

Courtside

NEWS FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT

SPRING 2010

Claire A. Williams Sworn In to Serve as Court's New CEO



Presiding Judge James J. McBride delivers the Oath of Office to Claire A. Williams, the new Court Executive Officer.

Claire A. Williams, an attorney who has held several leadership positions in the San Francisco Superior Court, was sworn in February 19, 2010 as Court Executive Officer.

With family, outgoing CEO Gordon Park-Li and staff looking on, Presiding Judge James J. McBride gave Williams the oath in her new office in Room 205 of the Civic Center Courthouse.

"I am proud to serve as the administrative leader of the San Francisco Superior Court," Williams said. "I am grateful to our talented and dedicated staff members who have been serving the public with distinction in spite of the state budget crisis and its impact on our Court."

The Court has changed Williams' title from Chief Executive Officer, the title held by the now-retired Park-Li, to Court Executive Officer, which conforms to Rule of Court 10.610 and is consistent with other courts throughout California.

"The Court is fortunate to have Claire's leadership as we transition from Gordon's steady guidance to a new CEO who will face some of the most challenging issues our Court has grappled with in decades," Judge McBride said. "Claire will provide the continuity and stewardship of our Court while we undertake a process to find our next CEO."

The Bench appointed Williams, who will serve as CEO for at least six months while the Court searches for a permanent CEO. The deadline to apply for CEO position is May 20, 2010. More information is available at the Court's Web site at www.sfsuperiorcourt.org.

SF Board of Supervisors Reconvenes in Honor of Former CEO Gordon Park-Li

On March 23, 2010, the Board of Supervisors honored Gordon with a proclamation that deemed that day "Gordon Park-Li Day in San Francisco." After the Board reconvened in Gordon's honor inside the elegant Board of Supervisors Chambers, Supervisor Bevan Duffy read the proclamation, which stated that Gordon "has been a true partner to the City in making sure ... the balances and responsibilities we have in our judicial system are preserved, and there is cooperation and coordination between City government and the Court."

Gordon Park-Li, continued on page 3



Supervisor Bevan Duffy presents Gordon with a proclamation in City Hall.

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Courtside

SUPERIOR COURT OF
CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

James J. McBride
Presiding Judge

Katherine Feinstein
Assistant Presiding Judge

Claire A. Williams
Court Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Judge James J. McBride, Chair

Judge Susan Breall

Judge Katherine Feinstein

Judge Loretta M. Giorgi

Judge Charles F. Haines

Judge Kathleen Kelly

Judge Cynthia Ming-Mei Lee

Judge Patrick J. Mahoney

Judge Richard B. Ulmer, Jr.

Commissioner Sue M. Kaplan

EDITOR

Ann E. Donlan

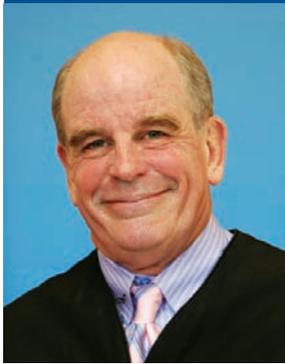
About this Publication

The Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco, publishes *Courtside* periodically to highlight the achievements of the Court's Judicial Officers and staff.

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Presiding Judge



James J. McBride

New Asbestos Department Reduces Juror Use, Increases Settlements

It's only been four months since the launch of the new asbestos department, but the results already confirm the urgent necessity to improve asbestos case management. With the cooperation of the asbestos bar and the concerted efforts of our Bench members and staff, the Court has been able to achieve my goal of improved case management in these highly

complicated cases in our Court, which has the largest asbestos caseload in the state
Consider the numbers:

- 88 asbestos settlements in April 2010. In April 2009, the Court logged just six asbestos settlements.
- Juror use has plunged from a high in 2005 of 14,323 sent in asbestos cases to 2,467 through April 30, 2010. If the trend continues, the Court will use the fewest asbestos jurors in 2010 since at least 2003.
- Total Court days in asbestos trials have fallen from an average of 45.4 days per month in 2009 to 21.3 days per month through the first four months of 2010.
- In four months, backlogged asbestos groups awaiting trial have fallen from 67 in January to 34 in April.
- Between June 2009 and May 2010, asbestos groups awaiting trial have fallen from 106 to 57. Similarly, new case management efforts have driven down the number of total asbestos cases awaiting trial from 852 in June 2009 to 628 in May 2010.

While it is true that asbestos filings are down from last year, and there may be other unknown factors at play for these improved numbers, there is no doubt that the increased attention to our asbestos caseload is an important step in the right direction. In the past, cases languished and did not progress toward resolution. From the bench, I knew this was happening — because I was part of it. Shortly after becoming the Presiding Judge in January 2009, I made it a priority to study the issues and then pursue a strategy to remedy this significant issue for our Court. I asked Claire A. Williams, along with Wayne Parinas, to oversee a working group of Bench Officers and Court staff to work on these new efforts to manage asbestos cases more directly and effectively.

