



# Oregon Judicial Department Juvenile Court Improvement Program

## JCIP Today E-Newsletter

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*Welcome to the first edition of JCIP Today. We hope that this E-Newsletter will increase communication by providing you with information about what is happening at JCIP on the statewide level, news from the county model court teams, notices of upcoming trainings and conferences, relevant state and national resources, and happenings of community partners. In order to make this newsletter the success we know it can be, we will need your input and contributions. Please e-mail comments, suggestions, announcements and articles to [shary.k.mason@ojd.state.or.us](mailto:shary.k.mason@ojd.state.or.us)*

### JCIP Highlights

#### ***JCIP "Through the Eyes of a Child Conference"***

Fifty-one judges and referees gave up their Sunday to attend the twelfth annual "Through the Eyes of a Child Conference". The conference received very favorable evaluations for sessions on New Legislation, Appellate Case Law Update and Courts Consulting with Children receiving the highest ranking. Attendees averaged 10.15 years presiding over juvenile dependency cases.

#### ***2009 Chief Justice Juvenile Court Champions Award***

The Honorable James Fun, Washington County Circuit Court, and Multnomah County Referees: Lisa Fithian-Barrett, Linda Hughes, Carol Herzog and David Knofler, have been named recipients of the 2009 Chief Justice Juvenile Court Champion awards. The awards were presented by Chief Justice, Paul De Muniz at the "Through the Eyes of a Child" conference.

Former Chief Justice Wallace P. Carson initiated the Chief Justice Juvenile Court Champion Awards when the JCIP started 12 years ago. Each year, two awards are presented. One award recognizes the efforts of a judicial officer who has made significant contributions over the past year to raise the profile and priority of child abuse and neglect cases in Oregon courts. The other award is presented to a judicial officer in recognition of lifetime contributions in juvenile dependency and child welfare issues.

It was with great emotion that Michelle McClaughry's family accepted a Posthumous Award in honor of her dedication to the Oregon Judicial Department and JCIP. Michelle had nearly an 11 career with the OJD beginning in Marion County Court's accounting and civil departments in 1998. Michelle brought her passion for improving the lives of all children to her most recent position as Management Assistant for the Juvenile Court Improvement Program. Michelle was a very committed talented person who had a generous smile and a positive attitude.



**Judge James Fun Knofler, and Linda Hughes**



**Referees Carol Herzog, Lisa Fithian-Barrett, David**

### ***JCIP Model Court Day***

The Judges were joined on Tuesday by community partners for the 3rd Annual Model Court Day - Statewide Summit on Abuse and Neglect. Over 200 participants were in attendance. Evaluations frequently expressed that Model Court Day was a positive experience and that it was inspirational. Attendees particularly appreciated the Foster Kids Panel. See the article below for more information from the foster kids.

### ***OFYC Panel Notes***

Following the Oregon Foster Youth Connection (OFYC) panel presentation at the JCIP Model Court Day, Jamie Lee Hinsz, President of OFYC, wrote to JCIP to thank the program for inviting the group to be a part of the conference, and to provide answers to some of the questions posed during the panel presentation. While all of the suggestions may not be possible to implement, it is interesting to see what the youth said. Attached are responses from OFYC members when these questions were discussed at a full group meeting.

[attachment "OFYC Panel Notes.doc" deleted by Darcy L DAVIDSON/CRB/OJD]

### ***Age Appropriate Consultation with Children***

The Child and Family Services Improvement Act requires states to have procedural safeguards in place to ensure that in permanency hearings the court conducting the hearing consults with children in an age appropriate manner regarding the permanency and transition plans proposed for them. JCIP has developed a draft set of recommended practices that is attached. Please review the draft and send comments or suggestions to shary.k.mason@ojd.state.or.us as soon as possible.

## **Announcements**

### ***Citizen Review Board Awarded Governor's Volunteer Award***

The Citizen Review Board (CRB) was selected to receive the 2009 Governor's Volunteer Award in the Statewide Volunteer Program category. The CRB was honored at the 2009 Governor's Volunteer Awards Luncheon on Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Salem Conference Center. This event was held in conjunction with the Oregon Civic Engagement Conference. Citizen Review Board members, staff, and juvenile judges were in attendance to accept the award and honor the work of Citizen Review Board volunteers who dedicate themselves to some of the most vulnerable children and families of the State of Oregon.

