



The Trial Court Administrator's Office
26th Judicial District of North Carolina

Community Report

FY2010-2011

Stemming the Tide

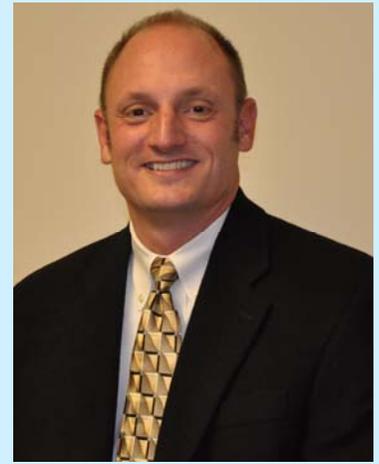


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A Word from the Trial Court Administrator

Welcome to the 2010-2011 Trial Court Administrator's Office Annual Community Report. The legislative session that recently came to a close proved to be one of the most challenging in my tenure with the courts. The twists and turns and ups and downs certainly made for an interesting, but I cannot say an enjoyable, ride. Despite what appeared to be the brewing of the perfect storm, the 26th District navigated its way through troubled waters and emerged largely unscathed. Below is a brief recap of the relevant highs and lows of the session.



Todd Nuccio

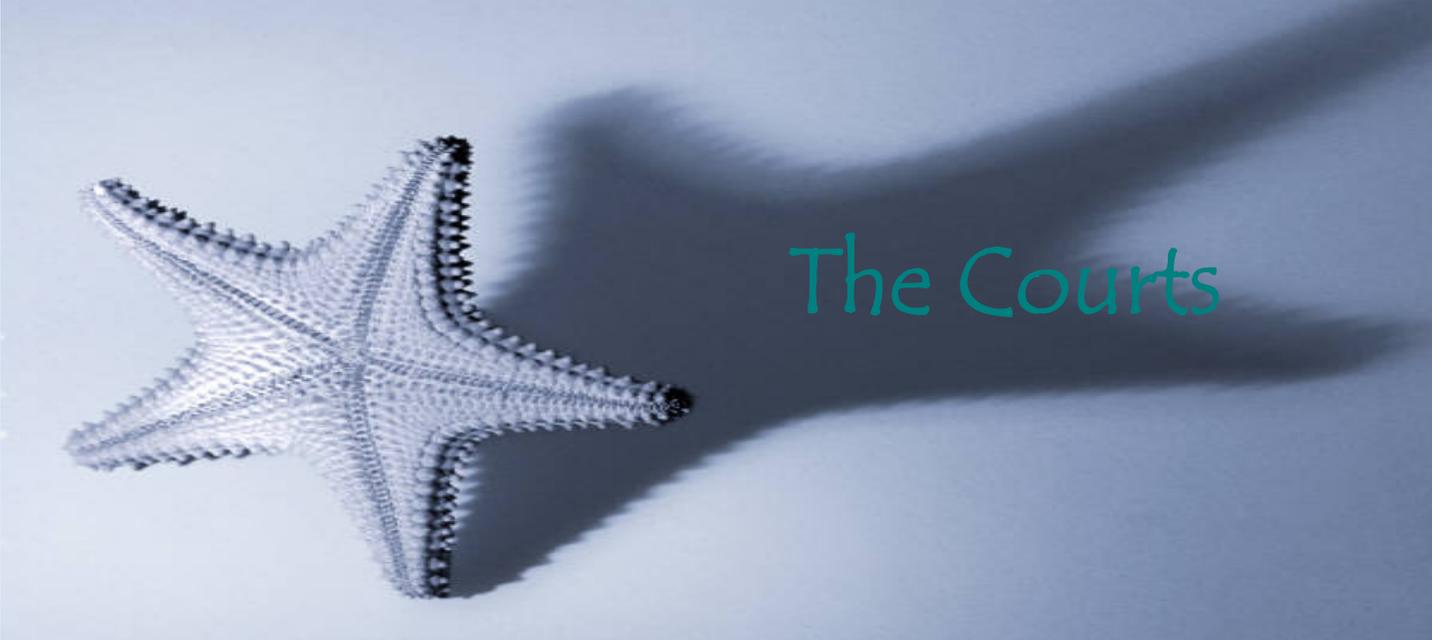
1. The House JPS Committee proposes the elimination of Family Court, Drug Court and Custody Mediation.
2. Efforts to repel the above action succeed. In lieu of the original cuts, funding for Custody Mediation is completely restored and Drug Court and Family Court are given a one-year reprieve under a continuation review scenario. However, 110 support staff positions in the District Attorney's Office are placed on the chopping block along with all TCA positions across the state.
3. Funding is restored for TCA positions on the House floor as long as an offsetting reduction is made within each judicial district with a TCA. The number of District Attorney support staff to be eliminated is reduced to 55.
4. The Senate JPS Committee fully restores funding for TCA positions, but it completely eliminates all funding for Drug Courts.
5. The Senate version of the budget prevails in the reconciliation discussions between the House and Senate. As a result, Family Court receives one-year continuation review funding, TCA and Custody Mediation funding are completely restored, District Attorney support staff reductions across the state remain at 55 and Drug Court funding is eliminated.
6. The Board of County Commissioners is approached about picking up the cost of our Drug Court operations and full funding for the positions eliminated by the State is approved.

So, after all is said and done, all programs and services have remained intact. There has been an emotional toll paid along the way and I recognize difficulties still remain as we reorganize and transition a number of positions over to County funding. It has been a very difficult journey and I wish we could have avoided the unpleasantness. Unfortunately, we have not seen the end and a battle still awaits us in the next legislative session when we will again have to demonstrate the merits of Family Court. However, we need to see the glass as half-full rather than half-empty and realize that we live to fight another day. I stand ready to help advance the cause.

