. The one-time, six-hour course focused on guardianship fundamentals required under new rules that took effect on June 1, including details about a guardian’s responsibilities, reporting requirements, and the rights of adult wards. Courses will be offered monthly and throughout Ohio.


In addition to 16 live course offerings scheduled through the end of 2015, the Judicial College will also offer interactive live seminars broadcasted to local communities beginning in August. Online courses will also be available later in 2015. The 2016 course schedule will be released later this summer.

Guardians appointed after June 1, 2015, are required to complete a fundamentals course within six months of their appointment date. Guardians appointed on or before June 1, 2015, will have until June 1, 2016, to complete the course.



ACCESSING THE COURTS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Ohio Supreme Court Provides \$2.5 Million in Grants for More



There is an expectation, especially among younger generations, that courts should be accessible through technology. In a recent survey by the National Center for State Courts, more than a quarter of the respondents expressed a preference for online options to access court records, pay fines, or get answers from court staff.

Some Ohio courts are challenged to keep up with the evolving technology while holding down costs. For the first time, the Ohio Supreme Court is providing more than \$2.5 million in technology funding to support local courts in removing barriers to efficient and effective administration of justice.

The funding through the Ohio Courts Technology Initiative will be used for 109 technology projects at courts in 61 counties across the state. Chief Justice **Maureen O'Connor** announced the grants in February, and all courts were notified by mid-June if their grant proposals were approved. When possible, the chief justice has personally delivered checks to court officials.

“Financial constraints at the local level can impede needed upgrades in technology. I’m pleased that the Supreme Court could assist in filling the funding gap,” Chief Justice O’Connor said.

Supreme Court Deputy Administrative Director **Mindi Wells** added, “The Ohio Court Technology Initiative was designed

to provide direct benefit to Ohio courts, specifically to support the delivery of technology services and the exchange of information by and between courts and justice system partners. With the budgetary resources available this fiscal year, it was a prime opportunity to launch the technology grant program.”

Willoughby Municipal Court Judge **Harry E. Field** said the money came at an “important time” for his court to make much-needed computer server improvements that had been delayed because of finances.

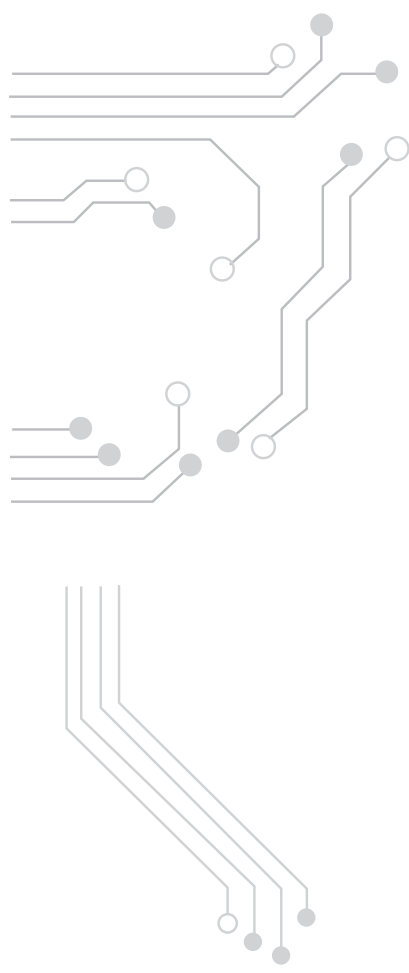
“I thank the Ohio Supreme Court for its vision regarding court technology and its considerable assistance in reducing the financial obstacles that impede technology advancements,” Judge Field said.

Wide Array of Projects

The grant awards range from a few hundred dollars to a few hundred-thousand dollars for projects such as website redesigns, security upgrades, and online case information access.

The Geauga County Common Pleas Court will apply its more than \$140,000 grant toward the purchase of equipment to offer electronic document filing to attorneys and self-represented litigants, 24/7 docket access, and online payment services.

“This grant will enable all of the divisions of the court to be more efficient



THROUGH COURT

More Than 100 Projects

in performing the court's duties while giving electronic access to the public for the filing of documents, review of court records, and payment of fees and obligations," Judge **Forrest Burt** said.

