



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Table Talk

Adieu Mary, Barbara and Polly

Once again, the Judicial Family Institute has to bid a fond farewell to valued members whose terms have ended. This time, our adieu embraces JFI Founders and board members Mary Moyer and Barbara George and retiring board member, Polly Seto Richardson.

In 2000, Mary founded the Ohio Judicial Family Network, a program offering a support network and educational programming to the partners and spouses of Ohio's judges

As JFI chair (2002-2003), Mary led the transition of our organization from a separate nonprofit organization into a full-fledged Committee of the Conference of Chief Justices reporting to the CCJ Past Presidents Committee with the support of the National Center for State Courts.

As Chair of the Website Committee, Barbara played an important role in the creation, design and development of the JFI website. As Chair, she gained the support of the California Court Administration and provided a nationwide network of judicial family education by linking all states to the JFI website.

JFI is grateful to Polly for her wise counsel through the years

Although their terms have expired, our debt to these outstanding leaders will always remain active. The excellence of their service is only matched by their exemplary integrity in leading the Judicial Family Institute to major achievements.

When I became Chair of the Judicial Family Institute last year, I was fortunate to have a great team to help reinforce our mandate to provide information and education on issues of concern and importance to judicial family members. Without the support of hard-working staffs at the National Center for Courts and the Judicial Branch of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, we could not have completed the work we set out to do.



The accomplishments of our leaders, including Jan Aikman Dickson, Mary Moyer, Barbara George, and Seymour Abrahamson, have been instrumental in making JFI indispensable to judicial families nationwide. Their dedication to the mission of JFI has inspired us to broaden the boundaries of the judicial community through the Internet. This fourth edition of Online with the Judicial Family Institute is testimony to our goal to foster communication within our membership. As shown by a rising number of website visits and hits, our electronic newsletter is an effective bridge that links judicial families from the Pacific to the Caribbean to the continental USA. Through Online with JFI, these families receive JFI news regularly.

Over the last few months we have digested a full plate of meaty subjects and our dessert has been the sweet satisfaction of keeping JFI on track. Meeting priority goals, such as updating our website and preparing committee agendas through 2010, took up much of our time. You may have noticed that we have also updated the list of liaisons for each state, territory and commonwealth comprising the JFI network, a list we featured in the third edition of Online with the JFI. Our fourth issue looks at judicial family programs in states, territories and commonwealths.

As part of our outreach program, we have encouraged members to contribute articles to the newsletter and have published articles by Jan Aikman Dickson, Mary Moyer, Sandra Chaves, Richard Dove and others on programs in their respective states. The pages of our e-newsletter remain open to our members.

This issue contains important interviews with JFI secretary, Dr. George Durham and clinical psychologist Dr. Mirelsa Modestti on health, wellness and judicial assistance. Dr. Modestti represents JFI in the Judicial Assistance Initiative (JAI) of the American Bar Association, one of three organizations with which JFI has forged closer links.

A banquet of possibilities lies ahead for JFI, and we are prepared to sit at the head of the table. I invite and welcome each member of the JFI to join us at the banquet.

Your presence is essential to our future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isabel Pico-Vidal".
Isabel Pico-Vidal, Esq.
JFI Chair

Be Prepared!

An Interview with Dr. George Durham



George Durham holds an undergraduate degree from Harvard in biochemical sciences (1969) and an M.D. from Duke University (1973). The Secretary of the Judicial Family Institute, Dr. Durham is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics (1980) and a Board Certified pediatrician from the American Board of Pediatrics (1978).

A general pediatrician in Salt Lake City, Dr. Durham former past president of the Utah Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and past president of the medical staff at Primary Children's Medical Center where he currently serves as a co-attending physician of the Down Syndrome Clinic.

He is also a Clinical Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Utah's Department of Pediatrics and participates in medical student and resident education.

Dr. Durham is the spouse of Christine Durham, the chief justice of Utah and incoming president of the Conference of Chief Justices. Chief Justice Durham received the William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence in 2007 and is recognized for her work in judicial education and the administration of justice.

What are the signs of an epidemic?