With the cooperation of Judges and staff, we are heartened by the evidence of progress. I want to thank these people for their contributions:

Judges Harold E. Kahn, James A. Robertson, II, Ernest H. Goldsmith, Tomar Mason, Marla J. Miller, John K. Stewart and Jeffrey S. Ross; Commissioner Arlene T. Borick; CEO Claire A. Williams; Deputy Jury Commissioner Pat Kilkenny; Civil Administrator Wayne Parinas; Asbestos Litigation Settlement Manager Pang V. Ly; Legal Research Attorneys John Ellis, Kimberly Gee, Clarissa Guerro, Elizabeth Kelber and Jessica Williams; Court Manager Regina Dennis; Trial Delay Reduction Coordinator Kathy Cox; Court Supervisors Donna Lok, Maura Ramirez and Vera Mu; Clerks Audrey Huie, Jhulie Roque, Dana Okazaki, Ernalyne Bura, Rochelle Veluz and Sajja Ravinantapricha; IT staff Arlene Monroy and William Knowles; Civil ADR Administrator Jeniffer Alcantara; and Principal Management Analyst Michael Corriere and the e-filing unit.



The Judicial Officers and Staff behind the creation of the new Asbestos Department in Department 220 gather on January 11, 2010, to celebrate the first calendar.



James J. McBride
Presiding Judge

Supervisor Dufty then invited Supervisor Sean Elsbernd — who represents Gordon in District 7 — to make some remarks about him. Supervisor Elsbernd joked that after seeing the photos of Gordon’s Hotel Nikko retirement party, noticing the friends and colleagues sitting in the Chambers that day, and knowing of his tribute that night at City Hall, “I’m just grateful you’re retiring during my second term and not in my first term, so that I don’t have to worry about you running against me.” He added that “it was great to have you as a constituent,” and emphasized that during his tenure on the Budget & Finance Committee, “You were one department that I knew when the numbers came forward, those were the numbers. Those were accurate.” He thanked Gordon for his many years of service, and after applause, Gordon approached the podium to make his remarks:

“I see the room is practically filled with my former colleagues, co-workers, friends and associates, so I thank you for coming here today.

President Chiu, Supervisor Dufty, Supervisor Elsbernd, Supervisors, I can’t tell you how honored I am to be here, and to hear your kind words and comments. As a native San Franciscan, born and raised, and educated in San Francisco, I am truly grateful that I have had the opportunity to have such a rewarding career here in San Francisco — a career in which I was able to serve not only the citizens of San Francisco, but also Californians and people nationwide. It truly was a remarkable career that I was able to live. A lot of what’s been accomplished over the years at the Court is due to the guidance of our Bench — our Judges and Commissioners, and the referees, and the good work of the dedicated staff — and I acknowledge their contribution, and their assistance, and their support of my endeavors.

Over the years, I have worked with a number of outstanding individuals. I must say it has been a pleasure working with all of those (City) entities — your Budget Analyst, Mr. Rose and his capable and dedicated staff, the City Attorney and his staff, the Controller, the Treasurer, the

Mayor’s office and their capable staff, and also many of you and many of your predecessors. As Supervisor Dufty said, we got a lot of things done and it was a pleasure working with all of you to reach our common goal — and that goal was for the good of San Francisco, and I am proud of the fact that I played a role in accomplishing that over 37 years with the Court.

Let me just close by saying, reflecting back, that the decisions that were made by this body were the right decisions — maybe I should back up and say they were ultimately the right decisions. There’s always been a lot of debate, discussion and so forth, but I think all of us had the good of the City and the citizens of San Francisco at heart when we made those decisions, and I applaud you for making those decisions, and for continuing to make those decisions. First I thank you for reconvening in my honor — and like I say, I am truly, truly honored by this event, and thank you, again, from the bottom of my heart, for all you have done, not only for me, but for our Court, and for our City. Thank you.”

We Say Goodbye: Tributes to Gordon Park-Li

By Elena Simonian

A couple of weeks ago, I sat down to go through pictures to find some for Gordon’s retirement party. It was like a walk down memory lane. A very sentimental walk. Gordon and I go back to the mid-1970s when we were so young and didn’t know any better.

As I flipped through the pictures, I came across one of Gordon and some other Court employees at the 1976 Municipal Court Clerks Convention in San Diego. Conventions were something that we loved to attend and better yet, host. The first one that we worked on together was “Come to Heaven in ’77” at the Sheraton Palace. It was grand! Gordon chaired the 1988 convention where the main dinner was held on the cable car tracks in the Cable Car Barn. And this convention was even grander! San Francisco had the reputation as the City that knew how and Gordon didn’t let the conventioners down.

