



February 2004 News & Updates

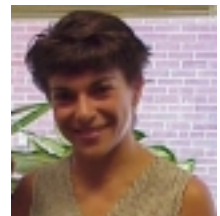
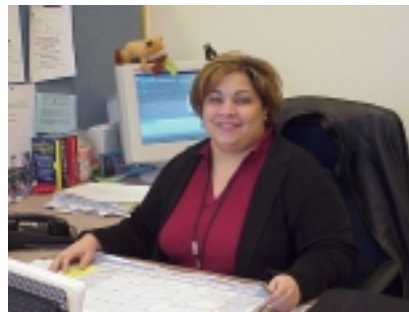
Produced by Chris M. Pleasanton, Volume 6, Issue 2

DMHAS: ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN THE COURT SETTING

The primary charges covered by the Community Court are mainly non-violent statutory offenses and city ordinances. We refer to these crimes as “quality of life” offenses. However, this does not mean that the social problems affecting Community Court defendants are any less serious or complex than those affecting people involved in much more serious, felonious crimes. For that reason, the on-site staff from the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is one of the more important services available to many of our defendants.

Led by Brenda St. George, the DMHAS team located at the Community Court in Hartford also consists of Eva Issavi, Michael Hatt, and Mildred Hickman. The DMHAS team works with defendants afflicted with substance abuse and mental health illnesses, arranging in-patient and out-patient treatment services, supervising their progress and compliance for the Court, and facilitating coordination services available from non-DMHAS providers.

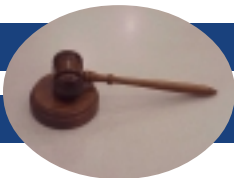
“The DMHAS staff has impressed me with their expert and diligent care for many of our defendants,” Presiding Judge Jorge A. Simón said. “They are a mighty tool the Court can use to help those troubled by mental illness and substance abuse receive treatment when the only other option may be incarceration.”



The on-site DMHAS team at the Community Court in Hartford (Clockwise from top left) Michael Hatt, Brenda St. George, Eva Issavi, Mildred Hickman.

MONTHLY COMMUNITY COURT STATISTICS JANUARY 2004

Hours of Community Service	1,992
Total Number of Cases Processed	463
Number of Human Services Referrals	103
Referrals to HAMP (Hartford Area Mediation)	44



LEAD MARSHAL DARNELL GIBBS

A TRUE LEADER

One of the true unsung staff members at the Community Court is Lead Marshal Darnell Gibbs. As Lead Marshal, Darnell is second in command to the Supervising Judicial Marshal for all community court security measures. Among her many duties, Darnell is responsible for the Marshal's operations in the courtroom, lock up, and other security posts. She also performs equipment inspections, handles payroll issues, and consults with the Supervising Judicial Marshal on security matters.

Outside of the Community Court, Darnell is mother to Ashley Gibbs, who is presently attending Manchester Community College. However, that is not the extent of her motherhood. Darnell is a friend and sounding board to many of the Marshals under her supervision. Darnell's guidance and wisdom has led to several of the Marshals affectionately referring to her as "Ma".

"Darnell is knowledgeable, professional, and leads by example," Supervising Marshal John Maloney said. "She also acts with a very personal touch that shows she genuinely cares for the people she comes into contact with, staff, defendants and public alike. She is a true asset to the Community Court."



Lead Marshal Darnell Gibbs

JUDGE SIMÓN

NOMINATED FOR EIGHT YEAR RE-APPOINTMENT TO BENCH



Hon. Jorge A. Simón

Judge Simón, Presiding Judge of the Community Court Session in Hartford, along with several other Superior Court, Appellate Court, and Judge Trial Referees, appeared before the General Assembly's Judiciary Committee on Friday, February 13, 2004, in a public hearing concerning their appointment to the bench. In Connecticut, Superior Court judges are appointed for an eight-year term. Those who are re-nominated for appointment, must appear before the Judiciary Committee for a public hearing, and then be approved by a vote of the Connecticut State Senate.

The Judiciary Committee approved Judge Simón's reappointment on February 18, 2004 with House and Senate votes expected in the near future.