At the Kettering Municipal Court in Montgomery County, Presiding Judge **Frederick Dressel** looks forward to upgrading the court's audio and visual equipment with a nearly \$32,000 grant.

"This grant will increase access to justice for the citizens served by our court by facilitating on-demand language interpretation, expanding video conferencing, and enhancing evidence presentation capability," Judge Dressel said. "These enhancements will improve the quality and content of the court's record with the addition of video and enhanced sound systems, while allowing parties seated throughout the courtrooms to hear and see proceedings more clearly."

The Fifth District Court of Appeals encompasses 15 counties and approximately 7,633 square miles. The court travels throughout the district, and, with only one dedicated courtroom when hearing cases in Stark County, borrows courtrooms to hear cases. A new video conferencing system with a \$14,000 grant from the Supreme Court will remove the geographical and scheduling barriers that exist now.

"This grant will enable the court to

hear cases expeditiously and to reduce travel in one of the largest appellate districts in the state. This grant will benefit parties and lawyers, as well as the judges," Presiding Judge **W. Scott Gwin** said.

Video conferencing will also be available in each of Columbiana County's courthouses, reducing the amount of time and money spent to transport inmates. A combined effort between the clerk of courts and county commissioners, on behalf of all the Columbiana County common pleas, Columbiana County municipal, and East Liverpool municipal judges, netted a check for \$78,814.

"The grant funds will make it possible for Columbiana County to stay

up to date with the latest technology available in video conferencing. I am certain that all the judges in Columbiana County appreciate the support of the Ohio Supreme Court," Common Pleas Court Judge **C. Ashley Pike** said.

Trumbull County Family Court Judges **Pamela Rintala** and **Sandra Stable Harwood** accepted a check for \$33,000 to buy a high-volume scanner and a desktop scanner for bulk document scanning. Judge Rintala said the current system requires pages to be scanned one at a time: "This will enable our employees to accomplish their duties in a more efficient manner."

Story continues on page 12.

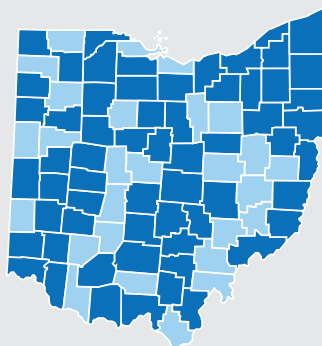
TECH GRANTS BY THE NUMBERS

\$ **2.5**
MILLION

FOR

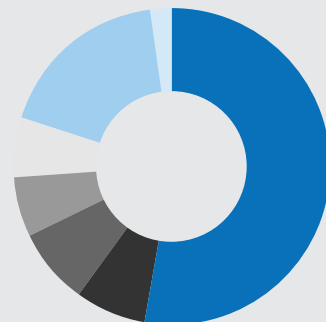
109 TECH
PROJECTS

IN



61 OHIO
COUNTIES

Funding Categories



- Additional or replacement hardware (e.g., desktop computers, servers, etc.)
- Additional or replacement software
- Upgrade to an existing case management system
- New or additional self-service kiosks for jurors, litigants, or probationers
- Upgrade to network infrastructure
- Upgrade or purchase of technology equipment
- Other

AVERAGE AWARD AMOUNT: \$ **23,388**



CNO Legislative Digest

Each month, Court News Ohio Review tracks bills and resolutions pending in the Ohio General Assembly that are of interest to the judicial community.

Photo courtesy of the Ohio Statehouse Photo Archive

HB 11, Rep. Andy Brenner (R-Powell); Rep. Margaret Ann Ruhl (R-Mt. Vernon)

To create a domestic relations division of the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas and to create a judgeship for that division.

STATUS: Introduced in the House on Jan. 28, 2015, and referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Passed the House on March 17, 2015 (93-0). Referred to the Senate Civil Justice Committee on March 25, 2015. Voted out of committee on June 10, 2015. Awaiting action by full Senate.

HB 151, Rep. Marlene Anielski (R-Walton Hills)

To expand the offenses of menacing by stalking and telecommunications harassment, to prohibit a person from knowingly causing another person to believe that the offender will cause physical harm or mental distress to a family or household member of the other person, to increase the penalty for assault when the victim is a volunteer firefighter, and to correct a cross reference in the theft statute to special purchase articles.