We attended conferences in Portland, New Orleans, Reno and Las Vegas, among others. We held hot dog picnics on the grass outside Room 101 and then graduated to the

Reno BBQ Cook off. We participated in softball games at Glen Park on Ray York Day in honor of one of our employees. Instead of playing softball we started attending the Giants’ games, and let it never be said that we missed an opportunity to party. No matter how early we got to the games we never made it into the park to hear the National Anthem.

Christmas was a special time for the employees. First we held our annual party at the Hall of Justice, Room 101, and then moved to the basement of the Veteran’s Building with Santa et al. Eventually Gordon started the tradition of management hosting and serving a Christmas lunch for our employees, which continues today.

These are some of the extracurricular activities that kept us a Court family. As the Court grew larger, it was difficult to maintain the familial culture that we experienced early in our careers. However, Gordon always kept an open door for his employees and remained steadfast in his loyalty to the Court and made his decisions based on his Golden Rule: It’s

for the good of the Court.

Over the past 40 years Gordon was my colleague, supervisor, Clerk of the Court, and then my CEO, but one thing that will always remain the same ... he is my friend.

Congratulations Gordon on your well-deserved retirement.

By Judge Patrick J. Mahoney

Thank you for your extraordinary service to the Court. Your thoughtful and compassionate leadership has been uniquely beneficial to the entire Court family. May your retirement years be equally rewarding to you.

By Judge Jeffrey S. Ross

Dear Gordon,
Upon learning of my judicial appointment, my first contact with the San Francisco Superior Court was your call. My subsequent meeting with you both confirmed the reality of my appointment and comforted me that the transition would go smoothly.

We Say Goodbye, continued on page 4

You are the consummate Court administrator, easing the way for all of the new Judges. You have created a warm and supportive environment for the employees of the San Francisco trial courts. The effect of your leadership is most evident as we all endure the pressures and economic hardship of the monthly furloughs and hiring freeze: We are meeting our obligations to the public and handling these challenges with poise and grace.

We are all in your debt and will continue to benefit from your contributions to the Court and to San Francisco, even as you are perfecting your golf game and traveling the world.

Thank you for making the San Francisco Superior Court a wonderful place to work.

By Judge Richard B. Ulmer Jr.

I haven't had the pleasure of working with Gordon as long as many here at the Courthouse have. But my brief tenure permits me to recall vividly my first meeting with him.

It was late June 2009. I had just been appointed to the Bench and was sitting in Gordon's office, awash in questions about the new job. I was immediately struck by how kind, competent and helpful this Gordon Park-Li was, as he sat there serving as my portal to a new world.

In these past months, I've learned infinitely more about how important Gordon has been, and is, to our Court. But that initial meeting will remain a happy memory long into the future. Best wishes in your retirement, Gordon!

By Patricia Dowling

I recall meeting Gordon in the early '90s when the courts were located in beautiful City Hall. In those days, the court reporter in Department One did the scheduling of the court reporters. Gordon's door was always open to us to discuss our problems or issues. We could count on Gordon to remain calm, professional and fair no matter what the situation. Occasionally, Gordon would break from his polished demeanor to have a good laugh with the staff when the Personnel Manager, Marge McSweeney, would show us her famous "mouse" trick.

Judge Joseph Desmond was particularly fond of Gordon, and you could hear the laughter from Judge Desmond's office as Gordon and Judge Desmond reminisced about the good ole days in San Francisco. We came to learn that Gordon is not only an

exceptional Administrator, but he is also an extraordinary human being.

By the San Francisco Official Court Reporters

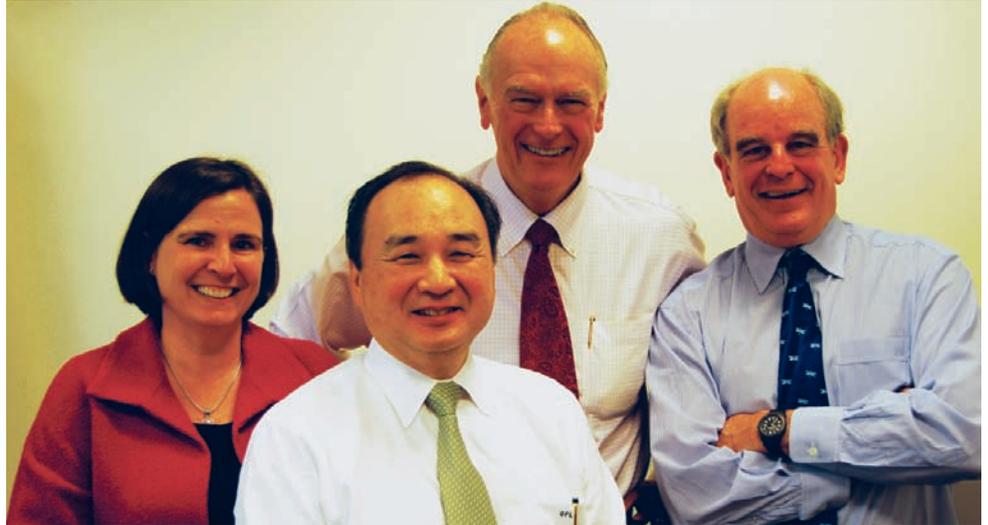
The San Francisco Official Court Reporters would like to thank Gordon for his support and professionalism through the many years of our wonderful working relationship. Gordon is a one-of-a-kind Administrator who knows how

to finesse his position with a human touch, and at the same time, adeptly manage the everyday business of the courts. We salute you, Gordon, on a job well done and wish you the very best in your retirement!!

