



2018 ANNUAL REPORT
presented at the
State of the Court Luncheon
September 21, 2018

Chief Judge Denise Page Hood

STATE OF THE COURT MESSAGE

September 21, 2018

“The United States Courts are an independent, national judiciary providing fair and impartial justice within the jurisdiction conferred by the Constitution and Congress. As an equal branch of government, the federal judiciary preserves and enhances its core values as the courts meet changing national and local needs.” The core values are: the rule of law; equal justice; judicial independence; accountability; excellence and service. Strategic Plan for the Federal Judiciary, September 2015, Judicial Conference of the United States.

Court Information

The Eastern District of Michigan is one of two federal district courts in the great State of Michigan. Our district is part of the Sixth Circuit, which is comprised of districts in Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee. The seat of the Sixth Circuit is located in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Our district includes the eastern half of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, divided into two divisions – the Northern Division and the Southern Division. The Court’s main office is located in Detroit at the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse. Other Southern divisional offices are located in Ann Arbor, Flint and Port Huron, and Bay City in the Northern Division.

The Eastern District of Michigan has 348 employees – 28 judicial officers, 79 staff working directly for judges, 97 Clerk’s Office employees, 84 Probation employees, 35 Pretrial Services employees, and 25 other court staff (court reporters and staff attorneys).



Judicial Officers in the Eastern District of Michigan

| Judicial Officer | Date Appointed * | Appointing President |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Denise Page Hood | 6/16/1994 (A) | Bill Clinton |
| Avern Cohn | 9/26/1979 (Sr) | Jimmy Carter |
| Bernard A. Friedman | 4/20/1988 (Sr) | Ronald Reagan |
| Robert H. Cleland | 6/19/1990 (Sr) | George H.W. Bush |
| Nancy G. Edmunds | 2/10/1992 (Sr) | George H.W. Bush |
| Paul D. Borman | 8/10/1994 (A) | Bill Clinton |
| Arthur J. Tarnow | 5/22/1998 (Sr) | Bill Clinton |
| George Caram Steeh | 5/22/1998 (Sr) | Bill Clinton |
| Victoria A. Roberts | 6/29/1998 (A) | Bill Clinton |
| Marianne O. Battani | 6/2/2000 (Sr) | Bill Clinton |
| David M. Lawson | 6/2/2000 (A) | Bill Clinton |
| Thomas L. Ludington | 6/12/2006 (A) | George W. Bush |
| Sean F. Cox | 6/12/2006 (A) | George W. Bush |
| Stephen J. Murphy, III | 8/18/2008 (A) | George W. Bush |
| Mark A. Goldsmith | 6/22/2010 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Gershwin A. Drain | 8/8/2012 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Terrence G. Berg | 12/7/2012 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Judith E. Levy | 3/14/2014 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Laurie J. Michelson | 3/14/2014 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Matthew F. Leitman | 3/14/2014 (A) | Barack Obama |
| Linda V. Parker | 3/17/2014 (A) | Barack Obama |

* (A) Active Judge, (Sr) Senior Judge

Currently the Eastern District of Michigan has 14 active district judges and seven senior judges with caseloads. Our senior judges receive cases at substantially the same rate as district judges in active service. There is one vacancy that was created when Judge Gerald E. Rosen took senior status on October 26, 2016.

Our Court has district judges on several prestigious national and circuit committees, including but not limited to the following:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Chief Judge Hood | <i>Judicial Conference Advisory Committee on Criminal Rules</i> <i>Sixth Circuit Ad Hoc Outreach & Civics Committee</i> |
| Judge Cleland | <i>Sixth Circuit Space & Facilities Committee</i> |
| Judge Lawson | <i>Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference Planning Committee</i> |
| Judge Ludington | <i>Judicial Conference Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System</i> |
| Judge Murphy | <i>Judicial Conference Advisory Committee on Appellate Rules</i> |
| Judge Levy | <i>Judicial Conference Committee on Defender Services</i> |

Our Court also has seven magistrate judges – Magistrate Judge R. Steven Whalen, Mona K. Majzoub, David R. Grand, Patricia T. Morris, Elizabeth A. Stafford, Anthony P.

Patti and Stephanie Dawkins Davis. Magistrate Judge Whalen continues to serve as Executive Magistrate Judge for the Court.