Todd Nuccio

Todd Nuccio

Trial Court Administrator



SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES FY2010-2011

- Hon. Richard D. Boner
Senior Resident
- Hon. W. Robert Bell
- Hon. J. Gentry Caudill
- Hon. Yvonne Mims Evans
- Hon. Linwood O. Foust
- Hon. Eric Levinson

SPECIAL SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE FOR COMPLEX BUSINESS CASES

- Hon. Calvin Murphy

SPECIAL SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

- Hon. F. Lane Williamson

DISTRICT COURT JUDGES FY2010-2011

- Hon. Lisa C. Bell, Chief
- Hon. H. William Constangy
- Hon. Rickye McKoy-Mitchell
- Hon. Louis A. Trosch, Jr.
- Hon. Regan A. Miller
- Hon. Hugh B. Lewis
- Hon. Becky Thorne Tin
- Hon. Thomas F. Moore, Jr.
- Hon. Christy T. Mann
- Hon. Timothy M. Smith
- Hon. Ronald L. Chapman
- Hon. Theo X. Nixon
- Hon. Paige McThenia
- Hon. Donnie Hoover
- Hon. Jena P. Culler
- Hon. Charlotte Brown
- Hon. John W. Totten, II
- Hon. Elizabeth Thornton Trosch
- Hon. Kimberly Best-Staton
- Hon. Tyyawdi M. Hands
- Hon. Karen Eady-Williams

District vs Superior Court

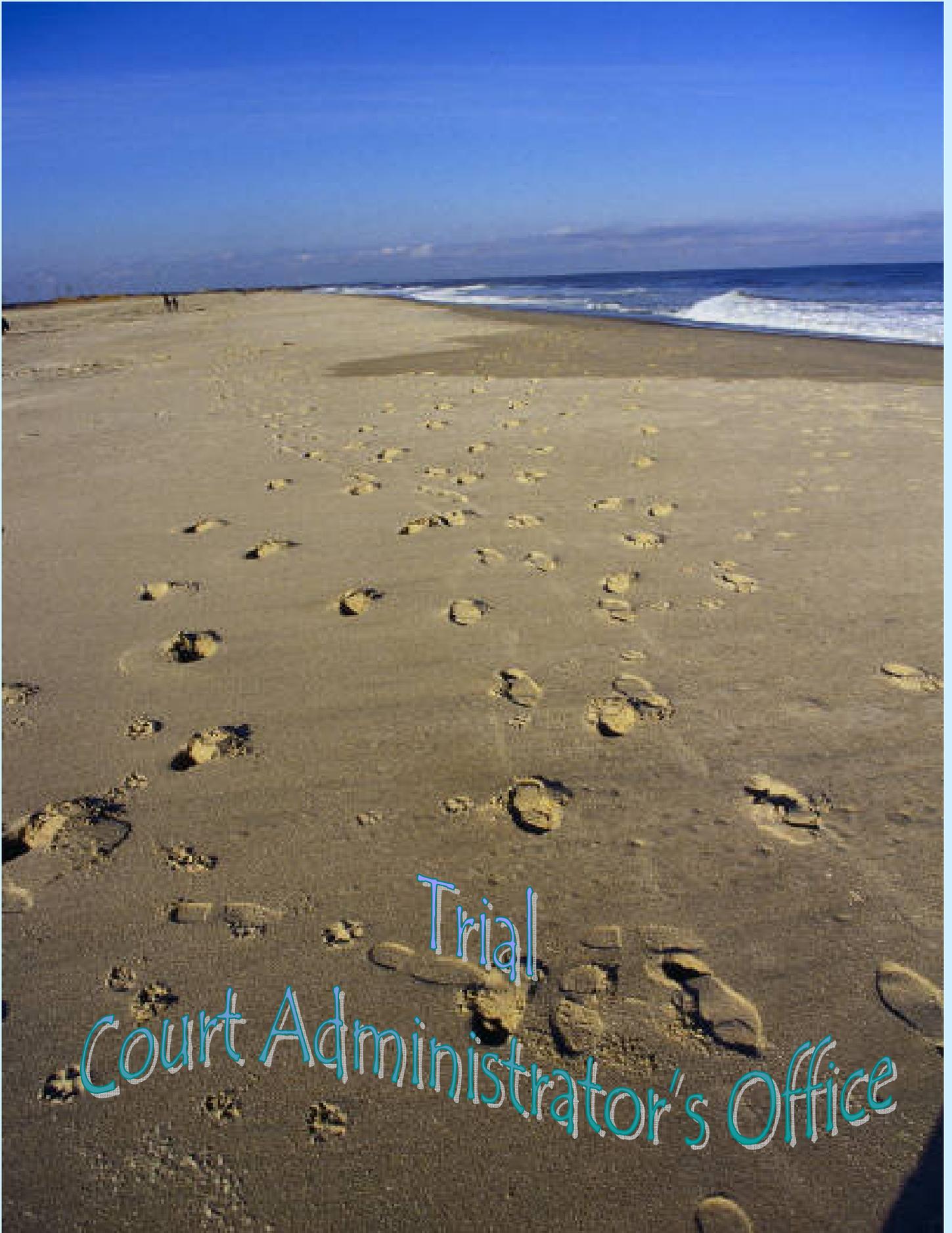
The North Carolina state court system is divided into 30 judicial districts comprising two major courts — District and Superior. Mecklenburg County comprises the 26th Judicial District. Both District and Superior Court handle criminal and civil matters.

Superior Court is the highest level state trial court. North Carolina divides Superior Court into eight divisions—Mecklenburg County is in the 7th Division. The 26th Judicial District is assigned seven “resident” Superior Court judges, including the Senior Resident. They rotate with the other resident judges in the 7th Division every six months, generally spending half a year in the 26th District and the other half in another district. Resident judges stand for election every eight years. Currently, there are also three “special” judges with offices in Mecklenburg County. They are appointed by the Governor, serve five-year terms, and may be assigned to hold court in any North Carolina county. One of the Special Judges is assigned to the North Carolina Business Court and generally handles only exceptional cases.

In civil court, Superior Court judges hear matters in cases involving more than \$10,000 and other special categories such as injunctions, constitutional issues, corporate receiverships and eminent domain. On the criminal side, Superior Court judges handle all felonies, as well as those misdemeanors or infractions that have been appealed from District Court.

District Court is the state trial-level court below Superior Court. Mecklenburg County’s 26th Judicial District is assigned 21 judges, including the Chief District Court Judge. District Court judges stand for election every four years.

