

Judicial Branch News

In Memoriam



Judge Helene Abrams

Honorable (Ret.) Helene F. Abrams passed away April 17, 2016 due to a recurrence of cancer and its complications. She is survived by her husband Brian Bond, sons Jack and Eric Bond, her mother Rosalie, siblings Diane and Steve, and her beloved cat, Mister B.

Judge Abrams was appointed to the Bench in 2005. During her eight-year judicial career, she presided over Civil, Criminal, Family and Juvenile Court calendars.

Prior to joining the Bench, Judge Abrams was the Juvenile Division Chief at the Maricopa County Public Defender's Office from 1993 - 2005. She started working at the Maricopa County Public Defender's Office in 1983.

Judge Abrams received her Juris Doctorate and her bachelor's degree from the University of Arizona.

"Our lives cross in so many fashions. Here at the court, we are fortunate when they intersect as we get to meet and work with some of the most exceptional people, such as our dear friend and colleague, Helene Abrams. The value we place on those who come into and out of our lives is that which we give and receive during those encounters. The gifts are what we share with that other person, whether it be wisdom, ways of doing our jobs, caring thoughts or just some plain fun. The connection opportunities with Helene no longer exist, but rather than solely regretting this profound loss, this is a time to celebrate the pieces of Helene that she gifted to each of us. I know that she felt that way about so many of you."

- Friend and Former Colleague Judge Bruce Cohen -



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Judicial Branch News

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ESS Committee Recognition Ceremony Highlights

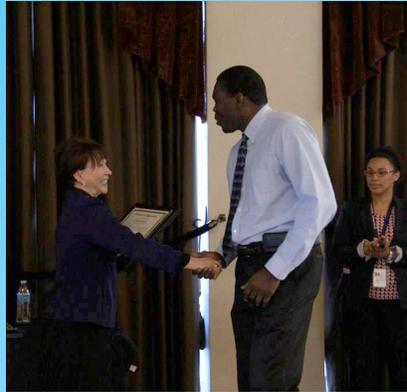
Recently, the Judicial Branch invited employees who served on Employee Satisfaction Survey Committees to be recognized for their participation. The Judicial Branch Executive Team presented the employees certificates to honor their contributions. Presiding Judge Janet Barton and Judicial Branch Administrator Ray Billotte were on hand to give special thanks to the committee volunteers.



Employee Service Awards



Michelle (Shelly) Bodenmiller
Adult Probation Department



Claude Renfro
Adult Probation Department



James O'Farrell
Juvenile Probation Department



Linda Newton Velazquez
Adult Probation Department



Richard Breed
Adult Probation Department



Bridgett Miller
Superior Court



Kit Russell
Adult Probation Department



Jim Marshburn
Adult Probation Department



MSCO Denis Healy
(He patrols the Old Courthouse)

Investiture Highlights

Judge Jeffrey Rueter



Judge Laura Reckart



Judge Alison Bachus



Judicial Branch Hires Security Director



Sean Gibbs

The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County hired Sean Gibbs as the new Director of the Judicial Branch Security Department.

Mr. Gibbs joins the Judicial Branch after a distinguished career serving in the United States Air Force from 1992 to 2014. Recently retired with a rank of Major, he has held numerous operations and security positions in the military and was most recently the Commander of the Security Forces Squadron at Luke Air Force Base in Glendale from 2012 – 2014. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice.

“I know you will find him to be very personable with a calm, caring demeanor. Most importantly, I know Sean is committed to making our court the safest in the nation in which to work and conduct judicial business,” Judicial Branch Administrator Ray Billotte said.

Judicial Branch Security Graduation



Judicial Branch Security's latest graduating class of officers.

Employee Anniversaries

5 Years

Renee Ellison, Judicial Assistant
Jay Adleman, Superior Court Judge
Brenda Lara, Judicial Assistant
LaTonya Queen, Adult Probation Officer
Toni Salerno, Adult Probation Officer
Rebecca Sifuentes, Adult Probation Officer
Diana Bautista, Judicial Clerk
Michael Gulyas, Bailiff - Classified
Thomas Wiley, Court Security Officer
Alexis Montijo Garcia, Judicial Clerk Senior

10 Years

Danielle Impellizzeri, Adult Probation Officer
Renee Mobley, Court Reporter
Dora Duarte, Judicial Clerk Associate
Maria Abasta, Juvenile Detention Officer
Ana Lopez, Judicial Clerk Associate
Endwy Tovar Marquez, Court Security Officer
Mary Blanco, Judicial Clerk Supervisor