Epidemic suggests the presence of a single illness—usually an infectious disease—that is present in greater numbers in a given population than would usually be expected.

Are epidemics and pandemics kissing cousins?

A pandemic is usually a much broader outbreak of a single illness across many populations. The recent H1N1 Novel Influenza Pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in early June 2009.

How are they different?

An epidemic may be present in a single locality or nation whereas a pandemic involves many nations and continents.

How should judicial families develop a flu plan in their communities?

There are many excellent community emergency preparedness programs throughout the United States. A good starting place could be the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

How develop a plan of action?

Identify your needs. For example—what if there were a power failure in your home for one week or more? What if

you had to evacuate your home? How would you communicate with family members in the event traditional communication networks did not exist? The community emergency preparedness programs have excellent pamphlets and checklists to assist families in developing a plan of action.

What are the priorities of the plan?

These are well outlined in emergency preparedness materials from organizations such as the American Red Cross.

What should be on checklist in case of emergency?

See the checklists but obviously issues of shelter, warmth, water, nutrition, medications, First Aid materials, transportation, communication, establishing contact with loved ones, etc.

What advice would you give in case of an emergency?

To cite the Boy Scout motto: Be prepared!

What community services should be up and running at all times?

The issue is not "should" but "will". In an earthquake disaster—

which could happen anytime in Salt Lake City there may not be availability of healthcare workers, first responders, grocery transportation etc.

What should parents tell their children, especially pre-schoolers, about controlling infections and how?

Singing "Happy Birthday" while washing the hands with soap and water probably is a good practice to teach pre-schoolers. Frequent hand washing is perhaps the most effective infection control we can all engage in. Seriously. . . we should perhaps NOT shake hands during illness outbreaks and epidemics.

What are the signs that an epidemic has run its course?

Health authorities track reportable diseases and incidences rise, peak, and fall. When diagnoses are less frequent and hospitalizations decrease—these are usually signs that an epidemic has run its course.

When is it safe to return to normal behavior?

Usually health authorities (State Health Departments, Board of Health, Homeland Security agencies, The Centers for Disease Control are able to tell a given community the answer to this question.

Hail to the Chief Justice!



The Judicial Family Institute joins friends and family of Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson in hailing her impressive re-election to the Supreme Court of Wisconsin. Her leadership and lasting contributions to the state were recognized by voters.

She has been Chief Justice since 1996 and, four years into her new 10-year term which begins in August, could become the longest serving justice in the state's 161-year history. Her husband Seymour was fully supportive in her re-election campaign, driving his spouse around the state and overseeing her campaign finances.

Chief Justice Abrahamson became Wisconsin's first woman justice in 1976, winning re-election in 1979, 1989 and 1999. She is an active participant in the Conference of State Courts and the National Center for State Courts.

The Abrahamsons are longtime supporters of the Judicial Family Institute with Seymour having served as Website Chair. "We look forward to receiving their combined wisdom and continued support," said current JFI Chair Isabel Picó-Vidal.

10 Questions for Mirelsa

Mirelsa Modestti earned her doctorate in clinical psychology with honors at the University of Puerto Rico. She is the spouse of Superior Court Judge Rafael Taboas Davila and the mother of five children whose ages run from 9 to 27.

Dr. Modestti has written and lectured on a broad range of subjects including domestic violence, ethics, stress and family adjustments. Some of her works are on the JFI website. She is a member of the Judicial Family Commission of the Puerto Rico Supreme Court and represents the Judicial Family Institute in the Judicial Assistance Initiative of the American Bar Association.

Earlier this year, you represented JFI at the Judicial Assistance Initiative business meeting of the American Bar Association Convention in Boston. What were your expectations and were those expectations met?

I had very little expectations, since I was attending for the first time. I knew that most of the members were judges or retired judges, and were not in the health services field. I didn't know how much experience in prevention and intervention they had or how much research they had done on the subject of recovery.

I was very pleasantly surprised to find not only a group of very knowledgeable people on all aspects of the recovery process, but also a group of professionals seriously committed to helping judges in distress.