Bankruptcy Judge Phillip J. Shefferly continues to serve as Chief Judge of the Bankruptcy Court. Chief Judge Shefferly was first appointed as Chief Judge of the Bankruptcy Court in April 2009, and is now in the first year of his current term, which will end on April 24, 2020. There are currently six bankruptcy judges serving in the Eastern District of Michigan – Chief Judge Phillip J. Shefferly, Judges Marci B. McIvor, Thomas J. Tucker, Daniel S. Opperman, Mark A. Randon and Maria Oxholm. One new judgeship has been approved for the Eastern District of Michigan and that selection process is underway.

Death of Judge Anna Diggs Taylor

Judge Anna Diggs Taylor, a civil rights champion, groundbreaking lawyer and judge, died on November 4, 2017 at the age of 84. She was appointed by President Jimmy Carter on November 2, 1979. She presided over many high-profile cases during her lengthy career, and served as Chief Judge from 1996-1998. She took senior status in 1999 and retired in 2011 after 32 years of service to our Court.

Inactive Status for Judge John Corbett O'Meara

Senior Judge John Corbett O'Meara closed his Ann Arbor chambers on July 15, 2018 and went on inactive status. Judge O'Meara was appointed by President Bill Clinton on September 15, 1994 and spent time in both Detroit and Ann Arbor during his 24 years serving our Court. He is happily enjoying his retirement.

Portrait Ceremony of Judge Victoria A. Roberts

On August 10, 2018, the Court held the Portrait Presentation Ceremony of Judge Victoria A. Roberts at the Levin Courthouse. Judge Roberts has been serving our Court for 20 years. The portrait was painted by Richard Lewis.

Reappointment of Magistrate Judge R. Steven Whalen

Magistrate Judge R. Steven Whalen was appointed to a third eight-year term as magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. His current term is September 11, 2018 to September 10, 2028. As noted earlier, he continues to serve as Executive Magistrate Judge for our Court.

Clerk's Office

The Clerk's Office has always focused on being accessible and transparent to the public, especially pro se litigants. It has been almost 10 years since the Court decided to allow pro se litigants to e-file, and many people have taken advantage of the process. In the first three years, only 75 people participated. Now, we have had more than 270 cases that included a pro se e-filer. Considering that about 13% of our non-prisoner

civil case load includes a pro se litigant, we are hopeful more people take advantage of the convenience of e-filing. So far this year, more than 295 documents have been filed by pro se e-filers, reducing postage and copy costs. Please see court statistics at the end of this report.

As busy as the Court has been, over a year ago several judges volunteered to assist the Middle District of Tennessee with their case backlog. The judges were assigned in total, 255 civil cases and 90 criminal defendants. In addition, magistrate judges volunteered to assist and prepare Reports and Recommendations for 34 social security cases. It is wonderful that e-filing makes this type of work so much easier. The willingness and swift handling of the cases had a significant impact in the Middle District of Tennessee. Since these cases were assigned to Eastern Michigan, one new judge was appointed to fill one of the two vacancies in the Middle District of Tennessee. As a result of her management of these cases, Clerk's Office employee Julie Owens was presented with the Chief's Award.

Pretrial Services

In 2018, the United States Pretrial Services Agency developed a new mission statement:

The United States Pretrial Services Agency for the Eastern District of Michigan adheres to the Bail Reform Act of 1984, treating all parties with dignity and respect while facilitating the fair administration of justice. We strive to conduct thorough and unbiased investigations in an effort to reduce unnecessary detention. We are dedicated to mitigating the risk of nonappearance and promote safety in the community by conducting proactive and effective supervision, while encouraging long term positive change in the individuals we supervise.

The agency participated in a variety of district wide and national trainings to learn ways to reduce unnecessary detention, increase adherence to bond conditions, identifying risk factors in supervision and personal leadership training. The district implemented the HRMIS E-performance system for performance management.

The agency is comprised of 35 staff members, serving five Eastern District of Michigan court locations. In 2018, Rasel Siddique was appointed as a Pretrial Services Intake Coordinator. Brian Harmon, David Nicoloff, Marie Serna, and Gwendolyn Stein were appointed as United States Pretrial Services Officers. All officers completed the six week new officer program at the Federal Pretrial and Probation Academy in Charleston, South Carolina. While at the academy, Officer Brian Harmon was selected as Class President. Officer Marie Serna was awarded the distinguished Directors Leadership Award. This award is presented by the Director of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center to the officer in each basic class who most exemplifies the core values of a federal law enforcement officer: integrity, fairness, respect, honesty, courage, and compassion.