15 Years

Alissa Williams, Juvenile Probation Officer
Kayle Grayson, Judicial Clerk Associate
Tracie Moore, Juvenile Probation Officer
Martha Mendoza, Judicial Clerk Senior
Mary Ennis, Judicial Clerk
Abelardo Verdin, Warehouse/Inventory Specialist
Kerry Vogel, Management Assistant

20 Years

Harriet Galbreath, Juvenile Probation Officer Supervisor
Mark Sielewicki, Juvenile Probation Officer
Connie Scott, Administrative Staff Supervisor
Kenneth Crenshaw, Electronic Records Supervisor
Robert Spence, Building Maintenance Supervisor

25 Years

Mary Stuart-Bronski, Business/Systems Analyst

** Information provided by Debbie Gilliland
Human Resources Department.*

Q-and-A with Karen Westover

Recently, Karen Westover filled in as the interim Security Director until the position was filled. During the course of her career, she has been called upon many times to fill a variety of leadership roles within the Judicial Branch and has performed admirably. Her versatility and leadership skills have made her a tremendous asset to the Judicial Branch.



Karen Westover

Q. What year did you start with the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County? Please list all of your assignments, permanent and temporary?

I started with the Judicial Branch in 1996 as the Self Service Center and Family Court Attorney. From there, I have been a Pro Tem for Mental Health Cases, the Director of Research and Management Analysis, the Civil Court Administrator, General Counsel and Criminal Tower Project Administrator. As Deputy Court Administrator, I have overseen the following departments: Court Interpreters, Jury, Media, ADR, Forensics, Law Library, Self Service Center (now known as the Law Library Resource Center), E-filing, E-Courtrooms, Justice Court Administration, Security, Capital Litigation Attorneys and Purchasing. I currently oversee the Regional Courts, and serve as a liaison with the 23 Municipal Courts and 26 Justice Courts for the Presiding Judge and Court Administrator. I have also had interim assignments as the Criminal Court Administrator and Security Director, both assignments held while holding other positions.

Q. What was your favorite assignment? Why? This is a really hard question for me. I have loved everything I have done with the Court over the years because I get to meet and work with so many wonderful people. But, if I was forced to pick, it would be any assignment that focuses on access to justice. Both the Interpreters and Law Library Resource Center focus on this issue more so than others, so they would be my favorite.

Q. You have held many different positions, permanent and temporary, with the Court. How have you been able to be so successful in so many different roles? I have been successful because of the people that surround me. The Court is blessed to hire the best and to have so many people that care about what they do. It is easy to be successful when you are surrounded by wonderful people.

Q. Were there any key events, early in your career, that affected your leadership style? There have been several key events in my life that have affected my leadership style. My father is a lawyer and loves administrative work too. He has been an example to me since I was a little girl. He taught me how to treat everyone with respect, work hard, delegate, prioritize, and find strengths in others. There have been other examples too – Gordy Griller, Marcus Reinkensmeyer, Noreen Sharp and now Ray Billotte. The Judicial Branch is about teamwork so there is always a place for someone to use their strengths. One event that also stands out to me was when I was a volunteer volleyball coach/player. Our team was in the regional finals tournament. We had great players and we had a few inexperienced players. We were going up against our most competitive team. As coach, I decided that everyone would play and we would rotate, including putting myself in the rotation and the first to be on the sideline. I thought for sure we would lose, but I felt it was important that everyone played. What happened next was truly amazing. Our team played better than we ever played. We were truly a team. Everyone was doing their job and doing everything they could to help the others. We won!!! I learned many things from this experience but the biggest thing was to value people, no matter their skill set. Everyone in the Court has a job to do and everyone is important.

Q. How would you say your leadership style has evolved since you first started managing employees? When I first started, I remember having very high expectations of myself and others. I still have high expectations of myself, but I don't force those expectations on others to the same degree. I was blessed to work directly for Marcus Reinkensmeyer for about 15 years and to watch him handle many issues and problems. He was very talented. He could tell you that you messed up and you would feel like the most valued person at the Court. He also taught me that it is easy to administrate or manage an area when you get to pick your team; but a really good administrator brings the best out in others and works with the people they inherit. As a result, I am softer, kinder, and less judgmental than I was when I began. If someone on my team fails, I fail. My job is to help people to do their very best. Everyone has a story and it is important to understand a person's story.