STATUS: Introduced in the House on April 13, 2015, and referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Reported out of committee at its third hearing on May 26, 2015.

HB 153, Rep. Mike Dovilla (R-Berea)

To change the date on which presidential primary elections are held.

STATUS: Introduced in the House on April 13, 2015. Passed the

House on April 22, 2015 (56-41). Passed the Senate on May 27, 2015 (23-10). Signed by the Governor on June 10, 2015. Effective in 90 days.

HB 164, Rep. Dorothy Pelanda (R-Marysville); Rep. John Rogers (D-Mentor-on-the-Lake)

To allow a person who is convicted of an offense that may not be sealed to apply to have the conviction sealed if, before the person makes that application, the offense is changed so that it may be sealed.

STATUS: Introduced in the House on April 23, 2015, and referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Reported out of committee at its third hearing on June 9, 2015.

SB 139, Sen. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati); Sen. Sandra Williams (D-Cleveland)

To require the clerk of a common pleas court to retain a copy of the original trial file when a death penalty is imposed, to specify that there is no page limit on petitions for postconviction relief in death penalty cases or in appeals of denials of such relief, to provide for depositions and subpoenas during discovery in postconviction relief proceedings, and to require a judge hearing a postconviction relief proceeding to state specifically in the findings of fact and conclusions of law why each claim was either denied or granted.

STATUS: Introduced in the Senate on April 6, 2015, and referred to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. Its second hearing was June 10, 2015.

**SB 161, Sen. Scott Oelslager
(R-Canton)**

To authorize probate judges to issue search warrants.

STATUS: Introduced in the Senate on May 12, 2015, and referred to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. Voted out of committee during its second hearing on June 10, 2015. Awaiting a vote by the full Senate.

**SB 165, Sen. Peggy Lehner
(R-Kettering)**

To establish procedures for the use of medical orders for life-sustaining treatment and to make changes to the laws governing DNR identification and orders.

STATUS: Introduced in the Senate on May 18, 2015, and referred to the Senate Civil Justice Committee. Its first hearing was June 10, 2015.

ON THE BENCH

Cuyahoga County Judge Among Recipients of Bar Association Awards

Two northeast Ohio judges were honored on June 5 by the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (CMBA) at its annual meeting and inaugural luncheon.



Judge Michael P. Donnelly

Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court Judge **Michael P. Donnelly** was selected as this year's winner of the Honorable William K. Thomas Professionalism Award. The award is given to a lawyer or judge who has significantly contributed to the enhancement of professionalism in

the Greater Cleveland legal community by exemplifying the goals of the Ohio Supreme Court's "Lawyer's Creed" and "Aspirational Ideals."

Among his many accomplishments, Judge Donnelly has served on and chaired the Ohio Supreme Court's Commission on Professionalism and also participated in a national two-year leadership and management initiative after being identified as a "Justice System Leader of Tomorrow." With the CMBA, he has co-chaired the Task Force on Civility & Professionalism and spearheaded the creation of a series of interactive continuing legal education programs on professionalism. He serves as chairman of the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court's Civil Rules Committee and as a trustee for the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association and the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association.

Judge Dan Aaron Polster

U.S. District Court Judge **Dan Aaron Polster** was named the 2015 Justice for All (JFA) Volunteer of the Year Award for his exemplary service and outreach to the youth in the community.

Judge Polster has been a dedicated volunteer in The 3Rs program since its inception, serving as a team captain for each of the nine years. He has served on The 3Rs Committee and is co-chair of the Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee, reaching out to new volunteers and ensuring that they remain committed to the program. In addition, Judge Polster volunteers time to the Louis Stokes Scholars Program. Each summer, he welcomes the scholars to his courtroom to observe a court proceeding, followed by lengthy sessions in which he personally engages with them in discussions about the justice system and careers in law.

The nonprofit CMBA operates as a center for legal professionalism in the region, promoting the highest ethical and professional standards. Serving the largest legal community in the state, the CMBA has nearly 6,000 members.

The Agenda

Upcoming events, training opportunities, and conferences for judges and court staff. For more information, contact the event sponsor at the website provided.