What are the principal signs of a judge in distress?

They are no different than those of anyone in distress, except that the consequences of ignoring the problem can be catastrophic. Judges in distress may exhibit very little patience, lack of self control, and may even abuse their authority. They might show emotional vulnerability, which could result in inability to tolerate painful testimonies, and judicial decisions not based on their knowledge and the evidence presented, but rather on their subjective evaluation or emotions.

Poor judgment could also be a problem. People abusing of alcohol or drugs frequently engage in other self-destructive behavior. They may visit perilous places or deal with dangerous people. This conduct could raise concerns about their safety and emotional wellbeing, as well as the image of the Judiciary.

What are the most common impairments to a judge's performance? (i.e. alcohol and drug abuse, illness, family problems, aging, retirement)

Marital or family problems, phase of life issues, economic and health problems, and of course, work related situations can be enormous stress sources. They may lead to acute burnout, which could cause judicial impairment. But alcohol or substance abuse and mental health problems are the most dangerous situations, since they can severely impair a person's moral judgment, and lead to problematic behavior in and out of the courtroom.

How convince a judge to get help? What is the best approach?

The greatest obstacle for a judge to seek or accept help is denial. Therefore, helping him or her overcome denial should be the first goal. Fears of disciplinary measures or public humiliation often keep judges from seeking help. An impaired judge must be reassured that he/she will be treated in a caring, respectful, and confidential manner. Denial is easier to overcome if the nuclear family is involved, and helps confront the judge with his/her denial. But spouses and children need support and guidance in the process.

Are fellow judges enabling their distressed peers? How break "blue wall" of silence protecting impaired judge?

Enabled denial is a great challenge in the judiciary. Judges, lawyers and courthouse employees feel that by remaining silent, they are protecting the judge, but it is exactly the opposite. Substance, alcohol and mental health problems are time bombs waiting to detonate. We can best help the judge if a therapeutic or support intervention is carried out before there is public exposure of the problem.

How weigh public interest and court integrity in judicial assistance programs? What are the common areas of conflict?

Judicial assistance programs must offer their services in strict confidentiality, since it is one of the keys to their success. It can be argued that people have "a right to know", but this must be weighed against the possible adverse effects of public exposure and the judge's confidentiality rights. Judges in distress should be closely monitored, and should be in treatment to reduce the possibility of judicial impairment.

Judicial assistance programs clearly are an asset in the performance of judges. How should courts promote these programs?

A Judicial Assistance Program has to be carefully designed to meet the needs of judges in distress and address

the delicate ethical and practical issues of handling their conditions out of public awareness. The judicial system needs to elaborate a program promotion agenda that should include promotional activities in the judicial regions, booths and conferences in meetings and conventions and recruiting and training sessions for mentor candidates.

What should the key message of these programs be?

Judges need to know they are not alone. Successful recovery programs thrive on values such as solidarity, loyalty, and sense of belonging. It is critical that judges feel safe in a Judicial Assistance Program. Care should be taken to reassure the judicial community that the JAP's work is therapeutic, not disciplinary. For example, the Utah Lawyers Helping Lawyers (LHL) program members are expressly relieved of their duty to report ethical violations discovered as a result of their LHL work. This not only makes volunteer recruitment process easier, but also reassures participants that the program's objectives are rehabilitative, and they will not be penalized for participating.

How intersect judicial assistance into the goals/mandate of the Judicial Family Institute?

