

Volunteer/Intern Program Approaches its 40th Year

JUDICIAL COLUMN

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New Training Added to Intern Orientation

Fall semester interns placed within Court Operations were the first Judicial Branch interns to receive training on the CRMVS system at Intern Orientation on Friday, September 21st. These interns are placed in Clerk's offices, Victim Advocate offices, Community Court and in the Court Service Centers throughout the state. 25 interns took part in this training on Friday afternoon during their day-long Intern Orientation.

The training was conducted by Jen Robinson, Caseflow Management Specialist from Superior Court Operations unit. Jen, a former intern herself,

provided the students with an overall lesson on the CRMVS system as well as codes used in their daily functions. Jen Robinson and Judy Lee both from the Criminal Matters unit have developed this training and have traveled throughout the state presenting this instruction to all Clerk's office staff. The students were given CR39 access, which allows interns to assist court patrons with specific case information whether in person at the Clerk's office window or over the telephone. Each student was given a folder with helpful tips to guide them while in the field at their internship sites.

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Jen also provided non-disclosure training regarding the use of CRMVS. Students were instructed on the importance of confidentiality and the complex issues some cases present when referring to non-disclosable information. Gina Vergnetti, a current intern at G.A. 23 Clerk's office in New Haven says, "At intern orientation, I received training regarding non-disclosure in a clerk's office setting. At my intern site, there are many non-disclosable documents that are brought to a clerk's attention. These documents must be treated sensitively; making sure no information is given out that will breach the privacy of the person's file. During orientation, I was told files that are non-disclosable will have an orange sticker on the outside of the folder, which is a clear indication that they should be withheld from being brought to the front desk where someone may be asking to view it."

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Mary Deluca, Assistant Clerk of G.A. 23 in New Haven says, "CRMVS look-up access is extremely beneficial for our interns. This access allows them to work independently which improves their problem

solving skills. They can look up information, find files, and file paperwork as needed. In addition, they can answer the telephones and help at the counter, which offers them an invaluable customer service experience.

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Eric Groody, Deputy Chief Clerk I for Criminal Matters at G.A. 18 in Bantam says, "I am very pleased that interns now have the training and capability to look up information on the Criminal/Motor Vehicle System. This access truly enhances the intern's ability to directly assist members of the public without having to refer calls or inquiries to other staff members. Interns are able to get the experience of dealing directly with our stakeholders, while the stakeholders benefit by receiving information accurately and quickly, without getting referred."

We have been very pleased with the feedback regarding this new training at Intern Orientation and look forward to continuing to work with Jen Robinson in providing more training for interns in the future.

Court Operations Supportive of Intern Program

The Judicial Volunteer/Intern Program has had a longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship with the Court Operations Division of the Judicial Branch for many years. In 2012 alone, there were close to 100 interns and volunteers placed throughout the various offices of the Division. The interns come from many local colleges and universities as well as throughout the country during the summer months. Interns placed within Court Operations offices are undergraduate, graduate, and law students.

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On a typical day in court, you can find an intern or volunteer assisting staff and members of the public in Court Service Centers, the Office of Victim Services, Court Clerks' offices as well as Support Enforcement and Jury Administration.

Tais Ericson, Director of Court Operations says, "My experience with the Intern Program has been consistently positive; the benefits are mutual – the interns have a genuine commitment to provide professional-level services, while gaining valuable exposure to the business we conduct, preparing them for careers within the Branch as well as outside of the Branch."

"My internship at the Office of Victim Services has helped me grow both personally and professionally."

Alexandria Bode, an intern for the fall 2012 semester through spring 2013 is placed with Ms. Jeanne Barth at the Middlesex Judicial District Court – Office of Victim Services. Alex says, "My internship at the Office of Victim Services has helped me grow both personally and professionally. The Office of Victim Services is an invaluable assistance offered by the State of Connecticut. We are able to help victims navigate the court system and offer direction to help



them ease back into their normal lives. As far as the employees that I work with, I cannot imagine a more open and accepting environment to work in. Speaking as a person who lives their life with disabilities, it is quite unusual to be treated with the same dignity and respect that all people are treated with. However, employees of the Middletown Courthouse see all people as equal and treat them as such. "

Alex continues, "My favorite aspect of my internship with the Judicial Branch is having the opportunity of working with a person who excels in her job, and is the most professional and compassionate person to take direction from. Besides loving what the job entails, I have now met the most inspiring mentor of my life."

Our Volunteer and Intern Coordinators within External Affairs have the uncanny knack of matching us up with the right individuals.