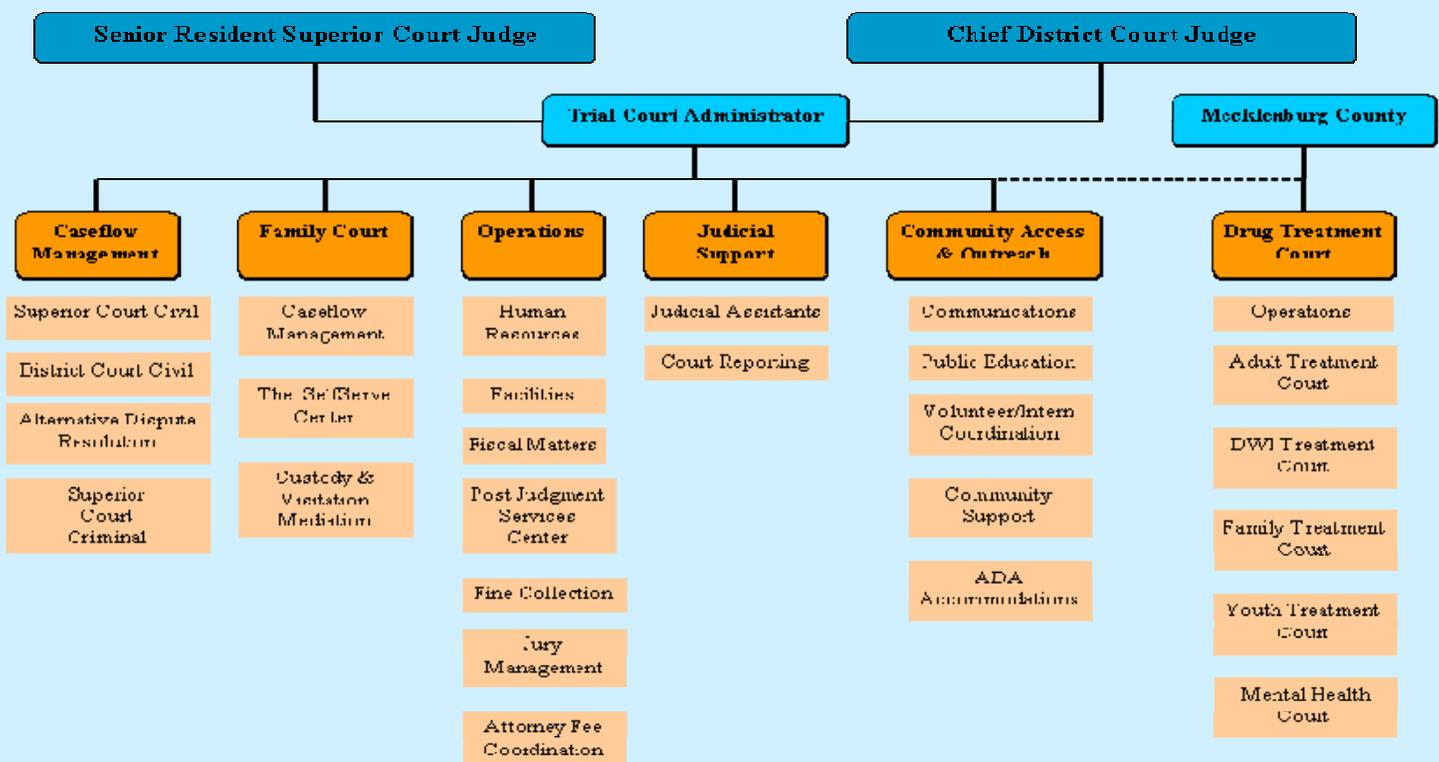
District Court hears both civil and criminal cases, as well as some specialized cases that are not heard in Superior Court. District Court handles all Family Court matters such as child custody, support, divorce, and juvenile abuse and neglect. It also hears civil cases involving money amounts over \$5,000 and less than \$10,000. (Cases involving \$5,000 or less are *generally* heard in Magistrate Small Claims Court and Probate and Estate matters are handled exclusively by the Clerk of Superior Court.) On the criminal side, District Court handles all misdemeanors, infractions, domestic violence and juvenile delinquency. Although felony cases are tried exclusively in the Superior Court, District Court conducts preliminary hearings to determine whether there is probable cause to bind defendants over to the grand jury for indictment to stand trial in Superior Court.



Trial
Court Administrator's Office

TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

The Trial Court Administrator (TCA) is a State-funded position established to improve the administration of justice through professional management. The TCA assists and supports the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and Chief District Court Judge in the overall supervision of the Judicial District, and provides professional expertise necessary for managing today's increasingly complex court system. The TCA works with other court officials as a facilitator for change by initiating and coordinating discussions and by identifying problems and recommending solutions that lead to a more efficient and effective court system. The TCA is entrusted with responsibility for planning, organizing and directing non-judicial activities within the Judicial District. General management responsibilities of the position include: development of local rules and administrative policies to facilitate calendaring and other administrative activities, budgeting, personnel oversight, facilities management, research and strategic planning, grant procurement and administration, program development and project management. In addition to general management responsibilities, the TCA oversees services provided through the following areas: District and Superior Court civil scheduling; Superior Court criminal scheduling; Alternative Dispute Resolution; Jury Management; Court; Family Court; Custody Mediation; Permanency Mediation; Family Law Facilitation; Fine Collection; Post-Judgment Services Center; SelfServe Center; Communications/Public Relations; and Judicial Support. The TCA's Office also plays a coordination role in Drug Treatment Court, which is now funded by Mecklenburg County. There are Team Leaders to administer each of the six divisions of the TCA's Office,



TWENTY SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide fair and accessible justice to the community is the fundamental mission of the Court and its justice partners in Mecklenburg County. We are committed to working collaboratively with the community to prevent and solve problems to enhance the quality of life for all.

In the state's largest and most complex judicial system, we administer, deliver and uphold justice with a commitment to the fundamental values and principles of Fairness, Justice, Integrity, Respect, Wisdom, Cooperation, Quality and Community Responsibility.

Each year, the Trial Court Administrator's Office issues Certificates of Excellence to team members who receive a overall rating of "distinguished" on their yearly evaluation. Team members, including interns and volunteers, who demonstrate a specific act that goes above and beyond their required duties receive an Outstanding Achievement Award.

During FY 10-11, the following persons received either Certificates of Excellence or an Outstanding Achievement Award:

Community Access & Outreach

Maura Chavez

Caseflow Management

Jennifer Acheson

Eva House

Amy Kolodziej

Drug Treatment Court

Sherrill Foust

Erica Oxendine-Hall

Michael Hamilton

Rosalind James

Jessica Modra

Jill Valente

Judicial Support

Linda Brooks

Christine Elminowski

Lynn Florczyk

JoAnn Harris

Pat Hines

Carol Swann

Jillian Turner

Operations

Mary Baker

Vanessa Glass-Harris

Lea Glaze

Tashia Jones

Mohammed Kemokai

Family Court

Shawana Almendarez

Mary Florence

Darwin Rice

Katherine Arnette

Jennifer Kuehn



The Helen Stonestreet TCA Employee of the Year Award



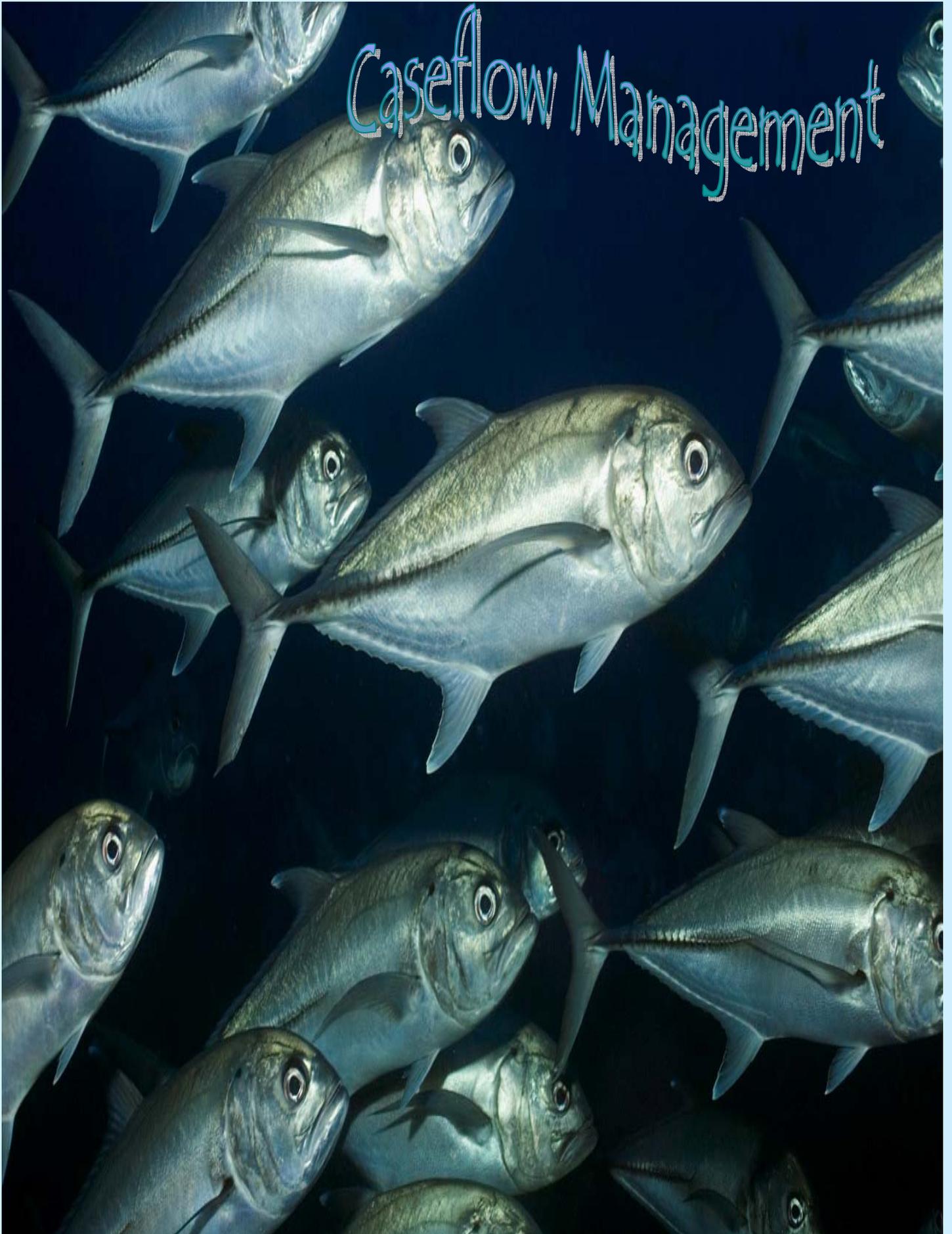
Carol Swann

In 2005, The Trial Court Administrator's (TCA) Office established The Helen Stonestreet Employee of the Year Award to recognize a TCA team member for their outstanding performance throughout the year. The award is named in honor of Helen Stonestreet, who was one of two founding members of the Mecklenburg County TCA's Office and served for over 25 years before retiring in 2004. The recipient of this award must demonstrate the qualities for which Helen was best known: professionalism, dedication, and hard work. Nominations can be submitted by anyone before July 31 each year. A selection committee comprised of a member of Justice Initiatives, Inc., the West Charlotte Rotary Club, and the Trial Court Administrator select a winner from the nominations. The award includes a certificate and is sponsored by the West Charlotte Rotary Club, who presents the recipient with a \$100 check, as well as Justice Initiatives, Inc. who provides \$150 for the winner, for a grand total of \$250. The recipients name is then engraved on a plaque along with previous recipients, which is displayed in the reception area of The TCA's Office in Suite 4420 of The Mecklenburg County Courthouse.

The recipient of the FY2010-2011 Helen Stonestreet TCA Employee of the Year Award is Carol Swann. Ms. Swann is a Judicial Assistant who supports five District Court judges, including the Chief District Court Judge. She has worked in the Judicial Support Division for over ten years. During this time, she has demonstrated that she is a dedicated employee through her excellent attendance record. She is well organized and is professional, a hard worker, and very pleasant to work with. She is always cordial, polite, and professional and represents the organization well. Carol maintains a professional, calm demeanor in her dealings with both the general public, as well as judges and staff. Many of the judges speak highly of Ms. Swann's integrity and the quality and efficiency of her work.



Caseflow Management



Caseflow Management

In Mecklenburg County, the Caseflow Management Division oversees the calendaring of all non-Family law related civil cases and Superior Court Felony cases excluding homicide. The most common types of civil filings overseen by this division are motor vehicle negligence, contract disputes, money owed and other types of negligence matters such as medical malpractice. The division is divided into five sections: Superior Criminal Case Management, Superior Civil Case Management, District Court Case Management, and Alternative Dispute Resolution. From filing until disposition, case coordinators monitor the cases and intervene as appropriate to ensure they are disposed within the time standards established under our local rules.

In most North Carolina counties, the Trial Court Administrator is personally involved in the day-to-day management of the docket. Given the breadth and depth of responsibility handled by the TCA in Mecklenburg County, though, docket management has been delegated to the Caseflow Management Administrator who oversees the division and reports directly to the Trial Court Administrator.

While it may seem that an extensive staff would be available to perform the duties of this division, only seven individuals manage what is the largest caseload in the State. These individuals are highly effective at what they do.

