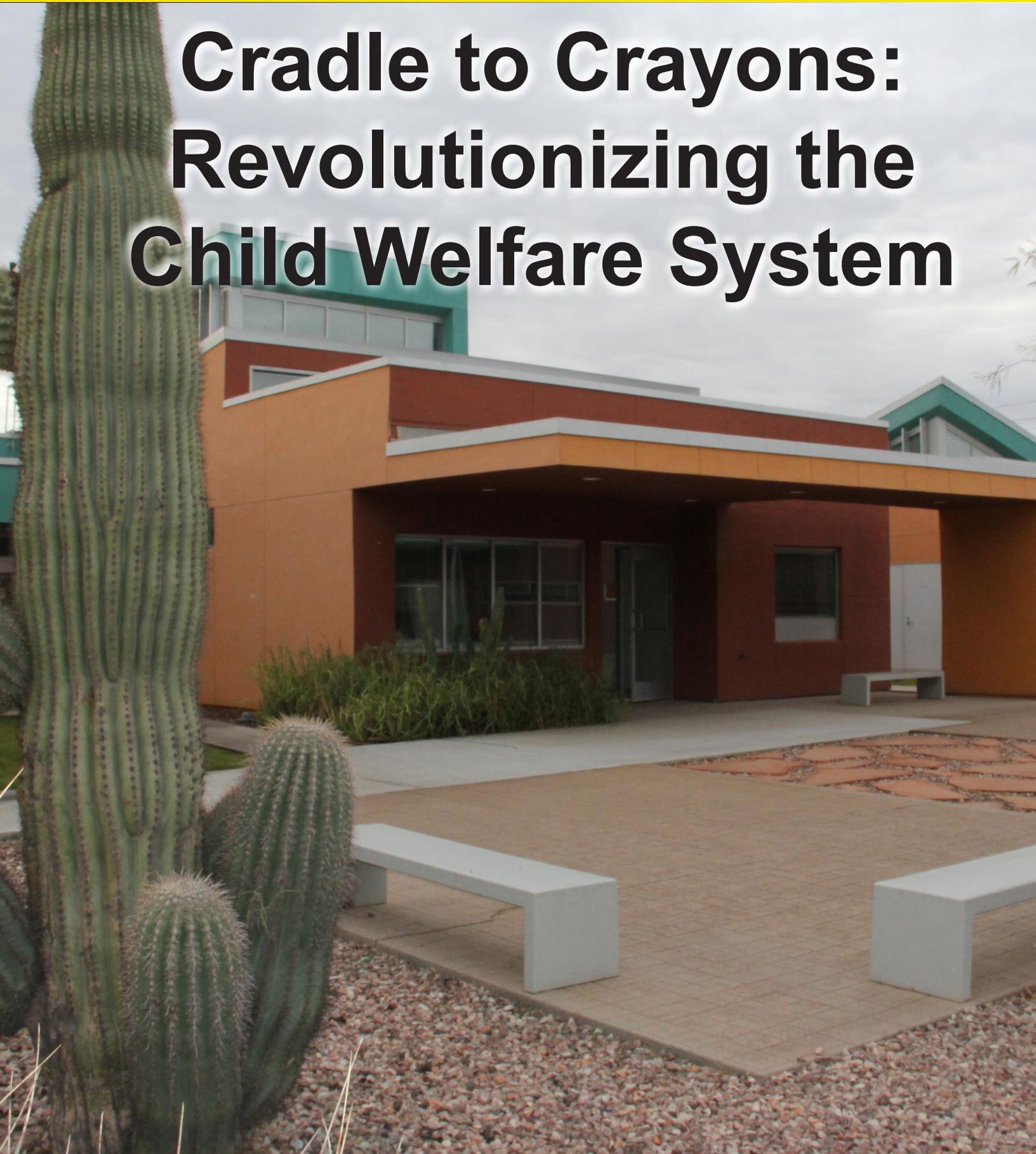


Judicial Branch News

Cradle to Crayons: Revolutionizing the Child Welfare System



February 2013



Features

- 3 Budget Decisions on the Horizon
- 4 Revolutionizing the Child Welfare System
- 5 Cradle to Crayons: Grand Opening
- 6 Homeless Court Ribbon Cutting
- 7 New iCISng Application
- 9 Judge Warren Granville Recognized

Cover - Courtyard view of the Cradle to Crayons facility.