Shari Deluca, Jury Outreach Coordinator for Jury Administration, related the following: "It is always a pleasure hosting interns at Jury Administration. Our Volunteer and Intern Coordinators within External Affairs have the uncanny knack of matching us up with the right individuals. The interns are pleasantly

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surprised on their first day at Jury Administration – they receive a guided tour of the building, a review of the office policies and attendance procedures, they are taken out to lunch, and then – they are put to work... and boy, do they work! Jury Administration receives about 3,000 pieces of mail daily and the interns get to assist in the processing of the mail. They go through the same training as our employees so they understand the importance of, not only jury service, but the importance of what the Jury call center staff accomplishes throughout the day.

A few weeks into their internship, the interns get to go on a field trip. They spend part of the day at the Supreme Court and have the opportunity to watch appeals. They are also taken on a tour of the Supreme Court, State Library and museum. Then it's over to the Hartford Superior Court where the court staff graciously spends time with the interns, explaining the jury process and allows the interns the opportunity to view the voir dire process.

The best part of their internship is going out in the field with the Jury Outreach Team. This allows the interns the opportunity to watch the presenters speak

with high school students and the general public about the responsibilities of jury service in an interactive and engaging manner. Many interns are asked by the presenters to introduce themselves and speak for a moment about their internship at Jury Administration. It is with pleasure to hear them relay that, in the short period of time they are with Jury Administration, they feel they have become one of the staff and know how much they are valued.

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The interns are a valuable asset to any organization within the Judicial Branch. As a host, your engagement and commitment are clearly recognized but, more importantly, the interns truly appreciate the opportunity you provide, sharing your knowledge, experience and insight. It is a very rewarding experience and one I highly recommend.

We are looking forward to continuing a great working relationship with Court Operations and providing rewarding experiences for all of our interns.

The Volunteer/Intern Program Gets New Staff

Alyson Downes is the newest member of the V/I Program staff. She joined the staff in February 2012 and is assigned to the Bantam, Danbury, New Haven and Waterbury Areas. Previously, Ms. Downes held positions within the Housing Session and mostly recently at the Information Desk in Bridgeport. “As a former intern myself with the Judicial Branch Intern Program I am looking forward to helping students gain a better understanding and deeper insight into their areas of study with hands on experience during their internships. I am very excited to be a part of the External Affairs Division.” Alyson is a great addition to the V/I staff.

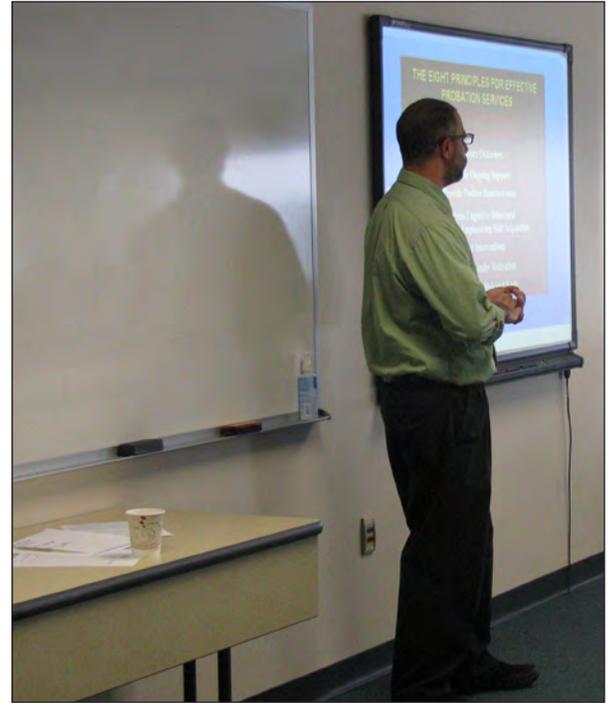


Spotlight on Trainers

Kirsten Sirois and Thomas Bavaro provide adult and juvenile training to the fall interns.



*Kristen Sirois, Adult Probation Officer II
CSSD Training Academy*



*Tom Bavaro, Lead Juvenile Probation Officer,
CSSD Operations*

Application Deadlines and Orientation Schedules

Paralegal, Graduate & Undergraduate Studies

Applications for Summer 2013 must be received by **May 5, 2013**

Applications for Fall 2013 must be received by **August 23, 2013**

Placement opportunities, eligibility and application process can be obtained at our new website www.jud.ct.gov/intern

Legal Studies

Applications for Summer 2013 must be received by **March 15, 2013**

Applications for Fall 2013 must be received by **August 17, 2013**

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