Supervising Officer Susan Gilmore and Senior Officer Brandi Baltes were selected as members of the Administrative Office's National Program Review Team. Both officers traveled to other districts and aided in conducting program reviews. Chief Pretrial Services Officer Patricia Trevino was appointed by Director James Duff of the Administrative Office to serve on the National Pretrial Services Working Group. The group will work on the development and implementation of national pretrial policy. Officer Ryan Helms completed the Federal Probation and Pretrial Academy's National Firearm Instructor Course in Charleston, South Carolina to become a District Firearm Instructor.

In 2018, five participants successfully completed and graduated from the RESTART Program. The program was implemented in 2017 and is designed to divert selected defendants from a conviction and aid them in being productive members of the community. The program involves the collaborative efforts of Chief Judge Denise Page Hood, Judge Paul D. Borman, Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Stafford, along with representatives from the United States Attorney's Office, Federal Defenders, the Pretrial Services Agency and the Probation Department. Participants work in conjunction with the RESTART team in learning social skills and cognitive restructuring. Successful completion in the program leads to diversion from the criminal justice system as the charges against them are ultimately dismissed.

In addition to the RESTART program, the Pretrial Services Agency worked in conjunction with the United States Attorney's Office and completed 36 pretrial diversion investigations. Defendants that successfully complete the diversion program are diverted from the criminal justice system and avoid a federal conviction.

The United States Pretrial Services Agency is responsible for providing quality pretrial reports to the court and making pretrial release recommendations. For the period of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, 1,083 pre-bail reports were completed. The release rate for the Eastern District of Michigan is the seventh highest in the nation. The department is responsible for supervising 747 defendants on bond. The department spent over \$275,000.00 for treatment services to address substance abuse, mental health, and sex offender therapy. The district maintains an onsite drug testing lab. From July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, 5,023 drug screens were processed in the lab.

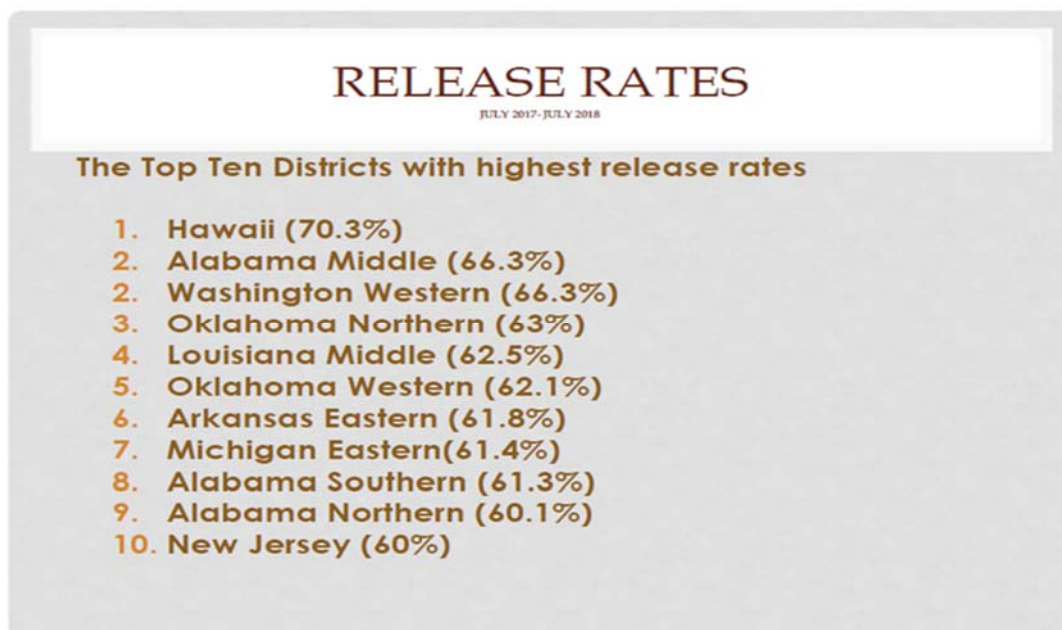
For the period of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, the Eastern District of Michigan Pretrial Services Agency received 1,166 initial appearances and completed 1,083 pre-bail reports. The table below represents pretrial interviews and reports completed in relevance to the sixth circuit.