Judicial Branch News

The Judicial Branch News is an online newsletter published by the Media Relations Department.

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Budget Decisions on the Horizon

By Court Administrator Raymond Billotte

In times of fiscal and economic pressure, one thing can be certain, and that is uncertainty. County revenues from sales tax, jail tax, property tax and vehicle license tax, simply have not improved as hoped and cause fear of a projected \$36 million deficit for FY14. All of us want answers on what, if any, impacts this situation will have on the Judicial Branch. Presiding Judge Norman Davis and I continue to work with the Board of Supervisors and the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) to address and resolve our funding issues. Unfortunately, the budget has yet to be resolved. I will, however, continue to share information as quickly as possible.

There is always difficulty preparing the budget for an organization as large and complex as the Judicial Branch. Weighing the needs of the Court against serious budgetary constraints of the County is often a difficult task. Compounding our dilemma is our desire to conserve taxpayer resources, maintaining critical court functions, addressing internal compensation and technology concerns, and providing the community with the service level they demand.

Judges, administrators, deputies, supervisors and employees alike have worked continually toward streamlining operations, moderating requests for additional funds and providing efficiencies wherever possible. Most recently, our efforts in 2009 resulted in reducing the Court's budget by more than 12% and eliminating more than 400 positions.

The BOS recently announced FY14 budget priorities which include a continuation of the Performance Incentive Award plan using one-time, nonrecurring funds similar to the incentive received in December of 2012.

In light of the County's fiscal situation, OMB has also asked for 3%, 5% and 10% budget reduction scenarios. On February 15th, we submitted the budget for the Judicial Branch seeking full funding for existing operations and additional funds to address issues in Adult Probation, Information Technology and our Commissioners. Furthermore, we continue to champion the need for pay increases for all employees to address the growing problem of salary compression, loss of valued employees, and the effects on morale. Additionally, we have also submitted our reduction scenarios with emphasis on our inability to absorb such reductions and the deleterious impact on public safety and the welfare of our communities, access to our services, public satisfaction and our employees.

Over the next few weeks, Presiding Judge Davis and I will be meeting with each Board member to discuss our FY14 needs and we remain very hopeful these efforts will prove beneficial to our Court. The Office of Management and Budget has established a budget schedule that provides for tentative adoption of the budget on May 20, 2013 and final adoption on June 17, 2013.

I realize this news may not be what we all want to hear, but my intention is to keep everyone informed about the budget and maintain a realistic understanding of our fiscal situation. I will continue to keep you informed as we move forward in this budget process.

Cradle to Crayons: Revolutionizing the Child Welfare System

In less than two years, the Juvenile court, with the aid of its partner, Maricopa County, has revolutionized the treatment of infants and toddlers in the child welfare system.

Former Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Eddward Ballinger said, "Not long ago, young ones could spend years in a number of different homes, have their emotional mental health needs go untreated, and be denied the opportunity to achieve the parental bonding that is crucial to early childhood development. Today, we put in place a growing number of judges dedicated to meeting the needs of this innocent and vulnerable population. These jurists, and the caseworkers and providers who work with them, have created a system that expedites infant/toddler case processing and mandates that each child's needs are assessed and treated."

Judge Ballinger, one of the original developers of the program in Maricopa County, said, "Cradle to Crayons is the part of this revolution that addresses the need to improve parent/child interaction. It supplies those involved with the juvenile court the opportunity to improve their chances of reunifying with their children. At the same time C2C provides judges with valuable information that aids in the court's ultimate goal: quickly placing each child in a permanent, supportive, safe and loving environment," Judge Ballinger said.

