

MINUTES
Advisory Board on the
Americans with Disabilities Act
October 19, 2011

The Advisory Board on the Americans with Disabilities Act met in the Attorney Conference Room of the Supreme Court at 231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut, on Wednesday, October 19, 2011.

Members in attendance: The Hon. Patrick L. Carroll II, Chair; Ms. Sandra Lugo-Gines, Atty. Robert Coffey, Atty. Stephen Ment, Mr. Richard D. Byam, and Mr. Ronald J. Macchio. Absent: Mr. David McCormick.

Guest: Atty. Paul Bourdoulous, Superior Court Operations Program Manager.

Judge Carroll called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

I. Review and approval of minutes of previous meeting: The minutes of the 3 May, 2011 meeting were amended to reflect the title of Atty. Robert Coffey and approved by unanimous vote.

II. ADA – Pillars Training: Judge Carroll introduced Atty. Paul Bourdoulous, who gave the Board members and update on an internal Judicial Branch staff training under its Pillars of Service Excellence program. The Pillars philosophy is driven by the Branch’s four core values of fairness, respect, integrity and professionalism. The Pillars’ training team, who are all Branch employees, have created a series of workshops based on each of the core values. Under the “respect” core value, a new workshop, titled “ADA: Problem Solving with Sensitivity and Respect”, has been provided to several dozen Branch managers and supervisors in anticipation of rolling it out in 2012 to line-staff. The workshop, which is presented by Atty. Bourdoulous and Ms. Lugo-Gines, lasts about 2.5 hours and provides a comprehensive overview of ADA requirements; the types of accommodations offered by the Branch to people with disabilities; the policies, procedures and forms that are in place to sustain the Branch’s compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Attendees are also told how to request an accommodation from a local trained Contact Person. The reviews by staff thus far have been overwhelmingly positive, Atty. Bourdoulous noted, with many managers impressed by the organization of the ADA accommodation process. Some of the Board members have also attended the training; it is being made available to all Branch divisions. Judge Carroll thanked Atty. Bourdoulous and Ms. Lugo-Gines for their work on the training and noted that all Branch staff should be familiar with the ADA.

III. ADA—Awareness & Sensitivity Training: Ms. Lugo-Gines and Judge Carroll discussed with the members a recent training with Atty. Melissa Marshall. Several Board members as well as judges and Branch staff members attended. The training was provided free by Atty. Marshall, who is the director of the Connecticut Business Leadership Network, which is charged with maximizing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

IV. ADA Outreach efforts: Ms. Lugo-Gines gave an update on her efforts to secure artwork, by people with different abilities, to display in the Branch's juror orientation rooms. This art-centered program is being done to enhance the Branch's relationship with the ADA community. An art display was held in July 2010 in the Middlesex Judicial District in the Court Street jury room and was very well received. Judge Carroll offered his full support for the idea and instructed Ms. Lugo-Gines to work not only with Jury Administration, but the Administrative Judge in each JD.

V. Role of Access to Justice (ATJ) Commission: Ms. Lugo-Gines is a member of the ATJ Commission, representing the Board. The ATJ Commission has met twice and will meet again in November. She has also been assigned to the Commission's Subcommittee on the ABA and Technology & Access to Justice. Some of the ideas Ms. Lugo-Gines shared with the ATJ Commission regarding disability issues were the result of a brainstorming session with Branch staff.

VI. Access to Facilities Committee update: Ms. Lugo-Gines co-chairs the facilities committee and several ADA Board members are also members. That committee has completed its work and she gave a brief update on the status of building evaluations. The facilities committee report will include a recommendation that all Branch facilities be evaluated for ADA compliance utilizing a checklist.

VII. Future meeting: To be scheduled.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.