By Michael Corriere

It's only natural at the end of a long journey to

We Say Goodbye, continued on page 5



Last Day: Claire A. Williams, Judge Jerome T. Benson and Presiding Judge James J. McBride celebrate Gordon's last day as CEO.

Gordon, Gordon, Gordon, what can I say?

- Grace under pressure
- Outstanding work ethic
- Respected by all
- Dapper (always)
- Oh how you will be missed
- Never to be forgotten...

I feel fortunate to have spent almost a decade under your guidance of the Court. Remember, once a part of the Court family, always a part of the family. Best wishes.

— By Commissioner Rebecca Wightman



Gordon and Michael Corriere share a smile during Gordon's office send-off on his last day.

look back and survey the terrain over which you've traveled, to reflect upon the places you've been and perhaps also to search for evidence of your footprints on the landscape. Leaders reflect upon the decisions they've made, the changes they've wrought and to which they've been subject. They remember the people with whom they've shared their time and look for the lasting impact of their works, the good they've left behind, the lives they've touched and made better.

Walter Lippmann, founding editor of *The New Republic*, felt that leaders meet their final test by leaving behind in others the conviction and the will to carry on. Judging from the courage and resolve I've perceived in my colleagues through these difficult times, it is clear that you've left behind just such a legacy. Your steady leadership has instilled confidence in us all, and you have given freely of yourself to bring forth the very best in each of us. I thank you for your service, your generosity, and your kindness, and I wish you and your family all the best in the future.

By Deborah Johnson

Mr. Park-Li, I would like to take this time to personally thank you for your dedication to the employees of the San Francisco Courts. I have not known you for long, but I appreciate the way you stood tall to maintain staff during these difficult financial times. You kept us abreast of our situation and I appreciate your honesty. I want to wish you well and Godspeed. Thanks.

By Lisa Lightman

Thank you Gordon — for your steady and calm leadership, your ability to let others lead and for your wise counsel. You will be missed.

By Peter Ong

Thank you for your 38+ years of dedicated service, guidance, teachings, inspirations, leadership, and visionary examples to follow. Your devotion to your employees, the Court, and the City made you a great asset and you will be greatly missed!

By Susan Patrick

Documentation is derided as the gum in a bureaucracy; paperwork often used as a metaphor for inaction. Unlike so many administrators I have previously served, you have consistently assisted me in the timely execution of the Court's contracts and related documents. Thank you.

Gordon Park-Li Receives Awards to Honor Nearly Four Decades of Public Service in San Francisco

Here is a list of the much-deserved awards Gordon received to honor his retirement and service to the San Francisco Superior Court, the City and County of San Francisco, and the State of California:



As Assistant Presiding Judge Katherine Feinstein looks on, Mayor Willie Brown congratulates Gordon Park-Li on his retirement during a well-attended City Hall tribute celebration. Photo by Mary Ann Scanlan

A U.S. flag which was “flown over the United States Capitol at the request of the Honorable Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator. This flag was flown for Gordon Park-Li on Feb. 19, 2010.”

Certificate of Appreciation from U.S. Rep. Jackie Speier. “From construction of the Civic Center Courthouse to ushering in the use of cutting-edge technology, you have overseen a great number of advancements during your four decades at the Court. Our community has truly benefited from your numerous achievements.”

Resolution from the Judicial Council, signed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, Chairman of the Judicial Council; and William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts. The resolution thanks Gordon for “his contributions to the promotion of public trust and confidence in the integrity and independence of the judicial branch and to the fair administration of justice and the role of the Courts in providing access to the rights and liberties guaranteed for all Californians by the Constitution of our great state.”

Copy of The Federalist from the Administrative Office of the Courts, signed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George; William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts; Ronald G. Overholt, Chief Deputy Director; and Chris Patton, Regional Administrative Director.

Letter of Congratulations from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger who said Gordon’s “vision and efforts have been noble.” The letter added that Gordon will be dearly missed by colleagues and the people he served. “California is very proud to call you one of its own.”

Resolution from the California Legislature, which offered sincere thanks, appreciation and “best wishes for a long, happy and healthy retirement.” Signed by State Sen. Leland Y. Yee, Assistant Pro Tempore of the California State Senate; State Sen. Mark Leno of the 3rd Senatorial District; Assemblyman Tom Ammiano, of the 1st Assembly District; and Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, of the 12th Assembly District.