Civil

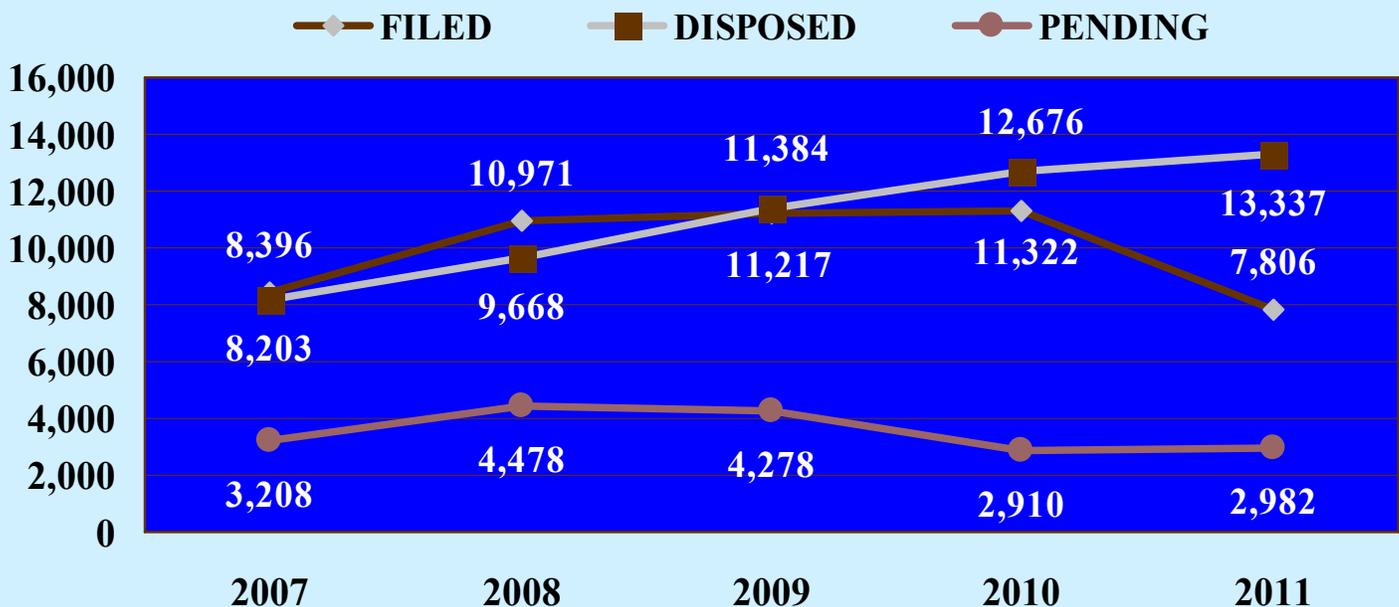
According to American Bar Association (ABA) standards, 90% of all civil cases should be settled, tried or otherwise concluded within twelve months of the date of filing, 98% within eighteen months of filing, and the remainder within two years of filing. In order for the court to maintain effective case management, it must dispose of cases at least at the same rate as cases are being filed. The number of Superior Court cases filed in the 26th Judicial District decreased in FY 2010-2011 compared to FY 2009-2010. The number of cases disposed in FY 2010-2011 significantly increased. For FY 2010-2011, the 26th Judicial District experienced an increase in the number of cases pending at the two year mark. The median ages of cases also experienced a corresponding increase.



The chart below demonstrates that the Superior Court Civil Pending Caseload inventory decreased by 1,105 cases through the disposition of 4,874 cases in FY2010-2011.

Case Type	Begin Pending	Number Filed	Number Disposed	End Pending	Cases Number	Cases Percent
Contract	1,107	1,084	1,506	685	-422	-38.1%
Collection	345	300	522	123	-222	-64.3%
MV-Neg	605	617	714	508	-97	-16.0%
Negligence	602	472	601	473	-129	-21.4%
Real Property	155	237	135	257	102	65.8%
Admin. Appeals	49	54	72	31	-18	-36.7%
Other	715	1,005	1,324	396	-319	-44.6%
Total	3,578	3,769	4,874	2,473	-1,105	-30.9%

The chart below reflects that the District Civil Caseload disposed of 13,337 cases in FY2010-2011, which is the most disposed in at least the last 5 years.



Criminal

Scheduling and processing large numbers of criminal cases in Superior Court are not simple tasks. Events must be scheduled well in advance, participants must make preparations for each appearance, and multiple parties have to converge at the appointed place and time for a scheduled event to take place as planned. It is also clear that court time and other resources will allow for less than five (5) percent of felony cases to actually be tried before a jury. Therefore, a large number of cases must be resolved in some manner short of trial.

For any system to work effectively, each integral party must constructively fulfill the responsibilities of their position. The District Attorney must make reasonable plea offers, defense counsel must weigh all factors and act in the best interest of his/her client, and the judge must give full consideration to any negotiated pleas and/or participate in plea conferences, where requested, to bring about resolution at the earliest stage in the proceedings.

The Caseflow Management Division is located in Suite 3420 of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse. For more information, call **(704) 686-0185**.

Criminal Caseflow Management

Under our new criminal case management plan, the average age of persons, drug, and property cases decreased in FY2010-11.

Felony Persons Cases: Time to Disposition Reduced by 54%

Current Plan: 140 days Previous Model: 304 days

Felony Drug Cases: Time to Disposition Reduced by 29%

Current Plan: 164 days Previous Model: 232 days

Felony Property Cases: Time to Disposition Reduced by 26%

Current Plan: 143 days Previous Model: 244 days.



*Number of Felony Cases
Filed*

9,805

*Number of Felony Cases
Disposed*

12,404

Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution

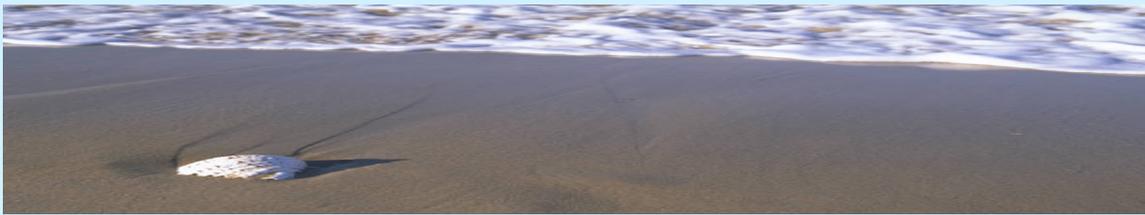
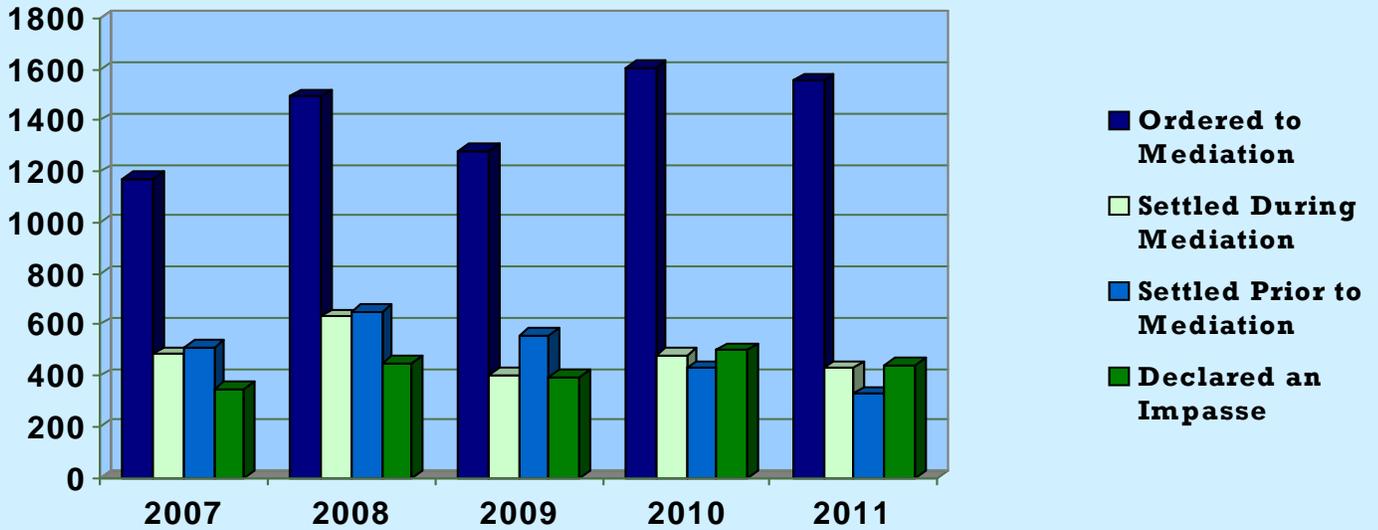
One of the court-mandated Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution (ADR) utilized in North Carolina is mandated settlement conferences. The program requires Superior Court litigants and their attorneys to participate in a discussion with a paid mediator before their case can be tried in court. In Mecklenburg County, seventy-one percent of the cases ordered to mediation are recorded as resolved at the conclusion of the mediation session. This program is likely to have an even higher success rate in that many cases are resolved at later stages and the exchange that occurs during the mediation is a factor in the eventual outcome. The cost of going to trial in Superior Court is \$1,704 per day (jury) and \$1,344 per day (non-jury). The average length of trial is 2-3 days. The only cost associated with mediation is taxed upon the parties at no cost to the state, and an average mediation session is two-and-a-half hours. The approximate cost of disposing the same mediation caseload through a two day trial is **\$1,021,440** for non-jury matters and **\$1,295,040** for trials heard before a jury.