Pretrial Services Interviews and Types of Pretrial Services Reports (Table H-2)
12-Month Period Ending: 2018/06/30

DSS Standard Report #1088

| Circuit | District Name | Cases Activated | Interview Status | | Types Of Pretrial Services Report | | |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | | | Interviewed | Not Interviewed | Prebail Reports | Postbail Reports | No Reports Made |
| 6 | Kentucky-Eastern | 457 | 332 | 125 | 271 | 114 | 72 |
| | Kentucky-Western | 289 | 206 | 83 | 223 | 19 | 47 |
| | Michigan-Eastern | 1,166 | 925 | 241 | 1,083 | 73 | 10 |
| | Michigan-Western | 458 | 327 | 131 | 399 | 47 | 12 |
| | Ohio-Northern | 861 | 731 | 130 | 834 | 8 | 19 |
| | Ohio-Southern | 930 | 708 | 222 | 716 | 97 | 117 |
| | Tennessee-Eastern | 753 | 725 | 28 | 746 | 3 | 4 |
| | Tennessee-Middle | 330 | 25 | 305 | 166 | 52 | 112 |
| | Tennessee-Western | 713 | 527 | 186 | 519 | 57 | 137 |
| | Total | 5,957 | 4,506 | 1,451 | 4,957 | 470 | 530 |

The Eastern District of Michigan has a 61.4% release rate (excluding immigration cases). The table below represents the top ten highest districts with the highest release rates. The Eastern District of Michigan ranks seventh.



The table below represents the distribution of the types of cases that were activated in each divisional office in the Eastern District of Michigan.

**Profile Of Cases Activated By Charged Offense, By Divisional Office For Michigan-Eastern
Year-Over-Year**

| Divisional Office | Charged Offense | 2018/06/30 |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Bay City | Drugs | 14 |
| | Escape/Obstruction | 1 |
| | Firearms/Weapons | 7 |
| | Immigration | 5 |
| | Property | 6 |
| | Public Order | 2 |
| | Sex Offenses | 13 |
| | Violence | 16 |
| | Total For Bay City | 64 |

| | | |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Detroit | Drugs | 271 |
| | Escape/Obstruction | 27 |
| | Firearms/Weapons | 138 |
| | Immigration | 181 |
| | Other | 6 |
| | Property | 234 |
| | Public Order | 5 |
| | Sex Offenses | 55 |
| | Violence | 94 |
| | Total For Detroit | 1,011 |

| | | |
|-------|------------------------|-----------|
| Flint | Drugs | 13 |
| | Escape/Obstruction | 2 |
| | Firearms/Weapons | 17 |
| | Immigration | 2 |
| | Property | 45 |
| | Sex Offenses | 8 |
| | Violence | 4 |
| | Total For Flint | 91 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Total For Michigan-Eastern | 1,166 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|

From July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, a total of 603 defendants were released on bond in the Eastern District of Michigan. The district released 315 defendants with drug testing and treatment conditions, 131 defendants with home confinement conditions, and 96 with mental health conditions. The Eastern District of Michigan is below the

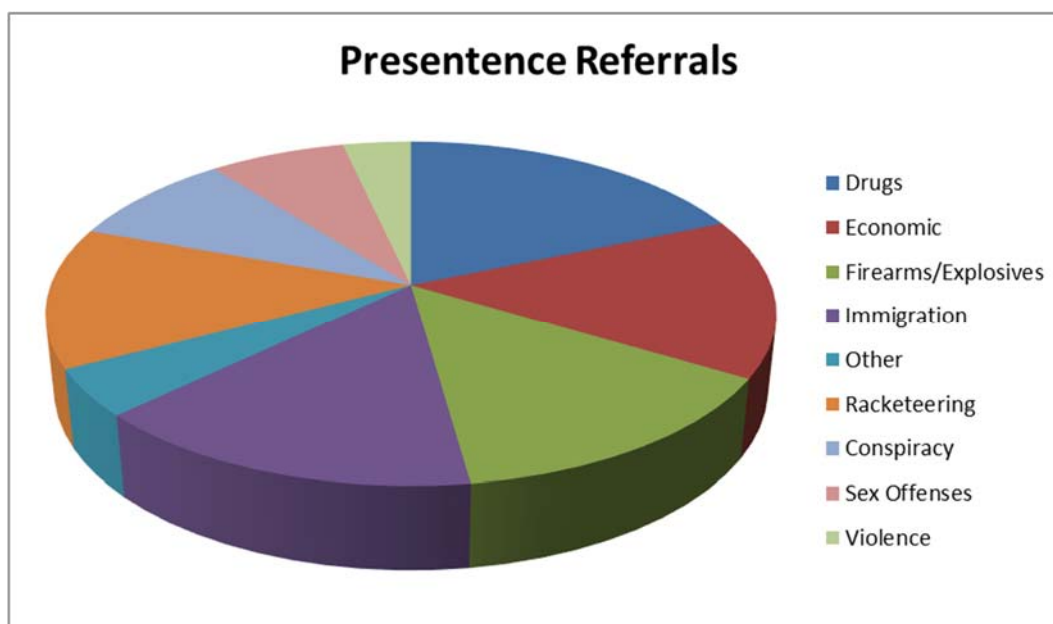
national average in failure to appear, rearrest violations, and technical violations as noted in the table below.