Certificate of Recognition from Sen. Mark Leno and Certificate of Recognition from Assemblyman Tom Ammiano. Sen. Leno commended Gordon’s “personal commitment to Court employees and San Francisco residents who need assistance navigating the complexities of the judicial system. It is through the steadfast work of devoted individuals such as you that more people can be better served in a system that can often be daunting.”

Proclamation from the City and County of San Francisco, presented by Mayor Gavin Newsom, for Gordon Park-Li Day in San Francisco.

Certificate of Recognition from San Francisco District Attorney Kamala D. Harris

Certificate from Public Defender Jeff Adachi

‘Lunch and Learn’ Sessions a Big Hit with Staff

By Annie Pascual

Businesses that empower staff to lead and contribute to the enterprise’s success reap the benefits in multiple ways. The Court is fortunate to have leaders who recognize that supporting and encouraging employees to contribute positively to the Court delivers not only internal staff benefits, but also enhances our customer service to the public.

Here at the Court, that staff-initiated process grew out of the Leadership Excellence for Aspiring Professionals (LEAP) program taught by Orin Johnson, our Training Instructional Designer. Upon completion of the program, Civil Court Administrator Wayne Parinas acknowledged and embraced the LEAP graduates’ potential and challenged us to see how we could use our LEAP education and work experience to contribute to the Court. At first it was only an idea, but like all great things, something spectacular blossomed and this group of eager Court employees bonded and became a self-directed team called the CADRE.

Developing a Mission Statement

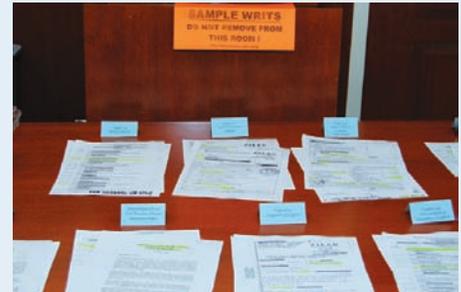
Delving into what the purpose and desire of the CADRE was we determined that our main objective was to learn about the Court and its functions. However, obtaining this goal was neither apparent nor simple. Ultimately we reached agreement on the concept of “Lunch and Learn,” staff-taught, fun interactive sessions on Court operations. By engaging with those around us and distinguishing our purpose, we formed our Mission Statement: “To research, promote and develop interactive learning methods for the benefit of all participants through the sharing of experience, Court knowledge and information.”

After hours of discussions and decision-making on how to deliver this new and exciting method of providing information to the Court’s curious minds, we tested the waters. Our first introduction to the Court of CADRE’s “Lunch and Learn” was the wonderful Carnival “Meet and Greet.” This event was open to all employees to play games to test their knowledge of various Court departments, followed by an enjoyable lunch



Top: Deputy Court Clerk II Tim Lavorini applauds fellow clerk Anita Bairogh for answering a Writ question correctly during the CADRE Lunch and Learn session.

Right: Education materials for the Lunch and Learn program helped participants learn about Writ of Execution procedures.



together. We had an amazing turnout of more than 60 people. Inspired by their apparent desire to learn in a fun environment, we created our first official “Lunch and Learn” session.

Focus on Writ of Execution

As part of our research, we surveyed the employees in the Civil Clerk’s Office about their interests and expertise they could share. This survey revealed that many of our colleagues had a very specific interest in Writ of Execution filings, so naturally it was our first topic. CADRE members collaborated on the best way to approach the topic as well as the most interactive way to deliver the information. We decided to open the session with an informative skit, a PowerPoint presentation to elaborate, and then ended with a game to reinforce the information. Our main goal was to ensure people felt involved in the learning process, had fun, and left knowing something new and were able to use this information. With more than 45 people in attendance providing their support and sharing their knowledge, the session was a success! Participants

earned one hour of training credit for attending and a certificate of appreciation from CADRE members. After the session many commented on their ability to answer customer-related questions regarding Writs of Execution. They also said the experience made them feel more involved in Court processes. As we move forward, we encourage everyone to attend our “Lunch and Learn” sessions because they are geared to provide you with the information to enhance your knowledge of the Court. This is your opportunity to shine and share in the presence of supportive colleagues in an open forum. All suggestions made for the continued success of “Lunch and Learn” are greatly appreciated.

Lunch and Learn is brought to you by the CADRE: Geraldine Anderson, Nancy Bautista, Cheryl Consing, Leslie Garcia, Leslie Gomez, Gina R. S. Gonzalez, Joy Guandique, Diane Hakewill, Tim Lavorini, Annie Pascual, Dennis Toyama and William Trupek.

All Rise features stories of inspiration and leadership involving Court staff.

MSP Graduates Hone Leadership Skills

By Ann E. Donlan and Lesley Sadhu

Graduates of the Management Succession Program (MSP) celebrated their achievement during a privately hosted lunch and awards program in Room 617 of the Civic Center Courthouse.