Q. What's your best advice for anybody seeking a long and prosperous career in Court Administration? First off, just do it. It is a great career. I am so blessed that Noreen Sharp took me away from the practice of law to work with her at the Court. Secondly, work is important, but people are more important. Do your very best to respect and value everyone. Third, work hard, be flexible, and success will come. It may not be with a window office or a large salary, but you will always be surrounded by people that care about you.

Law Library Construction



Presiding Judge Janet Barton and Judicial Branch Administrator Ray Billotte have approved the relocation and renovation of the Downtown Law Library Resource Center. The project will combine all of the functions of the Self Service Center, the Law Library and the Protective Order Center on one floor in the area that was previously Change of Venue. The new location will also have all staff offices, an additional 30 computers for customer use, a conference room and training area with video conferencing capabilities. These changes will only require minor changes to Table One.

The project is currently on schedule and projected to be completed in October 2016. During the relocation, the Law Library Resource Center will continue to provide all services in its current space in the East Court Building and information desk.

Shawn Friend

Law Library Resource Center Director

New Civil Attorney



Anya Stangl

The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County hired Anya Stangl as its Staff Attorney for Civil Complex and Commercial Court.

Previously, Stangl served five years as a Senior Law Clerk for the Honorable Donn Kessler at the Arizona Court of Appeals.

She earned her undergraduate degrees in Classical Civilizations and Art History from the University of Arizona and her Juris Doctorate from Arizona State University.

2016 Outstanding Jurist



Hon. Andrew Klein

The Board of Governors for the State Bar of Arizona selected Probate Court Presiding Judge Andrew Klein as the recipient of the 2016 James A. Walsh Outstanding Jurist Award.

Each year, the award is presented to the judge whose career exemplifies the highest standards of judicial conduct for integrity and independence; who is knowledgeable of the law and faithful to it; who is unswayed by partisan interests, public clamor or fear of criticism; who is patient, dignified and courteous to all who appear before him or her; and who endeavors to improve the administration of justice and public understanding of, and respect for, the role of law in society.

He will accept the award at the State Bar's Annual Luncheon on June 17.

Judge Klein was appointed to the Bench in 2001. He has presided over many calendars, including Juvenile, Criminal, Civil, Family and Probate Court.

New Judge Appointed



Hon. Kristin Culbertson

The Governor appointed Judge Kristin Culbertson to fill the vacancy created by Judge Joseph Sciarrotta's resignation.

Judge Culbertson, who will begin a family court calendar on May 31, is a shareholder at the law firm of Littler Mendelson. She practices in a variety of labor and employment matters and has extensive trial experience.

She graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University in 1998, with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and received her law degree from Arizona State University College of Law in 2000.

Honored Guests



A highly distinguished judicial delegation from China visited Superior Court on April 22. *(Pictured above with members of the Executive Management Team and Judge Rosa Mroz.)*

CASA Swearing-in



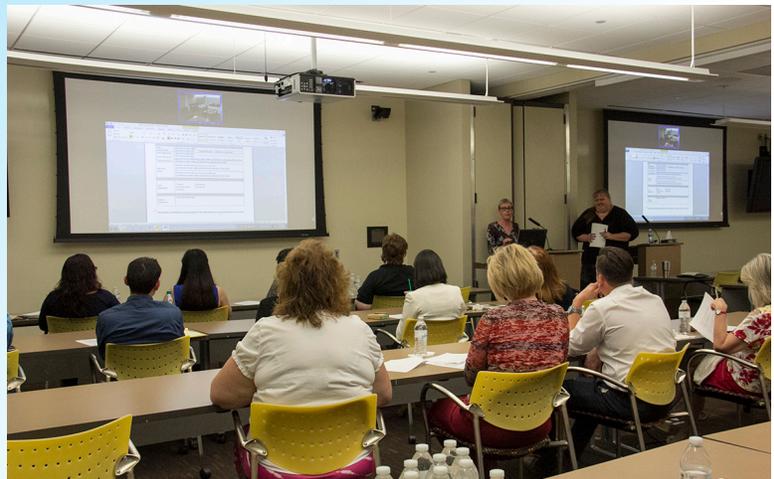
Recently, 30 new Court Appointed Special Advocates were sworn in at the Arizona Supreme Court.

New Beginnings



Criminal Court Administration hosted a going away party for Bob James, their former boss. James has been promoted to Deputy Court Administrator overseeing Court Reporters, Electronic Records Services, Jury Administration and Court Interpreters.

Judicial Staff Training



Superior Court hosted training in the South Court Tower for criminal and civil judicial staff.