The C2C Child Welfare Center is the result of a collaborative effort of many public and private partners in Maricopa County. The goal of C2C is to provide infants and young children with stable, nurturing and forever families.

The various programs provided by C2C include Judicial Leadership, Expedited Court Oversight and Direction, Community Coordinators assigned to C2C judges, Community Services Resource Coordination, Early Childhood Preschool readiness, Mental Health Service Coordination including Child/Parent Psychotherapy and Supervised Family Time Coaching, and a Dependency Treatment Court.

In an effort to improve capacity and expertise in this area, internship opportunities have been developed utilizing graduate students from several local universities to provide them the unique opportunity to work with this population of children and families.

"Experts have known for years that infants and toddlers have languished in foster care longer than they should," said Judge Aimee Anderson. "Research has also shown that these young children are at higher risk of developing mental health issues, developmental issues and chronic illnesses. These little ones are also at great risk of having significant relationship problems later in life. Our focus at C2C--not just our new Child Welfare Center--but the Court itself--is to address the significant needs of these young children and their families, in addition to getting them the permanency that they need and deserve. It is an exciting program to be involved with, as it is a result of a community coming together to help these babies."

"The parents of young children who are in foster care face many challenges including substance abuse, domestic violence and economic instability. Many of these parents did not have good role models for parenting," Juvenile Presiding Judge Colleen McNally said. "At the C2C Child Welfare Center, well-trained professional staff work with these families supervising visits, coaching parents on taking care of their little ones and addressing the trauma that they have suffered. It is really great to see these parents interacting with their little ones in a whole new way. The Child Welfare Center is a pleasant, inviting environment located just down the street from the Durango Courthouse."

Select Superior Court Judges preside over C2C cases at both Juvenile Court facilities in Maricopa County. The cases assigned to these judges are exclusively limited to families where at least one child is under the age of three. These judges receive specialized training in area of infant mental health, abuse, maltreatment and neglect. These judges provide expedited oversight to these cases, so that permanency can be achieved sooner than has been in the past.

C2C Open House Photo Highlights



Court Helps Homeless Overcome Obstacles



Presiding Judge Norman Davis (middle left) and Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Rebecca White Berch (middle right) attend the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Lodestar Day Resource Center.

For many homeless individuals, unresolved legal issues are the biggest roadblock to employment and self-sufficiency.

To aid the homeless population in becoming productive citizens, Maricopa County announced the expansion and relocation of its Homeless Court to the Lodestar Day Resource Center in Phoenix. The Court is designed to help homeless individuals resolve any outstanding low-level, victimless offenses on their record.

In 2006, Phoenix, Glendale and Tempe Municipal Courts began a Regional Homeless Court to resolve outstanding warrants of minor misdemeanors and victimless offenses for individuals who demonstrated a commitment to end their homelessness.

The program has been so successful that it's now expanding to hear cases in all limited jurisdiction courts throughout Maricopa County, including 23 Municipal Courts and 26 Justice of the Peace Courts.

The (newly renamed) Maricopa County Regional Homeless Court (MCRHC) is a therapeutic, problem-solving court located on the Human Services Campus at Lodestar Day Resource Center, 1125 W. Jackson St., Phoenix. Court is held the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m.

Tempe Municipal Court Presiding Judge and MCRHC Presiding Judge MaryAnne Majestic said, "Regional Homeless Court provides an opportunity for participants to resolve court matters by not only engaging in services that give back to the community but also provides participants the opportunity to resolve their pending court matters. It is an honor to participate in this collaborative effort among courts, criminal justice partners, and service providers in an effort to help people help themselves out of their state of homelessness."

MCRHC clears tickets such as: traffic infractions, jaywalking, riding the metro without a fare, sleeping in public places, illegal use of shopping carts, etc., as well as warrants that arise from these offenses.