Judicial College Courses

judicialedemy.ohio.gov

July 7

Probation Officer Training: Introduction to Assessment & Case Planning
Probation Officers
Dayton/Beavercreek

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course

Adult Guardians
Laypersons
Athens

July 8

Guardian ad Litem Continuing Education Course: Understanding Child Development
Guardians ad Litem
Athens
1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course

Adult Guardians
Professionals
Athens

July 9

Guardian ad Litem Continuing Education Course: Understanding Child Development
Guardians ad Litem
Cambridge
8:30 a.m. – Noon

July 14

Probation Officer Training: Intro to Motivational Interviewing
Probation Officers
Toledo/Perrysburg

July 15 & 16

Supervisor Series: Fundamentals of Effective Leadership
Court Supervisors
Columbus

July 21

Probation Officer Training: Introduction to Assessment and Case Planning
Probation Officers
Akron/Fairlawn

July 22

Guardian ad Litem Continuing Education: Understanding Child Protective Services
Guardians ad Litem
Columbus
1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course

Adult Guardians
Laypersons
Cleveland

Search Drills

Adult Probation Officers
London

July 23

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course
Adult Guardians
Professionals
Cleveland

July 23

Guardian ad Litem Continuing Education: Understanding Child Protective Services
Guardians ad Litem
Columbus
8:30 a.m. – Noon

Search Drills

Juvenile Probation Officers
London

July 24

Juvenile Detention Train-the-Trainer
Probation Officers
Columbus

July 28

Probation Officer Training: Introduction to Motivational Interviewing
Probation Officers
Columbus

August 4

Probation Officer Training: Professional Communication
Probation Officers
Dayton/Beavercreek

August 5

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course
Adult Guardians
Laypersons
Bowling Green

Guardian ad Litem

Pre Service Course (6 of 9)
Guardians ad Litem
Columbus

August 6

Fundamentals of Adult Guardianship Course
Adult Guardians
Professionals
Bowling Green

August 6 & 7

Certified Court Manager Seminar
Certified Court Managers
Columbus

August 7

Delinquency & Unruly Web Conference
Judges & Magistrates

Dispute Resolution Training

sc.ohio.gov/JCS/disputeResolution

July 23 & 24

Basic Mediation/Uniform Mediation Act
Columbus

Language Services Events

sc.ohio.gov/JCS/interpreterSvcs

July 10 & 11

Modes of Interpretation for Oral Exam Candidates
Exam Candidates
Columbus

Supreme Court of Ohio

sc.ohio.gov

July – September 1, 2015

2015 – 2017 Biennial Attorney

Registration is Open

sc.ohio.gov/attorneyPortal

July 3

Court offices closed in observance of July 4th

July 15

Deadline for Mayor's Courts to Submit Second Quarter 2015 Reports

July 28 – 30

Ohio Bar Exam Administered

New Location: Roberts Centre
Wilmington

Miscellaneous

July 27 – 29

Association of Municipal & County Judges of Ohio (AMCJO) Summer Conference
Member Judges
Mason

VETERANS COURTS | Continued from page 5.

Judge Ault started Mansfield's veterans court – the first of its kind in Ohio – in 2009. He said one reason why the program is so successful is because all team members are involved in trying to help get the veterans back on their feet. The treatment team consists of attorneys, probation officers, mentors, and local health organizations.

"We rely heavily on our assessment/evaluation process and our treatment team to establish a treatment plan that is best for the individual," Judge Ault said. "[The veterans] understand we want to help them but there is a significant commitment on their part, so the decision to make a positive change in their lives must be their choice."

Army vet Daron Minard, 44, went through Judge Ault's Veterans Treatment Court after he drove while under a DUI suspension. He also participated in Knudsen's study. When Minard graduated from the program, he said it was his probation officer who helped him want to get his life back on track.

"He spent countless hours being in my corner guiding me, talking to me," Minard said. "I can honestly say I have never had a man in my life that took the time to care about what was really happening and going on, to listen and to understand."

The veterans in Mansfield are also paired up with mentors during their time in treatment court. Established in July 2011, the Veteran Mentoring Program teams up the veteran going through the court system with another vet who knows what they are going through, creating a support system, Judge Ault said.