| District | Total Clients Supervised | FTA Violations | | | Rearrest Violations | | | | | | Technical Violations | | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | | # of FTA | # of Clients | % of Total Supervised Clients | # of Rearrest Violations | # of Mis-demeanors | # of Felonies | # of Petty | # of Clients | % of Total Supervised Clients | # of Technical Violations | # of Clients | % of Total Supervised Clients | # of Clients Revoked* | % Revoked Technical Violations | % of Total Supervised Clients Revoked for Technical Violations |
| National | 45,197 | 657 | 595 | 1.3% | 862 | 488 | 324 | 50 | 814 | 1.8% | 11,683 | 7,583 | 16.8% | 2,778 | 36.6% | 6.1% |

Probation Department

The mission statement of the United States Probation Department for the Eastern District of Michigan is to protect the public, assist the Court in the fair administration of justice and to assist offenders in making long-term positive change in their lives. The United States Probation Department consists of two district units: presentence and supervision. The department is comprised of 84 total staff members. Sixty-three staff members are sworn probation officers, 25 of which prepare presentence investigation reports and 38 of which provide community supervision for offenders.

For the calendar year 2017, the presentence unit completed 923 guideline presentence reports. Officers were not only tasked with calculating the correct sentencing guidelines for the offense of conviction, but also spent a great deal of time focusing on the offender characteristics section of the presentence in an effort to identify appropriate factors under 18 USC § 3553(a) for the Court to consider when imposing sentences. The referrals for presentence reports were categorized in the following manner: Drugs (21% or 196 cases); Economic (17% or 158 cases); Firearms/Explosives (16% or 152 cases); and Immigration (17% or 158 cases).



The Supervision Unit is responsible for supervising over 1,700 persons. The United States Probation Department offers many programs and treatment services to protect the community and to assist offenders in making long term positive change in their lives. During this past year the department spent over \$575,000.00 for treatment services to address substance abuse, mental health and sex offender related issues, as well as to satisfy conditions imposed by the Court. United States Probation Officers facilitate numerous cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) programs to assist clients in changing their criminal thought patterns. Some of the CBT program topics include Family Ties, Peer Relationships, Social Values, Responsible Thinking, Substance Abuse and Makin' It Work (an employment focused program).

There are several officers who serve as members of the Administrative Office's National Program Review Team: Supervising Probation Officers Ann Smith, Tracey Kosmas and John Ade, and Senior Probation Officer Corey Elder. Their commitment requires periodic travel to other districts to conduct program reviews/audits. Other officers also serve as national trainers and facilitators in Staff Training Aimed at Reducing Re-Arrest (STARR) and Criminogenic Needs and Violence Curriculum (CNVC). Additionally, Chief Anthony Merolla serves on the National Advisory Group for Space and Security.

The United States Probation Department continues to be part of the Court's re-entry program, Helping Offenders Positively Excel (HOPE). This program involves the collaborative efforts of Judges Paul D. Borman and Gershwin A. Drain, along with the United States Probation Department, the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Defender's Office and various community resource providers. The program is available for certain moderate to high risk offenders, as well as high need individuals who are re-entering the community. Generally, the offenders have long terms of supervised release. The HOPE Program began on January 19, 2012. As of August 27, 2018, 47 participants have voluntarily entered the program. Of those offenders, 23 have successfully completed the program and discharged from supervised release. The HOPE program links participants with a wide range of social services, including educational and literacy programs, employment and vocational skills training, community resource services, housing assistance, cognitive behavioral therapy, substance abuse treatment programming, and mental health services, where needed. Enrollment in the program, which runs for two years, is voluntary. Participants are required to sign a participant agreement and abide by the terms. The agreement outlines the program and the responsibilities of all parties. As of June 12, 2018, the total estimated supervision cost savings was \$131,360.08.