TOMO KOARAI

A NEW FRIEND FROM JAPAN

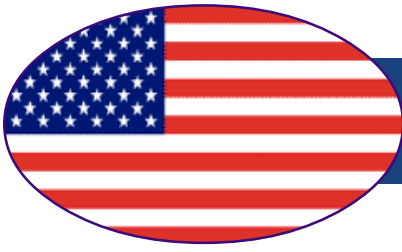
The Community Court Session in Hartford was pleased to host a recent visit by Tomoatsu Koarai, a Public Prosecutor from the Sendai District in Miyagi, Japan. Tomo, as he prefers to be called, is spending four and a half months in the United States studying American courts and judicial processes. Working closely with New York's Center for Court Innovation, he is focusing his research primarily on the community court concept.

Upon meeting Tomo at the Midtown (Manhattan) Community Court's 10th Anniversary celebration in December and learning of his research efforts, Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton invited Tomo to visit the Community Court in Hartford. Arriving for a two day visit on January 20, Tomo, accompanied by his wife Akiko, toured the Community Court facility, observed several court sessions, and met with many members of the Community Court staff including Judge Simón and State's Attorney Glenn Kaas. In addition to attending official Court functions, Tomo joined Judge Simón, Glenn, and Chris in the more sociable settings of lunch and dinner, where the conversation centered more on the respective culture of each.

"It was an honor for us to be visited by Tomo and his wonderful wife Akiko," Judge Simón said. "While they came to Hartford to learn about us, we all learned a great deal about Japan from them. I sincerely hope their visit was as educational and pleasurable as it was for us."

Photos at right: Judge Simón with Tomo Koarai in the Judge's Chambers (Top), "Collegues in Prosecution" Asst. State's Attorney Glenn Kass and Tomo (Middle) , and Tomo with Court Coordinator Chis Pleasanton outside Connecticut's State Capitol.





Community Service



Community Pride



COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK SITES JANUARY 2004

- | | | | |
|------------|---|------------|--|
| January 5 | Chesnut St., Ward St., Zion St., Washington St. | January 20 | Washington St. F.D. Oaks & Mahl Ave. |
| January 6 | Ward St., Zion St. | January 21 | Hillside Ave. |
| January 7 | various trash removal projects | January 22 | Russ St., Morton St., Putnam St. |
| January 8 | Empty lot at Garden St. & Ledyard St. | January 23 | FOODSHARE - La Casa de Puerto Rico, Faith Manor, Golden Age Senior Center, Smith Towers |
| January 9 | FOODSHARE - La Casa de Puerto Rico & Faith Manor, Webster St., Maple Ave., Whitmore St., Bond St. | January 26 | Mather St., Pliney St. |
| January 12 | Elliot St. | January 27 | Webster Square, Maple Ave. |
| January 13 | Grand St., Park Terrace, Russ St., Albany Ave., Sigourney St. | January 28 | snow removal |
| January 14 | South Whitney St., West Boulevard | January 29 | Hamilton Ave., New Park Ave., Florence St., Park St., Putnam St., Zion St., Ward St., George St. |
| January 15 | various snow removal projects | January 30 | FOODSHARE - Mahoney Village, Smith Towers Golden Age Senior Center |
| January 16 | FOODSHARE - Mahoney Village, Smith Towers, Golden Age Senior Center | | |

COM. SERVICE PERFORMED AT MERCY HOUSING & SHELTER & EBONY HORSE WOMEN RANCH THROUGHOUT THE MONTH
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CHRIS MENA, CPA, COMMUNITY COURT COMMUNITY SERVICE TEAM

FAREWELL TO SALLY DOUGHERTY

The Community Court Session in Hartford would like to bid a fond farewell to one its original social services team members, Sally Dougherty of the State Department of Social Services. Sally (pictured at right) is leaving to pursue an opportunity with the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Norwich area. As a DSS Eligibility Caseworker, Sally provided on-site assessments of Community Court defendants to determine their eligibility for state medical benefits, food stamps, and other assistance. During her tenure, Sally interviewed over 3,000 defendants and issued close to 1,800 social services referrals. The Community Court is currently working to fill her DSS position in order to maintain these essential services for our defendants.

“We would like to offer Sally our best wishes for success in her new opportunity,” Judge Simón stated. “Her professionalism and caring approach to helping those in need will be very beneficial in her DMHAS work.”



Please feel free to email the court with questions or comments at:

Hartford.Courtcourt@jud.state.ct.us

and visit the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch website at:

www.jud.state.ct.us