Applicants enter into Homeless Court through one of twenty qualified community providers. The typical sentence imposed is community restitution. One hour of community restitution is equivalent to \$10; if someone owes \$200 in parking tickets, they complete 20 hours of community restitution. Their case manager monitors their restitution hours and case plan, which generally includes education, employment, sobriety, and self-improvement hours; all aiding their ascent out of homelessness. Everything is completed before court, which they then attend with the case manager and report on their achievements and restitution hours. The Judge then quashes any relevant warrants, applies completed hours in exchange for fines, therefore closing cases and removing legal barriers.

iCISng Application - ePTR - Probation Revocation Warrants

After conviction, many criminal defendants are sentenced to probation in lieu of confinement. Defendants placed on probation are usually monitored by probation officers who ensure that the defendant is complying with all terms of probation. If a defendant fails to comply with the conditions of probation, the probation officer may seek to revoke probation and ask the judicial officer to issue an arrest warrant.

In the past, if a probation officer wanted to obtain a warrant to revoke probation, the officer completed a hard copy petition and forwarded it to the Judge for review. After review, the judge decided whether to grant the request and, if so, asked the Clerk to issue a warrant. The paper warrant then made its way to the Sheriff's Office, where the warrant was entered into the state-wide criminal database. The entire process normally took 1-3 weeks to complete.

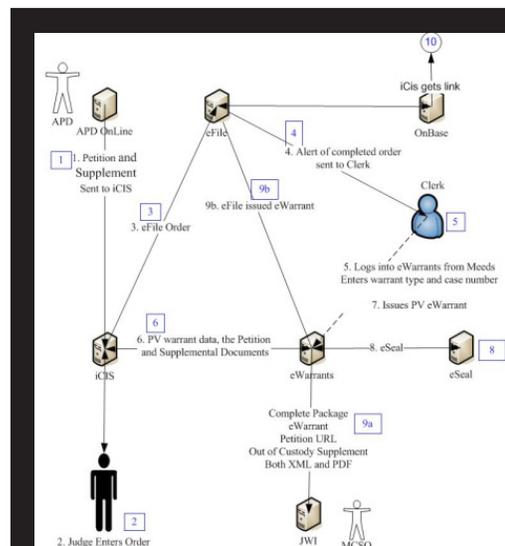
The latest iCISng phase that has been released moves the entire process between systems electronically. The officer starts the process by completing the petition in the Adult Probation Department's online system. That petition is automatically submitted electronically to the judicial officer's work queue. The Judge grants or denies the petition. The Clerk issues an e-warrant that is electronically transmitted to the Sheriff's office. All of the required data points in iCIS are automatically entered, so staff will not need to manually enter the data. All of this can occur within a matter of minutes.

Commissioner Steven Lynch and his staff, as well as the Probation Officers from WRC Field Unit 15 and Southport Field Unit 8 are currently participating in the pilot stage of this project. The project will expand through March until all probation officers submit their petitions to revoke electronically.

The project was developed through the collaboration of the Criminal Judges and Commissioners, Criminal Court Administration, CTS, ICJIS, the Adult Probation Department, the Clerk of Court and the Sheriff's Office.