In August of 2018, the United States Probation Department hosted the Third Annual Community Resources Fair. This project assisted ex-offenders, military veterans and others seeking information to recover from legal, financial and health issues. Services included free health screenings by the Detroit Medical Center, employment resources (including Returning Citizens programming for ex-offenders), utility bill counseling from DTE Energy, veterans' assistance from the United States Veteran's Administration (Detroit and Ann Arbor), fellowship services from Prison Ministries and vocational training, legal aid and drug rehabilitation resources from various organizations. The

Wayne County Friend of the Court also offered child support assistance in a warrant-free setting.

As noted above, the Probation Department is committed to all three prongs of its mission statement. The programs noted above are a testament to the dedicated staff of the Probation Department and their commitment to the Court and public service.

Pro Se Clinic & Pro Se Administrator

The Court has taken a proactive approach in providing assistance to pro se litigants with the creation of a Pro Se Case Administrator position and the establishment of a Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic.

The Pro Se Case Administrator works in the Clerk's Office and assists pro se litigants by answering procedural questions and ensuring that their documents are properly completed. From January until August 20, 2018, the Pro Se Case Administrator has met with 110 pro se individuals, all of whom were referred to the Clinic.

The Court also approved a one-year pilot project to establish a Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic managed by the University of Detroit Mercy Law School under the administration of Anne Yantus, Professor of Practice & Director of Externships. The Clinic opened on January 17, 2018 and is located in the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse. The Clinic is open three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. As of August 20, 2018 the Clinic has met with 182 pro se litigants and provided assistance to 173 pro se litigants.

In addition to providing legal advice, the Clinic prepares documents for pro se litigants, such as complaints, amended complaints, and responses to motions. This service is valuable because it puts the documents into proper form and context. The Clinic also directs pro se litigants to the correct court or social service agency thus eliminating the filing of cases that would not meet the jurisdictional requirements which ultimately saves judicial resources.

The Bench recently extended the operation of the Clinic through the winter semester which ends in May 2019. An additional review will be conducted by the Bench to determine whether the Clinic project will be further extended.

Pro Se Prisoner Mediation Program

In June 2018 the Bench approved the creation of the Pro Se Prisoner Early Mediation Program ("Program") for a pilot period of two years. The Program is part of the Court's continuing effort to address goals of the *Strategic Plan for the Federal Judiciary* issued by the Judicial Conference to improve access to the courts for pro se litigants.

Judge Victoria Roberts is responsible for introducing the Program to the Bench which was modeled after the United States District Court of Nevada's prisoner mediation program which allows pro se inmates who file prisoner civil rights lawsuits to participate

in mediation. The Michigan Department of Corrections and the Michigan Attorney General's Office have agreed to participate in the program for at least one year.

Paul Monicatti, Lead Mediator, was instrumental in the recruitment and training of over 40 experienced lawyers who will act as mediators. All have agreed to assist with the program and serve without compensation. Magistrate Judge Patricia Morris will serve as the Mediation Referral Judge overseeing the Program.

Mediations are expected to begin once the Program development is complete.

Building Renovation Project

A \$140-million program to upgrade mechanical, electrical and other systems within the U.S. Courthouse in downtown Detroit has been underway for over two years. The four-year project at the historic courthouse is one of the largest projects the General Services Administration has undertaken in Detroit in many years. The work will be completed without having to relocate building tenants to external space. The 770,000 square foot building will remain fully occupied through the duration of the project.



The construction work started over the summer of 2016. To date, the contractor has completed the 10th, 9th, and 8th floors. Other mechanical work has been completed throughout the building

New Fan Coil Units (FCUs) are being installed throughout the courthouse which will improve year-round heating and cooling in much of the Court's space.

The 2nd floor is now under construction. The 2nd floor has eight chambers and eight courtrooms, and is the Court's largest floor by square footage and has more construction work required than any other floor. Currently, they are installing new duct work on the 2nd floor for new HVAC systems.

Three new chillers and new switchgear have been installed in the basement, replacing the previous outdated equipment.

The renovation of the new courthouse parking area has been completed. Renovation of the loading dock area in the basement is underway. The modernization of the eight passenger elevators, is underway and so far two new elevators are in service. Much of the construction work will occur outside of normal business hours.

Starting in early 2017, the contractor began construction of a new stair and elevator tower, and the construction of a new arraignment courtroom on the 1st floor. Floor by floor infrastructure improvements will continue based on a sequencing plan to complete this work while still allowing the USDC to operate without any major interruption to their mission. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2019.