Training Director Brandon Riley welcomed the graduates and guests, and provided some of the history of the program's launch. In August 2006, Brandon went to then-Assistant CEO Elena Simonian to discuss the importance of succession planning in the San Francisco Superior Court. Ultimately the decision was made to offer two tracks of MSP: one for court clerks seeking to become supervisors, and another course for supervisors who want to become managers.

Recognizing that a group of the Court's professionals had been with the Court for many years, Riley said the Court was fortunate that CEO Gordon Park-Li and Simonian embraced the importance of preparing the Court's future leaders for the day when veteran employees would retire. "Learning and development is a lifelong opportunity," Riley said. "The only thing I wanted to promise at the end of this was an opportunity."

Uncertain Future

MSP Executive Coach Hollie Selfridge then addressed the graduates, noting that the Court's ongoing budget shortfall was providing many staff and operational challenges. "It's not an easy life to be a pioneer. There is no safety net. That's what you do is push the boundaries. I think you are pioneers. But pioneering and being a pioneer are different.

"It's all about action. The spirit of pioneering is really much more about attitude ... about living and working within this environment."

Selfridge acknowledged that the Court's future leaders are facing an uncertain future. "You need tenacity. Don't give up. You need a vision: 'Where are we going?' Pioneers don't wait for things to get better, they make them better."

Fellow coach Debra Schoenstein told the graduates that "you know you don't have to have a title or position to lead." She added that everyday decisions demonstrate "what makes you the person that others will choose to follow."

Schoenstein commended the graduates for their accomplishments, adding, "I am truly honored to have been a part of this journey. You are the people who make our communities better."

Spotlight on Court Achievers

Court Manager Sally Pina then showcased the achievements of Mark Culkins, who used to work for Pina as a Supervisor in the



Training Director Brandon E. Riley inspires the Court's future leaders.



The proud graduates of the MSP celebrate their achievements.

Collections Unit until his promotion in December 2008 to Court Manager of Courtroom Clerks at the Hall of Justice.

"When I hired him, he proved his mettle immediately," Pena told the group. "He brought an infectious positive attitude and approach to everything he did, and that remains true today. He fostered a happy, congenial atmosphere to work in. He made the job fun, so we have a highly motivated and productive team."

Pina said she was happy for Mark, but she was emotional about losing his expertise and leadership. "It has been an absolute honor to mentor Mark. He's a true leader. It's an honor today to salute his excellent work. I just want to say, 'Thank you Mark.' Congratulations."

Court Manager Valerie McGrew of Unified Family Court (UFC) also addressed the recipients offering her congratulations with special attention to Angelique Andreozzi and Shannon Martin, her subordinate supervisors in UFC. Valerie also took pride in the fact that so many MSP participants were either present or former UFC staff members.

Congratulations to the graduates on your achievements!

Certificates of Completion Were Awarded to:

- Angelique Andreozzi – Unified Family Court – Manager Track
- Anthony Gavero – Criminal Division – Manager Track
- Gia Espinocilla – Criminal Division – Manager Track
- Jennifer Ngo-Chan – Criminal Division – Manager Track
- Mark Culkins – Criminal Division – Managers Track
- Rose Gonzalez – Civil Division – Manager Track
- Shannon Martin – Unified Family Court – Manager Track
- Yvette King – Jury Department – Manager Track
- Ernaly Bura – Civil Division – Supervisor Track
- Lesley Fiscella – Civil Division – Supervisor Track
- Sherif Huseny – Criminal Division – Supervisor Track
- Melinka Jones – Civil Division – Supervisor Track
- Jose Rios-Merida – Civil Division – Supervisor Track
- Lesley M. Sadhu – Training Department – Supervisor Track

Mary Quinn Elected to Probate Leadership Position

Mary Joy Quinn, Director of the Probate Department, was elected to the position of President-Elect at the 2009 Fall Conference of the National College of Probate Judges. Quinn has been a member of the College since 1989 when she began attending at the request of Judge Isabella Horton Grant. Most recently, she has served on the Executive Board after having serving on many committees over the years.



The 500-member National College of Probate Judges is the only national organization exclusively dedicated to probate law and probate courts. It was organized in 1968 to improve the administration of justice in courts with probate jurisdiction. Probate Courts are responsible for equitably handling the estates of deceased persons, conservatorships of adults, trusts, elder abuse, and guardianships of children.

The mission of the College is to promote efficient, fair and just judicial administration in the probate courts and to provide opportunities for continuing judicial education for probate judges and related personnel. These twin purposes are accomplished through a number of national and regional programs and projects, including conferences, publications and other materials (<http://www.ncpj.org>).

Quinn has been employed with the Court since 1977 when she began as a Court Investigator in the Probate Court. In 1989, she was promoted to the newly created position of Director of Probate. She is the author of numerous professional articles on conservatorships and elder abuse. She is the co-author of the first book on elder abuse (1986; 1997) and the author of *Guardianships of Adults* (2005).