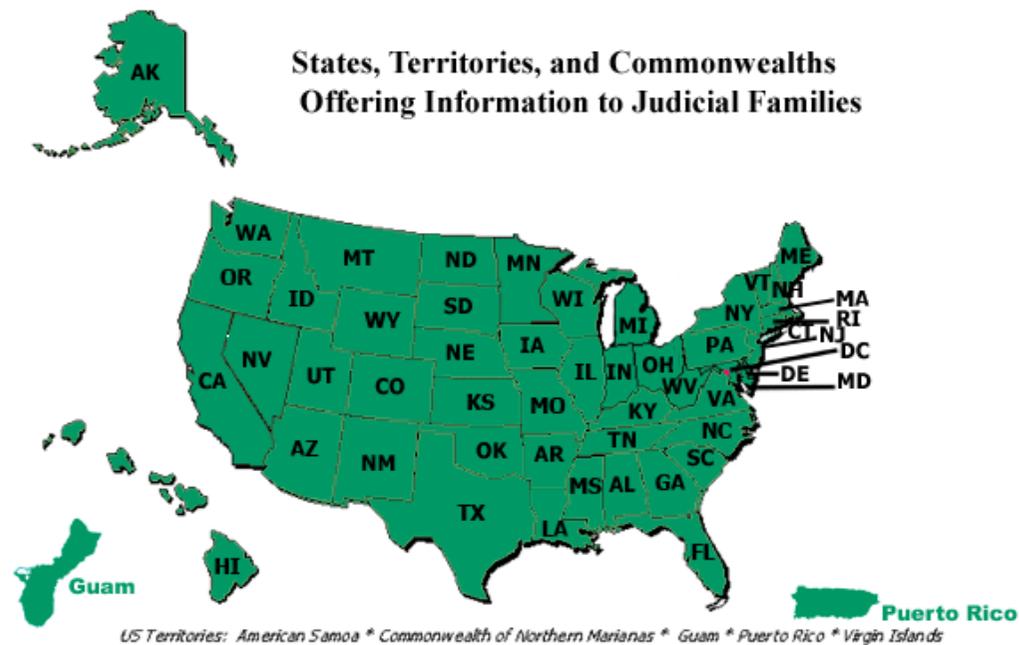
Judicial Family Institute offers education and assistance to judicial families in home and travel security, ethics guidelines, judicial elections, and quality of life issues. Judges with the aforementioned problems not only risk judicial impairment, but also jeopardize marriage stability, and their spouses and children's emotional wellbeing. Judicial Assistance Initiative is justly becoming a big priority for the Judicial Family Institute.

Should services be provided to members of a judge's family and should family perspective be incorporated into design of those services?

Definitely, yes. Substance, alcohol and mental health problems deeply affect spouses and children of those who struggle with them. Their emotional situation should be addressed. Besides, unguided family members can unwillingly become enablers, thus making recovery more difficult.

The judge and his/her nuclear family must accept and understand the condition, and the ways it affects all family members. Sometimes, by assisting the judge, the problem is solved and family troubles consequently improve. But there are cases in which there are deeper family issues that need to be addressed separately, in order to reach complete recovery.

JFI State Programs 2009: an overview



All states are now highlighted on the map with the name of a liaison we can contact for information about judicial family programs in their state. <http://jfi.ncsconline.org/>
The National Center for State Court sponsored a college intern to update information about judicial family programs.

Four years ago, Indiana's Supreme Court established the "Judicial Balance" website edited by a former editor of the Pepperdine University School of Law website. Judicial Balance publishes bimonthly summaries of articles, books and interviews about how to achieve a balanced life.

Introducing the site, Chief Justice Randall Shepard wrote: "If there has been a tougher year to be a judge it is difficult to recall. From confirmation battles that brutalize the reputation of judicial nominees to assaults on judges who heard the Schiavo case to murders of a judge and a judge's family, the environment in which we work has posed tough and personal questions for the American bench."

The Indiana Judicial Conference Committee on Ethics and Professionalism advises the "Judicial Balance" website and suggested revisions to the Judicial Code of Conduct.

Indiana's JFI is a good example of what the Judicial Family Institute is in the process of doing: establishing new links to state web sites that are already connected to the Judicial Family Institute website and that offer programs for judicial families

Relevant issues facing spouses and family members as well as news of what is going on in other jurisdictions can be found on the JFI website. We speak the same language, voicing concerns ranging from security at home and in the courthouse to experiencing feelings of social isolation and the challenges of raising children in the public eye.

Ethics education, mentoring for new judges and their spouses, counseling on a variety of problems including alcohol and substance abuse, security strategies and stress management sessions are among the resources offered through JFI links. Following is an overview of state programs.