The Court's Ad Hoc Renovation Committee consists of Chief Judge Hood and Judges Cleland, Cox, and Michelson. They are available for project progress updates and to provide critical design and construction input and feedback throughout the project life cycle.

The Court thanks you for your patience and cooperation through this project. After completion, the building will be greatly improved for many years to come to house the Court family and better receive the public and the Bar.

Budget

The fiscal year 2018 budget, which ends on September 30, 2018, provided a minimal decrease to the funding levels from the prior fiscal year for the Eastern District of Michigan. The District Court Fiscal Year 2018 local budget was two hundred thousand dollars less than Fiscal Year 2017.

The Court did not receive its final fiscal year 2018 budget until May 2018. The District Clerk's Office, Probation Department and Pretrial Services Agency payroll accounts were funded near their full staffing formulas. In fiscal year 2018, the District Clerk's Office authorized staffing decreased by 3.3 work units, the Probation Department increased by one work unit and the Pretrial Services Agency decreased by 3.3 work units. The operational and information technology accounts were reduced by 2.5% across-the-board for the District Clerk's Office, the Probation Department and the Pretrial Services Agency.

Congress, maintaining our local budget levels, has permitted the Court to hire additional Clerk's Office staff and Probation and Pretrial Services officers as needed, allowing the Court to maintain all normal operational levels to the public and the Bar.

The final budget picture for fiscal year 2019 is not yet known. The House of Representatives passed H.R. 6147, the FY 2019 Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Appropriations Bill, which includes the Judiciary at 2.2% above the FY 2018 enacted level. The Senate version of the FSGG bill provides a 2.0% overall

increase, respectively, above our 2018 budget. These are excellent funding levels and the Judiciary is well positioned for eventual negotiations that will take place to resolve the differences in the House and Senate versions of the bill.

Although Congress has made significant progress on FY 2019 appropriations bills, the Court expects to be on a Continuing Resolution (CR) of some duration, starting the beginning of the fiscal year, October 1, 2018 until a final budget is passed.

Congressional action the past few fiscal years has been very encouraging for the Judiciary and reflects the hard work of the Judicial Conference's Budget Committee, judges around the country involved in our congressional outreach efforts, and staff at the Administrative Office. The prospects for 2019 appear to be positive.

I want to personally thank our outstanding staff for their continued hard work and good stewardship. I also want to thank Congress for making the Judiciary a funding priority in order to allow us to continue to provide the level of services that the Court historically has provided to the public and the Bar. Thanks are also due to the Judicial Conference Budget Committee.

I will continue to keep you informed on FY 2019 funding for the Judiciary as it progresses through the full Congress and ultimately the President of the United States.

Space & Facilities Projects

The Probation Department completed a project to consolidate their staff on the 9th floor of the Levin Courthouse, vacating their space on the 10th floor. With the recent technology improvements, Probation Officers can perform most of their work in the field. So, they chose to have their staff move from individual offices to open work space. The Probation Department moved into their new space in October 2017.



With the assistance of the GSA Historic Preservation Office, the Court recently completed the renovation of Judge Cox's courtroom and chambers. Along with new carpet and refinishing the woodwork, these areas were outfitted with new historically accurate light fixtures. The design of the new lights was based on design drawings from the 1930s found in the basement of the courthouse.

The Court will be renovating the Magistrate Judge courtroom in Ann Arbor to be used for criminal trials. The jury box will be expanded to seat 14 people. New attorney tables and lectern will have new connections and monitors for electronic evidence presentation. Design for this project will start later this year.

Public Information

The Court's Public Information Officer, David Ashenfelter, responded to hundreds of inquiries this year from news organizations seeking information about civil and criminal cases being handled by our Court. Most of the inquiries involved questions about upcoming court hearings, newsworthy developments in civil and criminal cases and rules governing access to our courthouses with cell phones and laptop computers.

Given major cutbacks in the media, the Court has adopted a proactive approach to alerting news organizations to the work of our Bench. Our Public Information Officer tracks scores of newsworthy civil and criminal cases, and alerts journalists to key developments, legal decisions, criminal sentences and other public information. He also manages the Court's Media Center in Detroit and works with judges and Information Technology staff to live-stream major court hearings there. He issues news releases about major Court events and initiatives such as the Early Mediation Program for Pro Se Prisoner Civil Rights Cases and the and Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic for low-income citizens who seek to represent themselves in federal civil lawsuits.