Congratulations Mary!

New Chief Adult Probation Officer Takes the Helm



Wendy Still, a rehabilitation and correctional specialist in adult and community corrections, is the new Chief Adult Probation Officer of the City and County of San Francisco.

Still replaces Patrick J. Boyd, who retired in January 2010 after 37 years in Corrections.

A criminologist and a Peace Officer, Still most recently worked as the Director of the Activation Management and Rehabilitation Program under California Federal Prison Health Care Services.

“Wendy Still is a highly qualified expert in adult and community corrections who is dedicated to public safety in the City and County of San Francisco,” Presiding Judge James J. McBride said. “The Judges of the San Francisco Superior Court are confident that Wendy’s credentials and commitment to San Francisco will help the Adult Probation Department achieve its goals of effective and measurable public safety services.”

Congratulations Wendy!

Sally Pina Elected to CROA Leadership Role

Sally Pina, Manager of the Comprehensive Collections Unit, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the California Revenue Officers Association (CROA).



CROA is a statewide non-profit organization comprised of city, county and state government collection representatives. CROA was established in 1981 to provide a forum on matters of interest in the collection and enforcement of city and county government debts. Its mission is to promote effective collection practices and increase revenue collections to local and state agencies and victims of crime. Since SB 940 in 2003 required courts and counties throughout the state to work together to collect court-issued debt, courts have become active in CROA as well.

Pina’s new role with CROA is of heightened importance because she is the only court representative on the CROA Board, which is an asset to the entire judicial branch during these difficult fiscal times.

Congratulations Sally!

CJC Celebrates First Anniversary

Judge Loretta M. Giorgi, CJC Coordinator Tomiquia Moss and CJC staff members recently celebrated the 1-year anniversary of the Court’s newest Collaborative Justice Court. The City and other City and County agency staff members gathered for cake in March and *Courtside* was there to capture the pride of the staff’s sense of shared accomplishment after a year of operation.



The following article, by Program Coordinator Megan Filly, originally appeared in the SF Collaborative Courts E-Newsletter, Spring 2010.

What's Happening at the CJC?

Since opening its doors a year ago, the San Francisco Community Justice Center (CJC) has heard the cases of more than 1,800 defendants. The CJC Service Center, located upstairs from the courtroom, helped 800 clients access drug and mental health treatment, primary care, employment, education support, and housing services. Staff assessments have found that 64 percent of CJC clients have serious substance abuse problems, and nearly half are at risk for homelessness, financial troubles, and mental health issues.

One of the key elements of the CJC is working to build strong community partnerships. Recently, Tomiquia Moss, the CJC's Coordinator, has established a partnership with the Community Court Panelists, a program overseen by the SF District Attorney's Office. The panelists hold monthly meetings on-site to hear cases CJC Judge Loretta M. Giorgi refers to the program, which emphasizes restorative justice principles. The panel includes citizens from the neighborhood who talk to CJC participants about the impact their criminal behavior has on the community. They then offer the appropriate sanctions, such as community service or fines.

The CJC Service Center also is supporting the Department of Public Health's Offender Services to provide intensive case management, therapy and treatment to the most vulnerable defendants involved in the criminal justice system.

CJC by the Numbers

In its first nine months of operation, the CJC handled 900 misdemeanor citation cases, decreasing the median time between citation and arraignment from 45 days to 4 days. The CJC is the only community justice court in California to hear serious case types, including nonviolent felonies and probation revocation cases. The felony caseload increased from 17 percent of cases in June to 33 percent of cases in November. The average appearance rate for CJC clients is 73 percent.

Great work!

Appreciation on the Menu



Barbara Compton serves up some appreciation along with Mexican fare to Deputy Court Clerk II Gwendolyn J. Moses.

The mood was upbeat and the food was delicious during a Civil Staff Appreciation Luncheon that drew more than 100 Court staff members.

It's true that the luncheon was held a year ago this month, but the memories are enduring and the appreciation continues even today, despite the delay in publicizing this festive luncheon for the deserving guests of honor.

Upon entry, staff took part in a drawing for small rewards, such as a cup of coffee from the Mint Café. As the guests enjoyed their lunch, and chatted at the festively decorated tables, then-CEO Gordon Park-Li recalled that the event had its roots in the Municipal Court. In the early 1980s, Park-Li organized an appreciation luncheon for staff in the then-Municipal Court Traffic Division in appreciation of staff's work on the implementation of the Court's Simplified Automated Traffic System (SATS).

"I was able to borrow waiters' jackets from a major hotel for our managers who served food banquet style," Park-Li recalled in an interview. "It's been tradition, almost annually and adopted by other Court divisions, ever since."