EDUCATION FOR NEW JUDGES AND SPOUSES

The Chief Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court sends a welcome letter to the spouses of new judges offering the judicial branch's assistance with the changes and new responsibilities. New judges also receive a copy of "An Ethics Guide for Judges & Their Families" by Cynthia Gray, American Judicature Society, to help in their transition to the bench.

Ohio's Judicial Family Network (JFN), a model for judicial family initiatives, provides spouses and partners with three or more formal education programs each year and a resource notebook. Leading the way, the JFN designed a blueprint for supporting judicial family life, starting with a clear, concise mission statement. The message that comes across is that the Supreme Court cares about the families of judges and is committed to supporting their needs.

The Ohio approach inspired the Tennessee Judicial Family Institute Committee to establish the Association of Judicial Spouses and Families. Tennessee also encourages the exchange of information and resources within the judicial family community and plans to make information on a variety of topics, including transition to public life, media relations and high profile cases available.

Tennessee convenes judges, spouses and other judicial family members in plenary sessions to examine such issues as family matters, security and ethics.

As in other states, the Oklahoma Judicial Conference Auxiliary supports programs for spouses of judges during annual judicial conferences.

Every other year, the Indiana Judicial Center hosts a daylong orientation program for new judges' spouses and guests. New and veteran judicial spouses and guests are invited to attend separate education programs on ethics, security, wellness

and other relevant topics. Georgia also encourages spouses and guests to sit in on programs planned for judges.

Judicial spouses in Arkansas suggest program topics for the conference as well as selecting their own program fare. When the state Attorney General's Office presented spouses with a program on identity theft, the group asked that the presentation be given to the judges.

Puerto Rico's Judicial Family Support Program, fostered by the Judicial Family Institute, provides orientation and support to members of the judiciary and their families on ethical and practical aspects of their lives as spouse, son, daughter or close relative.

At a recent JFI dialogue sponsored by the program, judges from the judicial regions of Aguadilla, Arecibo, Mayaguez, and Utuado held all-day workshops tackling such subjects as high profile cases, security for judges and their families, the media and public opinion and cyber networks.

Separate workshops were held for children and adolescents. Puerto Rico's Chief Justice reiterated support for the JFI initiative and applauded workshop recommendations.

JUDGES ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

In addition to judges and designated court officers, spouses and unmarried dependent children are eligible for counseling and consultation services through the California Judicial Officers Assistance Program. A wide range of personal issues, from marital and family problems to financial and credit concerns, to emotional problems and stress, are treated. Participants are eligible for up to five sessions per family member per incident.

The New York State Unified Court System serves judicial families in need of counseling through its Work/Life Assistance Program, an independent professional counseling service, and

What JFI State Contacts Do

- Coordinate judicial family activities in their state, territory or commonwealths.
- Update information quarterly on state programs and submit to JFI website periodically for posting at our web.
- Provide a short and concise description of judicial family state program activities.
- Identify and submit articles, documents, or other educational material to be posted at the JFI website.
- Serve as contact between JFI and the state judicial family programs.

AL- Karen Trussell
AK - Stephanie J. Cole
AZ -Theresa Barrett
AR -Pat A. Hannah
CA -Bob Lowney
CO -Mindy Masias
CT-Mary B. O'Connor
DE- Franny Haney
DC Cheryl Baily
FL- Elisabeth H. Goodner
GA- Rich Reaves
Guam- Mary C. Torres
HI- Marsha Kitagawa
ID- Patricia Tobias
IL- Monica Pruitt
IN- Anne Jordan
IA- Jerry Beatty
KN- Hon. Lee A. Johnson
KY- Dr. Deborah Williamson
LA- Tim Palmatier
ME- Tracie Lammers
MD- Frederick C. Williams
MA- Joan Kenney
MI- Dawn F. McCarty
MN- Judge James E. Dehn
MS- Kevin Lackey
MO- Beth Riggert
MT- Karen Sedlock
NE- Carole McMahon-Boies
NV- Michael Bell
NH- Barbara Sweet
NJ- Richard Young
NM- Debra Seeley, Esq.
NY - Lauren DeSole
NC- David F. Hoke
NC- Beryle Talton
ND- Hon. Gerald W. VandeWalle
OH- Ruth Ann Newcomer
OK- Cheryl Camp
OR- Mollie Croisan
PA- Stephen M. Feiler, Ph.D.
PR- Anabel Solá Márquez
RI- Joseph Baxter
SC- Rosalyn Frierson
SD- Gloria Guericke
TN- Sarah Appleby
TX- Carl Reynolds
UT- Mary Aguirre-Shahin
VT- Patricia Gabel
VA- Karl R. Hade
WA- Christine Alexander c/o Wendy Ferrell
WV- Kathleen Gross
WI- Linda Albert, LCSW, CSAC
WI- David Hass
WY- Ronda Mungar