In March, the Public Information Office implemented a new local rule approved by our Bench that allows journalists to enter our courthouses with cell phones. Bona fide journalists – those who pledge to adhere to the ethics policy of the Society of Professional Journalists - may apply for special court-issued credentials so they may enter our courthouses with such devices. The equipment may be used in the Media Center and attorney conference rooms in Detroit and designated areas in divisional courthouses. Nearly 100 credentials have been issued since the program began in mid-March.

Live Streaming at the Court

In the past year, the Court's IT Department has enhanced the live stream experience to allow media to, when approved, watch high profile trials, ceremonies and other court matters directly from the media room. By installing a dedicated streaming server and cameras in almost every courtroom, IT staff has made more court matters available to the media and to all court staff.

Naturalization Ceremonies

In calendar year 2017, the Eastern District of Michigan naturalized 11,785 new citizens, up from 9,114 in 2016. Nationally, USCIS naturalizes approximately 700,000-750,000 citizens each year. The Court continues to hold three or four ceremonies each week at the Levin Courthouse. In addition to these ceremonies, judicial officers presided over several large off-site ceremonies throughout the Eastern District of Michigan including

venues such as Comerica Park, the Macomb Intermediate School District, the USCIS facility on East Jefferson in Detroit, and several local community festivals.



Court Ombudsman

Retired Judge Fred M. Mester continues to serve as the Ombudsman for the Eastern District of Michigan. Judge Mester is a former Circuit Court Judge for the Sixth Judicial Circuit in Michigan (Oakland County Circuit Court) and is currently a certified mediator, arbitrator and facilitator, as well as a visiting judge for the Sixth Judicial Circuit of Michigan. He is an active member of the Federal Bar Association, both locally and nationally, and is a member of several other well-known bar associations.

The Ombudsman's role for the Eastern District of Michigan is as an intermediary between judicial officers of the Eastern District and the Bar. He acts on an informal basis to interface and address those matters lacking an institutional mechanism or forum for redress.

Judicial Interns

The Court conducts a summer internship program in June and July for judicial interns. This summer there were approximately 65 summer interns who worked for our District Judges and Magistrate Judges, 18 of whom participated through the Wolverine Bar Association's Judicial Externship Program. The Court's summer internship program included presentations by other federal agencies such as the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Defender Office, the FBI, DEA and ATF. The interns also had the opportunity to visit certain divisions of the state court system, sit down at breakfast or brown bag lunches with several of the Judges on this Bench, and attend numerous Federal Bar Association events.

Court History Program

The oral history program of the Court's Historical Society is managed by retired Court employee Judy Christie. Judge George Caram Steeh has agreed to be interviewed this Fall for the program. In addition, Ms. Christie has interviewed Kenneth G. McIntyre, the Assistant U.S. Attorney for the trial of the officers in the Algiers Motel incident, and the transcript of those interviews will be available in the coming months.

The Court Historical Society Board met on July 19, 2018 and approved a video project, the details of which will be announced shortly. Also in the works is a complete redesign of the Historical Society website.

The current officers of the Historical Society are Matthew Lund, President; Debra Gerous, Vice President; Kevin Ball, Secretary; and Jeff Raphelson, Treasurer.

Law Day 2018

The Court and the FBA co-hosted a Law Day event on May 1, 2018. This year's national theme was *"Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom"*. Several federal agencies, as well as Court departments set up booths to inform attendees of their purpose and provide demonstrations. Participating agencies included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and many more. Law Day guests included approximately 350 local high school students, college students, and members of the Bar and public.



The Court, in conjunction with the Federal Bar Association and the Wolverine Bar Association, continued with the always popular "Ask the Lawyer" program where attorney volunteers provided free legal advice to people who have cases pending in our Court and do not have lawyers representing them, as well as other persons with legal questions, was a success as well. This year's "Ask the Lawyer" program included 11 volunteer attorneys who provided legal advice to the 11 litigants who attended. Four

student volunteers from Cooley Law School and nine court volunteers assisted with the program.

Conclusion

The Court continues to strive to uphold the mission of the federal judiciary and to deliver justice under the law to the public it serves. The Court is mindful of the importance of the Court to the community and ensures that the Court is open and accessible to all.

A special thank you to all of the court staff who have contributed to this annual report – David Weaver, Anthony Merolla, Patricia Trevino, Joseph Herd, Kinikia Essix, Josh Matta, Robyn Ringl, Kevin Williams, David Ashenfelter, Michael Coker, Stephen English, Victoria Lung, Stephanie Miskowski and Judy Christie.

Following are some Court statistics you may find interesting.

COURT STATISTICS