Another method of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) being used in North Carolina is court-ordered arbitration. Arbitration is submission of a dispute to a third party who renders a decision after hearing arguments and reviewing evidence. Arbitration is generally less formal and less time-consuming than litigation. It has been used for many years by agreement of the parties in commercial or labor contracts. The first court-ordered Alternative Dispute Resolution program enacted in North Carolina was mandatory, non-binding arbitration of civil claims for monetary damages of \$15,000 or less. The program now covers all District Court judicial districts and applies to civil cases for monetary damages of \$15,000 or less except those cases where the sole issue is collection on an account or an eviction. The state assesses a fee of \$100, payment of which is shared equally by the parties. A party who is not satisfied with the arbitrator's decision has a right to have the case heard by a judge. In FY2010-11, 87% of the cases ordered to arbitration in Mecklenburg County were successfully resolved at the arbitration stage.

The approximate cost for holding a one-day civil trial session of District Court is \$1,235 (jury trial) and \$875 (non-jury trial). The average time required to hear a District Court civil trial is 4-8 hours. The cost associated with an arbitration hearing is \$100, which is divided between the parties. The time allotted for an arbitration hearing is one hour. There is no cost for disposing of the civil caseload through arbitration; the cost is borne by the parties. The approximate cost of disposing the same arbitration caseload through a one-half to one-day trial is **\$364,875** for non-jury matters and **\$514,995** for jury matters. ADR results in greater user satisfaction, timelier disposition of cases and cost effectiveness. For more information call **(704) 686-0185**.

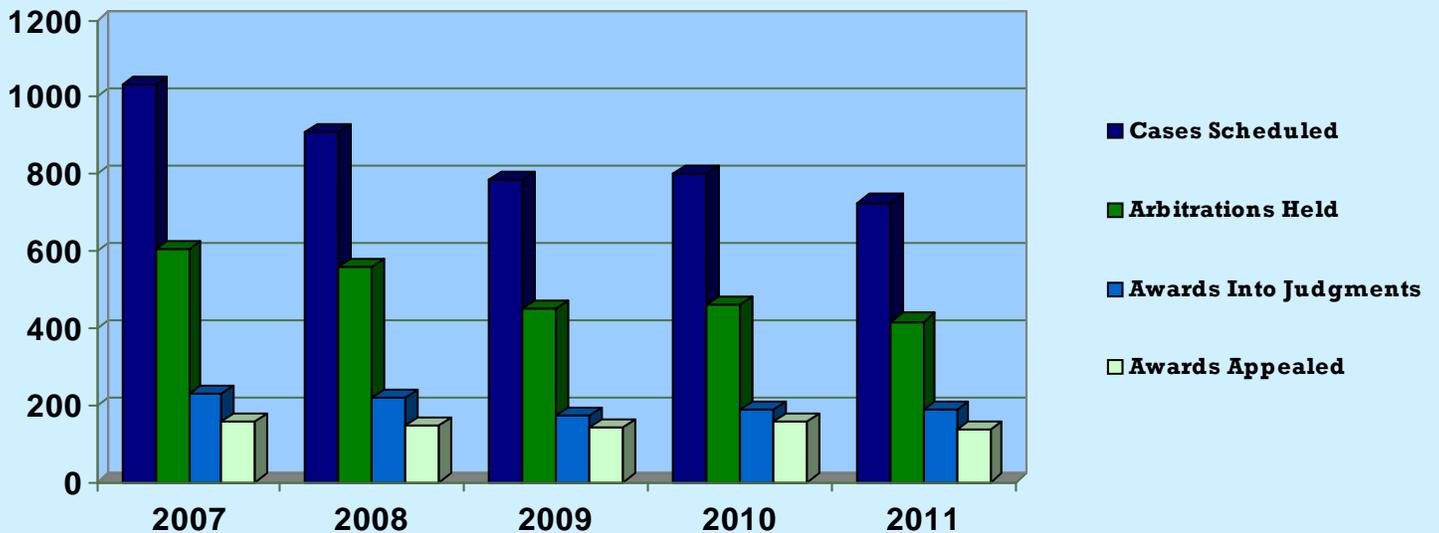
26th Judicial District Mediated Settlement Conferences Trend Analysis

In FY2010-2011, 71% of the cases scheduled were settled through mediation



26th Judicial District Arbitration Trend Analysis

In FY2010-2011, 87% of the cases scheduled were settled through arbitration





DRUG TREATMENT
COURT

Drug Treatment Court

Established in 1995, Drug Treatment Courts (DTC) began as an alternative sentencing option to address the revolving door created by simply sentencing offenders, defendants, and respondents in juvenile petitions for abuse, neglect, or both to serve jail time, when the crimes, delinquent acts, and child abuse and neglect committed are related to the underlying abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Drug Courts are a team effort, bringing together the resources of many community agencies to address the root of one of the core problems associated with the increase in crime and the resulting costs to our communities. The Mecklenburg County S.T.E.P. Treatment Court Programs are court-supervised, holistic and intensive programs for individuals identified as having a substance abuse problem. A multi-agency program consisting of a presiding judge, district attorney, public defender, case coordinator, probation officer, treatment provider, social worker and/or community support worker.