the statewide Lawyer Assistance Trust. Court employees and their families dealing with personal problems or requiring help with care for a child or an adult relative may contact the counseling service directly through a toll-free number and at no cost. The New York State Lawyer Assistance Trust provides financial support to statewide and local lawyer assistance programs, which in turn provide services to legal professionals and their families experiencing alcohol and substance abuse problems.

Judicial Assistance Services of Washington state also offers judicial families confidential assistance with mental, emotional, drug, alcohol, family, health and other personal problems. Services include assessment, referral, and short- and long-term counseling.

ETHICS EDUCATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Washington state has an online ethics program, available free to judges, judicial families and the public. This ethics educational tool facilitates information in a question and answer format covering topics such as campaigning, fundraising and charitable activities.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Nevada gives classes on managing stress to judges and judges' partners. One course has participants take a stress inventory, scheduling separate follow-up sessions on interpreting the results. Afterwards, judges and partners discuss stressor definitions, recognition and modification. In a second course, the focus is on one-to-one conversations with judges about stressors they encounter, followed by a presentation on the results of those conversations to a joint audience of judges and partners, plus a lengthy guided discussion.

MENTORING

Under the Tennessee Judicial Family Institute's new-judge mentoring program, a judge is assigned to mentor each new arrival to the bench. New judges are encouraged to engage in the mentoring process for at least one year following election or appointment to the bench.

Ohio's Judicial Family Network (JFN), a leader in judicial family initiatives, tapped an associate professor at The Ohio State University Fisher College of Business to help develop a mentoring program for

spouses and partners of new judges.

The Washington Chapter of JFI is gauging interest in a mentoring program for judicial spouses. The idea is to provide assistance and information on issues important to judicial spouses, including ethics, security and the stress facing families new to public life.

SECURITY

The Michigan Judicial Family Resource Page posted a pamphlet "101 Ways To Save a Judge," coupled with a list of things to do, or avoid doing, to enhance personal security. Many of the suggestions listed are common sense ones and can be used by anyone concerned with their personal safety. Among them is; "Do not reserve your parking space with a sign that says 'Judge' or your name," and "Do not answer your door (any door) without knowing who is on the other side. (by way of a peephole or by audible recognition)."

Meanwhile, the Arkansas Supreme Court created an Administrative Office of Courts Task Force on Court Security with Pat Hannah representing JFI and judicial spouses.

In a timely bow to the perils of the Information Age, the Judicial Council of California has prepared Privacy Protection Guidance for judicial officers. The California Court Security Education Committee is also developing new security DVDs for court staff.

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND STATE JUDICIAL PROGRAMS

The economy is going through a down cycle, and what goes down, will eventually go up. Yet, the financial crisis affecting state and local governments has hurt judicial programs. Maryland and Delaware, for instance, are no longer offering education for spouses. A smart move is to turn to the JFI website to make the most of the downturn.

The sample programs show that one size does not fit all. But checking different state models may inspire and can help tailor a format for your particular jurisdiction. The JFI website contains guidelines about planning methods and the programs each jurisdiction emphasizes.

The Judicial Family Institute urges members to keep in mind that an abundance of state resources is just a click away.

Excerpts from States Program Committee Report 2009. Committee: Mary Moyer, Ruth Ann Newcomer, Mary Torres, and Isabel Picó- Vidal