A special note of thanks to Judge Norman Davis, Judge Douglas Rayes, Judge Warren Granville, Judge Lisa Flores, Judge Joseph Welty, Judge David Cunanan, Commissioner Steven Lynch, Commissioner James Morrow, Commissioner Richard Nothwehr, Bob James, Chris Bleuenstein, Paula Collins, Sandra Mena, John Barrett, Steve Ballance, Leticia Butner, Linna Guo, Chris Holly, Steve Stilwell, Diana Hegyi, Stephanie Valenzuela, Brian Gay, Ginger Hopper, Barbarajo Hardge, Frank Drake, Don Thomas, Tom Gendron, James Tucker, Dave Spurling, David Gleason, Barbara Broderick, Mark Hendershot, Mary Stuart-Bronski, Jaqua Davis, Ken Troxel, Timothy Potratz, Monica Scheffner, Correnia Snyder, Lauri Million, Debra Olsen, Jacques Porter, Larry Schulze, Laura Eng, Jonnie Parker, Dennis Benzer, Nicole Branham, Suzanne Segarra, Emily Cook, Achi Yapo, Anna King, Amber Holcomb, Pete Jacaruso, Ines Jankovic, Jazmaine Wilkins, Olivia Ramirez, Juli DeYoung, Morgan Dinovo-Stevenson, Richard Baca, Ricardo Brandon, Ricardo Mendez, Cedric Johnson, Tyson Sam, Wateka May, and Rachel Simons.

The new process allows Adult Probation officers to quickly obtain a warrant and arrest a defendant. This means we have a safer community.



Two Commissioners Announce Retirement

Commissioners Mina Mendez and Stephen Kupiszewski are retiring after years of dedicated service on the Superior Court Bench.

In her time with the Court, Commissioner Mendez served in juvenile, criminal and family court assignments.

“Mina is so competent and enthusiastic in all she does, and it has been a real joy to work with her during the last nine years,” Presiding Judge Norman Judge Davis said.

Commissioner Kupiszewski served 10 years on the bench. He will be retiring March 31, 2013 to return to private practice.

During his time as a judicial officer, Commissioner Kupiszewski handled a wide variety of assignments and calendars in the criminal, civil, probate/mental health, juvenile and family court departments.

“His professionalism and versatility have also allowed him to serve as a floating commissioner wherever he was needed on short notice,” Judge Davis said.

The “Mayor” Says Goodbye to the Court



Judge Douglas Rayes (right) presents Bailiff Larry Martinez (left), who he nicknamed the Mayor, a plaque at Martinez’ retirement party. In his other hand, Judges Rayes holds a Martinez-designed prototype of a bailiff uniform. Earlier in his career, Martinez proposed to court administration that all Superior Court bailiffs wear the same shirts. Judge Rayes, who has held onto the shirt for years, will hang the relic in his office permanently.

Judge Michael McVey Celebrates his Retirement



Judge Michael McVey cuts his cake at his retirement party in the Central Court Building.



Judge Michael McVey (left) with longtime Judicial Assistant John Johnson.

Judge Warren Granville Recognized for his Contributions



Left to right - Criminal Presiding Judge Joseph Welty, Judge Douglas Rayes, Judge Warren Granville, Commissioner Steven Lynch and Criminal Court Administrator Bob James. At the beginning of the last criminal bench meeting, Judge Warren Granville was recognized for his last three years of service as Criminal Department Associate Presiding Judge.

JCORPS Helps Clean Mesa Park



JCORPS partnered with the Mesa Police Department and the City of Mesa to clean up Guerrero-Rotary Park. JCORPS crews worked to pick up trash and other unwanted items from the yards of vacant homes, lots, streets and alleys. In one afternoon, JCORPS youth, along with adult work crews, were able to help clear 22.70 tons of trash and debris.

If anyone has additional ideas for community service projects or agencies or businesses that would be interested in a partnership, please contact Lara Meier at 602-506-4522.

Employee Anniversaries

5 Years

Aundrea Green, Adult Probation Officer

Shirleen Tarangle, Adult Probation Officer

Angie Torrez, Health Technician

10 Years

Marcus Jones, Surveillance Officer

15 Years

Domingo Gonzales, Warehouse/Inventory Specialist

Court Surveys Customers



On January 29th, Superior Court conducted a public survey to assess the court's accessibility and its treatment of customers in terms of fairness, equality and respect. The court received more than 600 responses. The survey was conducted at all court locations simultaneously. Employee volunteers assisted in the completion of this important survey.

Thanks to all staff members who volunteered.