S.T.E.P. is the daily operating name of the program and is an acronym for Supervision, Treatment, Education and Prevention. The purpose of this name is to communicate the basic functions of the DTC and the reality that just as recovery and behavioral change on the part of the alcohol and drug-dependent offender is an incremental growth process, behavioral and institutional change on the part of government and the community is also a process of learning and continuous improvement.

In Mecklenburg County, the S.T.E.P. Programs have established eight different treatment courts: Superior, District (2), DWI (2), Mental Health, FIRST (Family DTC) and a Youth Treatment Court. Program participants are held accountable for their behavior in an intensive, rehabilitative environment that provides a holistic approach to treating substance abuse while ensuring the safety of the citizens of our community.

Unfortunately, the North Carolina state budget recently eliminated all \$2 million in annual funding for Drug Treatment Courts statewide, leaving county governments to fund the court's coordinator positions. Our district was very fortunate that Mecklenburg County agreed to fund the court, as local government realized the cost savings and benefits to the community. While the budget cuts are ostensibly intended to save the state money, eliminating funding for the Drug Treatment Court will actually cost money.

Continued on next page



Following are the goals for Drug Treatment Court:

- To reduce alcoholism and other drug dependencies among adult and juvenile offenders and defendants and among respondents in juvenile petitions for abuse, neglect, or both;
- To reduce criminal and delinquent recidivism and the incidence of child abuse and neglect;
- To reduce the alcohol-related and other drug-related court workload;
- To increase the personal, familial, and societal accountability of adult and juvenile offenders and defendants and respondents in juvenile petitions for abuse, neglect, or both; and,
- To promote effective interaction and use of resources among criminal and juvenile justice personnel, child protective services personnel and community agencies.

Drug Court Works

In February 2005, the U.S. Government Accountability Office issued its third report on the effects of adult criminal drug courts. Results from 23 program evaluations confirmed that drug courts significantly reduced crime. Moreover, although up-front costs for drug courts were generally higher than for probation, drug courts were found to be more cost-effective in the long run because they avoided law enforcement efforts, judicial case-processing, and victimization resulting from future criminal activity.

In the ensuing years, researchers have continued to uncover definitive evidence for both the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of drug courts. The most rigorous and conservative estimate of the effect of any program is derived from “meta-analysis,” in which scientists statistically average the effects of the program over numerous research studies. Four independent meta-analyses have now concluded that drug courts significantly reduce crime rates an average of approximately 7 to 14 percentage points. (National Drug Court Institute. (2008). *Painting the Current Picture: A National Report Card on Drug Courts and Other Problem-Solving Court Programs in the United States* (Vol.II, No.1). Alexandria, VA: Huddleston, C.W., Marlowe, D.B. & Casebolt, R.)

Adult Criminal Drug Treatment Courts

During FY10-11, The five Adult Criminal Drug Treatment Courts served approximately 332 participants and achieved a retention rate of 74%. There was a 53% completion rate with 130 graduates.



Taking STEPs
Supervision • Treatment • Education • Prevention
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG DRUG TREATMENT COURTS

Mecklenburg County S.T.E.P. Program Accomplishments

- 113 Adult DTC clients employed at time of exit
- 28 MHC clients engaged in competitive employment
- 2 drug-free babies born
- 206 Child & Family Team meetings held for YTC clients
- 67 School meetings held for YTC clients
- 11 Veterans served in adult/family DTC programs
- 3 Families enrolled in Project HOPE (Housing Opportunities Plus Employment)

Chinese Officials Visit Mecklenburg Courts

A group of Chinese court officials and law professors visited the Mecklenburg County Courthouse on Tuesday, April 5 and Wednesday, April 6, 2011. The main purpose of their visit was to observe various components of the Juvenile Justice System. Part of the focus was on alternative sentencing and diversionary options. As such, they learned more about how Drug Treatment Courts are structured and operate.



Chief District Court Judge Lisa C. Bell welcomes the visitors

The guests began their visit by taking a tour of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse. In the evening, they attended a dinner and reception hosted by The Charlotte School of Law. On Wednesday, Chief District Court Judge Lisa C. Bell welcomed the visitors. Afterwards, they were given an introduction to Drug Treatment Courts. In the afternoon, the group took a tour of Jail North before coming back to the courthouse for a panel discussion with District Attorney Andrew Murray, Public Defender Kevin Tully, Assistant Public Defender Bob Ward, District Court Judge Elizabeth Trosch, and David Wallace with the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.

The visit was made possible through a partnership with the UNCC Criminal Justice Department, The Charlotte School of Law, and the Mecklenburg County Drug Treatment Courts.

Family Drug Treatment Court



The F.I.R.S.T. (Families In Recovery to Stay Together) Program is a collaborative effort of the Court, the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services Youth and Family Services Division, and the Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health Authority. The F.I.R.S.T. Program coordinates and monitors the delivery of substance abuse treatment services to all parents involved in the child dependency process.

In FY2010-2011, one-hundred sixty-four parents referred to the FIRST Level 1 program were screened for substance abuse and eighty-four parents were referred to substance abuse treatment. One-hundred sixty-three were referred to mental health and/or domestic violence treatment.

Fifty-seven parents were served in FIRST Level II (more intensive) with a 57% completion rate and a 58% retention rate. There were eleven graduates.



YOUTH TREATMENT COURT

The Mecklenburg County Youth Treatment Court (YTC) is a program designed to provide judicial supervision, address substance abuse, mental-health and behavioral issues by identifying child/family specific needs. The YTC program strives to build upon and support the intrinsic strengths that exist within each youth and their family. The program has been operational for six years and continues to strive to increase the number of treatment options and services that are available for program participants to meet their individualized treatment needs and aid them in successful program completion.

During FY2010-2011, fifty-five youths were served with a 55% retention rate and a 29% successful completion rate. There were 10 Graduates. Several special events were coordinated through the YTC program including a ropes course, an NFL luncheon, the DTC Annual Cookout, and the YTC Holiday Court.

S.T.E.P. Mental Health Court

The Mecklenburg County S.T.E.P. Program has been in operation for close to fifteen years. During this time, we have witnessed a high correlation between substance abuse and mental illness. However, it is often difficult to determine which issue is at the root of the individual's criminal involvement – their mental illness or the use of alcohol and other substances legal and illegal. Since 1995, the treatment providers who collaborate with the S.T.E.P. Program have specialized in providing an array of evidence-based, best practice substance abuse treatment. In an effort to address both the substance abuse and mental health needs of program participants, when resources are available, they have incorporated an Integrated Dual-Diagnosis Treatment model. This model seeks to work with an individual's alcoholism/addiction and their mental illness in an integrated and congruent manner.