A portion of the privately donated money collected to pay for the luncheon came from the Estate of Ada Leong, a

well-liked Court Clerk from 1975-2002, whose husband, Ron, sent funds to the Court for the purpose of providing snacks to staff.

"It was common for people to bring in goodies and leave them on the countertops for fellow workers," Park-Li said. "I wasn't going to burden someone with getting snacks periodically, so I waited for an opportunity which would benefit the most staff, and eventually gave some of the money to Jeanie Dobbs who was working on last year's civil luncheon."

The Mexican menu was a hit with staff members, who enjoyed the chicken and beef fajitas and the fixings through the added generosity of:

Managers and Executives

Gordon Park-Li
Wayne Parinas
Regina Dennis
Mary Quinn
Elena Tucker

Barbara Compton
Jeanie Dobbs
Rose Gonzalez
Diane Hakewill
Donna Lok
Vera Mu
Bertha Paredes
Maura Ramirez
Jeanette Santos

Supervisors

Jeniffer Alcantara
Mallun Breedlove

Nora Shea
Ella Yip

APJ Feinstein Named 'Judge of the Year' for 2009

Assistant Presiding Judge Katherine Feinstein has been honored by the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (SFTLA) as the "Judge of the Year."



Judge Feinstein was honored during SFTLA's Judges Dinner Dance at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in October. The award led to a lead feature story in the Winter 2009 issue of the *The TRIAL LAWYER*. Author Rebecca Grey interviewed Judge Feinstein for the profile article, which provided details about Judge Feinstein's upbringing, law school experiences and her accomplishments on the Bench since Gov. Gray Davis appointed her in 2000.

In the article, Grey writes that "Judge Feinstein came to the bench after a lifetime in the front row of some of the most significant local, state and national dramas to happen in the last 30 years. Despite being part of a famous, influential and storied family, Judge Feinstein is unpretentious, gracious and clear-headed."

Presiding Judge James J. McBride, who was quoted in Grey's article, described Judge Feinstein as "extremely polite, a throwback to a former era." He added that "she'd wear a hat and gloves downtown if she could get away with it."

Judge Feinstein confirmed for Courtside that she would indeed be apt to wear gloves and a hat downtown!

The article is available at this link: http://www.sftla.org/temp/ts_3B344A42-BDB9-50CE-F17D52148B7C4F283B344A51-BDB9-50CE-F251EAC556773B31/TrialLawyerwinter200908f.pdf. (click)

Congratulations Judge Feinstein!

Commissioner Slabach Earns 'Judicial Officer of the Year' Award

The State Bar of California's Family Law Section has named Commissioner Marjorie A. Slabach the "Judicial Officer of the Year."

The Bar's Family Law Section will honor Commissioner Slabach during an award presentation and reception on Friday, September 24, 2010, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the State Bar of California Annual Meeting in Monterey.

"I congratulate Commissioner Slabach on this well-deserved honor," said Presiding Judge James J. McBride. "The entire Court should feel proud of the fine work she has done to earn this honor."

Judge Patrick J. Mahoney, Supervising Judge of the Unified Family Court, added, "This is an award that is richly deserved for an extraordinarily talented and compassionate jurist."

Commissioner Slabach has been a San Francisco Superior Court Commissioner since May 1997. She initially served as the Child Support Commissioner, and then as a Family Law Commissioner, where she has been presiding over child custody, financial, property, and domestic violence matters since 2000. She covers calendars for Family Law Readiness, Status Conference, Law & Motion, Case Management, Settlement Conferences, and Trials.

The Bar's Family Law Section is comprised of more than 2,700 attorneys and non-lawyer affiliated professionals. John D. Hodson, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of California, will present the award to Commissioner Slabach in September.

"Your substantial contributions to family law over the years easily persuaded the Executive Committee that you should be the 25th annual recipient of this award," Hodson wrote to Commissioner Slabach in a letter.

Congratulations Commissioner Slabach!



Chief Justice Appoints Judge Jackson to Jury Instructions Committee

California Supreme Court Chief Justice Ronald M. George has appointed Judge Teri L. Jackson to a 3-year term on the Judicial Council Advisory Committee on Criminal Jury Instructions.

Judge Jackson's term on the 13-member committee began on November 1, 2009. Under California Rule of Court 10.59, the committee is responsible for reviewing case law and statutes affecting jury instructions. The committee makes recommendations to the Judicial Council for updating, amending, and adding topics to the council's criminal jury instructions.

The Committee is responsible for more than 700 criminal jury instructions in the state of California.

In addition to serving on the full committee, Judge Jackson also serves on a committee working group, which reviews suggested jury instruction changes from judges, attorneys and the public. The working group reviews these matters and makes recommendations to the full committee.

The committee is comprised of appellate court justices; trial court judges; lawyers whose primary area of practice is criminal defense; deputy district attorney or other attorney who represents the People of the State of California in criminal matters; and a law professor whose primary area of expertise is criminal law.

Congratulations Judge Jackson!