### **Congratulations CRB!!**



**Linn County Board Member Cynthia MacKay and Danny Santos from the Oregon Governor's Office**



**CRB Members in Attendance at the Awards Luncheon**

## ***From the Counties***

### ***Putting Information on Consulting with Children and Youth into Action***

JCIP Staff Counsel, Rebecca Orf, put information from the "Through the Eyes of a Child" conference to good use recently when filling in as a pro tem judge. She had a case involving a 16 year old "cross-over kid", who had multiple diagnoses and issues. She reported that she did more than usual to try to include him in the conversation. The court clerk commented that as a result you could actually see the child's body language change. She credits her new approach to what she learned from the foster kids on Model Court Day and from the presentation and recent conversations, about consulting with kids in court. She reports that she now has personal experience of the value of JCIP training.

### ***Ensuring Juvenile Dependency Justice in Difficult Fiscal Time***

The attached article, submitted by the Honorable Daniel R. Murphy of Linn County, outlines ten strategies for bringing about improvements in our juvenile dependency system during challenging budgetary times.

### ***NCFCJ Model Court All-Sites Conference***

Members of the Multnomah County Model Court team recently attended the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Model Courts All-Sites Conference in Newport Beach, California. Multnomah County is Oregon's only NCFCJ model court team.



Relaxing after a busy day of workshops at the conference are, from left to right, the Honorable Nan Waller, Former Senator Margaret Carter, Attorney Robin Wolfe, Referee Linda Hughes, and the Honorable Paula Kurshner.

## ***Training, Conferences, and Resources***

### ***2009 JCIP Road Show***

The JCIP Road Show is here! Topics include New Legislation, Safety Decision Making, Relative Placements, The Child Welfare Program Improvement Plan and Reducing APPLA Placements. Online registration is now available. Following is the link to JCIP web site to access the registration:

<http://courts.oregon.gov/OJD/OSCA/cpsd/courtimprovement/jcip/RoadShows/2009RoadShow.page?>

## ***2009 Governor's Summit***

The 2009 Governor's Summit on Eliminating Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) in Juvenile Justice & Child Welfare Systems will be held on Monday, November 16, 2009 at the Red Lion Jantzen Beach Hotel in Portland, Oregon from 8:00am to 4:30pm. The event is presented and coordinated through the Office of the Governor, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, the Oregon Commission on Children & Families, and the Oregon Youth Authority.

This is a wonderful training opportunity, and has only a small registration fee of \$25, which includes a continental breakfast and hot plated lunch. On-line registration is available at: <http://www.oregon.gov/OYA/dmcs Summit/2009/summit.htm>

## ***Examining Judges' Perspectives on Termination of Parental Rights and Adoption of Foster Children***

A new Child Trends research brief explores the issues that judges consider when making decisions about termination of parental rights and adoption of foster children. The brief, [\*The Timing of Termination of Parental Rights: A Balancing Act for Children's Best Interests\*](#), is based on interviews with 20 judges from 18 states.

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 shortens the time frame for terminating parental rights (TPR) as a way to facilitate timely adoptions for children in foster care who cannot be reunited with their birth parents. The interviews suggest that while judges are concerned about terminating birth parents' rights to a child before an adoptive family has been identified, recent innovations in case practice have helped to address these concerns and have made for a less divisive decision-making process.

## ***Community Partner Corner***

### ***Department of Health and Human Services Awards \$220,000 to Oregon to Increase Adoptions***

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded \$35 million to 38 states and Puerto Rico for increasing the number of children adopted from foster care. States use the funds from the adoption incentive award to enhance their programs for abused and neglected children. Oregon has been awarded \$220,000.

Under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351), the adoption incentives were revamped to provide stronger incentives for states to redouble their efforts to find children – particularly older children and children with special needs – loving adoptive homes. In addition, the law introduced the concept of an adoption rate, which is derived from comparing current year adoptions to the number of children in care at the end of the previous year. States receive additional money if they exceed their highest foster child adoption rate for previous years back to 2002. The Adoption Incentive program gives states \$4,000 for every foster child adopted above their 2007 baseline, plus a payment of \$8,000 for every foster child age nine and older and \$4,000 for every other special needs child adopted above the respective baselines. In addition, states receive \$1,000 for every foster child adopted over and above the level of the state's highest foster child adoption rate for previous years.

## ***2008 Status of the Children Report***

Oregon recently released the eleventh annual Status of Children report, designed to give information about the experiences of the children who come into Oregon's child protection system each year due to abuse or neglect. Almost 14,000 children spent at least one day in foster care in 2008, a significant reduction from the year before. Although the number of children in foster care in Oregon declined in 2008, Oregon continues to place more children in foster care than almost any other state in the country.

To download a copy of the 2008 Status of Children in Oregon's Child Protection System report, go to <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/abuse/publications/children/index.shtml> - please note: the full report is 56 pages in length.

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