"Mentors have created pseudo unity and act as the veteran participant's mentor, cheerleader, and advocate," said Lorie Fourhman, the mentor coordinator in Mansfield Municipal Court. "The bond is unique, healing, and strengthening for both the veteran mentor and the participant, and has

a positive, supportive impact on the veteran participant's time with the court."

And that support of mentors, probation officers, and other team members, Judge Ault said, helps the veterans thrive while participating in his treatment court.

"I think they learn we sincerely want them to be successful," Judge Ault said. "Participants soon realize it's not just about them. It's about family, a decent job, and actually feeling better about themselves. Graduation is a special time for them to begin anew."

"I have always had a special appreciation for those who serve our country and truly believe this is an opportunity for my court to contribute in a small way to a veteran who may have lost his or her way," Judge Ault added.

And that appreciation is how Armstrong got out of the court system and into the classroom. He has already received his associate's degree with the intention of obtaining a master's degree and specializing in PTSD. He'd like to get a job in a local Veterans Affairs clinic and continue to help other veterans as they struggle to adapt.

He's on the right path. Armstrong became so invested in his treatment program that he became a mentor with Judge Ault's program this year.

"Having now graduated from the program, I find myself as one of the mentors for the other veterans and only hope to do the same for them," Armstrong said. "People make mistakes, and every person needs different ways in which to get through to them. The program provided me with many tools and people which I could turn to in time of need, which sometimes can make the world of difference to an individual just knowing someone is there."

TECH GRANTS | Continued from page 7.

The Canton Municipal Court will use its \$51,150 grant to buy digital signage that will include answers to frequently asked questions and court news.

“The implementation of the digital signage project will improve access to the courts and assist court patrons, jurors, and litigants in navigating the court system. This project would not have been realized without the assistance of the Supreme Court. Our court looks forward to the Supreme Court’s continued involvement in projects that benefit our community,” Presiding and Administrative Judge **Richard J. Kubilus** said.

New computer network servers will be installed at Lima Municipal Court with the help of a \$94,000 grant.

“With this funding, the Lima Municipal Court will not only improve its technology but will afford the public with a greater speed and access to court information and assist us in developing the use of video arraignments, video pre-trial conferencing, and interpretation services, as well as self-service kiosks,” Judge **Tammie K. Hursh** said.

Implementation and Outcomes

The Supreme Court funding covers one-time costs, with the local court responsible for any maintenance or ongoing support costs. All purchases or upgrades must be completed, installed, operational, and in use by Sept. 1, 2015, according to **Colleen Rosshirt** of the Supreme Court’s Case Management Program who coordinated the program.

“These projects were selected for the positive impact expected on the administration of justice and increased efficiency. We look forward to feedback from each court about how those outcomes are being met,” Rosshirt said.

There were 336 requests for funding submitted. While not all the requests could be approved, Chief Justice O’Connor commended each judge and court staff for submitting grant applications, and added the Supreme Court will continue to look for opportunities to assist local courts with resources that improve access to justice.



ABOVE: Montgomery County Probate Court Judge Alice O. McCollum, Kettering Municipal Court Judge Frederick Dressel, and Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor with ceremonial check during a presentation in Dayton. **RIGHT:** The Seneca County Juvenile and Probate Court received funds for a new walk-through metal detector.

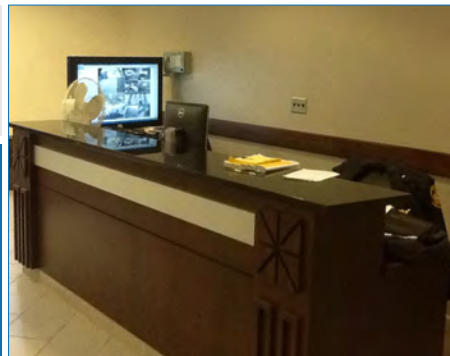


ABOVE: Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor presents a ceremonial check to Clermont County Common Pleas Court Judge Thomas Herman.



LEFT: Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Tammy O’Brien, Stow Municipal Court Judge Kim R. Hoover, Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor, and Summit County Juvenile Court Judge Linda Tucci Teodosio at check presentation in Akron.

RIGHT: The 6th District Court of Appeals used grant money for a new computer, monitor, and security camera networking.



MORE INFORMATION

A complete list of the technology grants is available at:
courtnewsOhio.gov/techgrants