The Mental Health Court (MHC) was born out of the recognition that the primary need for many of those referred to one of the S.T.E.P. DTC programs was a mental illness masked by their use of alcohol and other substances. The MHC held its first court session on February 25, 2005. It is a collaborative effort between the Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health Authority and the 26th Judicial District of North Carolina. Its mission is to reduce recidivism among participants and to promote stability, service engagement and increased levels of independent functioning within the community. The MHC is a voluntary, court-based alternative to incarceration.

During FY10-11, this program served sixty-six individual in a program with a current caseload capacity of 30. As the program continues to grow, we are able to refine the selection and participation criteria. The result is that our success as an alternative to incarceration grows. We achieved a 53% completion rate and a 77% retention rate for those who participated last fiscal year, with the average length of participation at months (far longer than the traditional jail term associated with their criminal activity). There was a total of eighteen graduates from this program.



**"Thanks to Drug Court, for the first time in a long time,
I am looking forward to not being wrapped up in the
legal system."**

(Superior DTC Client)

"Drug Court offers what clients seek.... a solution."

(Dawn R. - DWI Client)

Mecklenburg County S.T.E.P. Drug Treatment Court Partners

Partners with Adult DTC Programs

Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office
 Mecklenburg County Public Defender's Office
 Mecklenburg County Division of Community Corrections
 Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office
 Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health
 Southeast Addiction Institute and Learning Center, Inc.
 Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center
 McLeod Addictive Disease Center
 Mecklenburg County Jail Inpatient Treatment Program
 Freedom House
 Urban Ministries
 Salvation Army Residential Program
 Joblink Transformation Center
 CPCC Pathways Program
 Uptown Men's Shelter
 Emergency Winter Shelter

Partners with FIRST Program

Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health
 Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center
 Community Choices CASCADE
 McLeod Addictive Disease Center
 Southeast Addiction Institute & Learning Center, Inc.
 Women's Commission

NOVA

CMC Behavioral Health Center
 Department of Social Services, Youth & Family Services Division
 The Law Offices of Pili Fleming

Partners with YTC Program

Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health
 Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
 Children's Law Center
 Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
 Family Preservation Services
 CMC-Behavioral Health Center
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Partners with MHC Program

Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office
 Mecklenburg County Public Defender's Office
 Mecklenburg County Division of Community Corrections
 Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office
 Mecklenburg County Area Mental Health/ Provided Services Organization
 Mecklenburg County Jail Inpatient Treatment Program
 Mecklenburg Open Door
 CMC Randolph Behavioral Health Center
 Person Centered Partnerships

DRUG COURT WORKS!

"Drug Court saved my life. I was lost and I had no one to turn to. I heard about Drug Court and how they help you to regain your life and give you a great opportunity to be reunited with your children. They've taught me how to apply rules and regulations that will lead me to a better life instead of prison or death. It changed my life and my family's life. It helped me look for a better future for myself. It taught me love and honesty and respect. Thanks for Drug court, without it I wouldn't make it and thanks for allowing me the chance to be reunited with my child and to be a mother again."

-Tammy M.

FAMILY COURT



Family Court Program

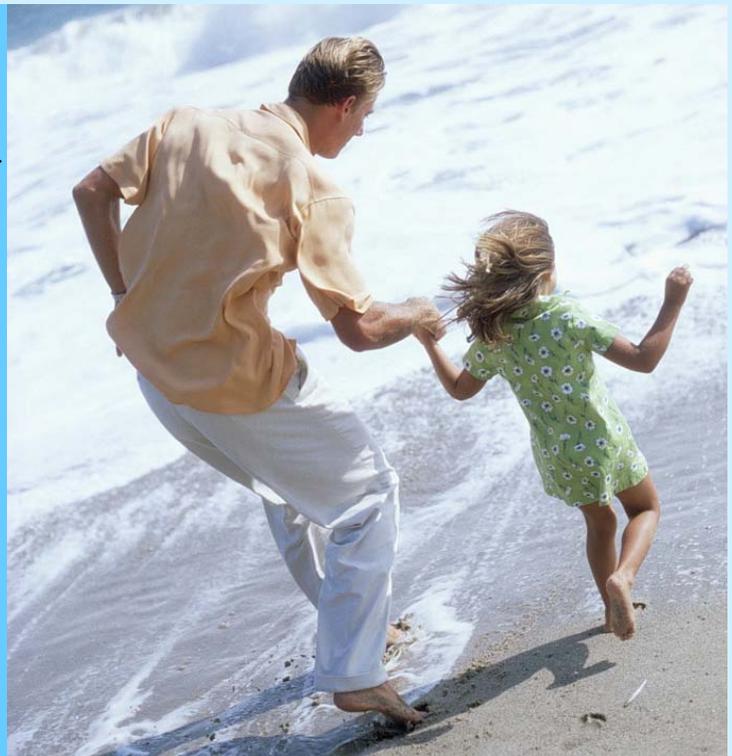
The 26th Judicial District's Family Court Program has been in operation since June of 1999. Family Court is designed to respond to cases involving families and children more efficiently and effectively by reducing the amount of time it takes to move from filing to disposition and by using a variety of intervention services to improve outcomes for families and children. Judges are specially trained to deal with issues affecting children and families, including child development, cultural competence, substance abuse, domestic violence, family dynamics, and alternative dispute resolution. The program subscribes to the "One Family – One Judge" model, thus consolidating multiple court cases involving one family before one judge. The goals are to promote earlier resolution of issues, reduce the number of court hearings a family must attend, and foster consistency in judicial decision-making.

Since its inception, the Family Court program has made notable strides in this District's caseload management. (1) Fewer continuances are granted. (2) The number of referrals to intervention services such as mediation, parent education classes, counseling and treatment programs and parenting-support groups has increased. (3) The Parent Coordinator program has been developed and utilized to improve outcomes in family disputes. (4) Family Court hearings are scheduled and tracked by Family Court Case Managers to ensure that they are resolved within established time standards. (5) Conferences are conducted with pro se litigants to explain court processes, assess family needs, and make proper referrals. For more information, call the Family Court Division at **(704) 686-0200**.

Family Law Facilitator Program

The goals of the Family Law Facilitator Program are to reduce the number of children entering foster care and to assist self-represented litigants navigate the courts when involved with domestic matters.

Measurable outcomes from this program for FY2010-2011 were of the 180 children referred to the program, 115 achieved permanency.



Caseflow Management

Mecklenburg's domestic filings represent 24% of all family court filings and 11% of domestic filings statewide. Mecklenburg has met its caseflow management goals through intensive case management .

Clearance Rate

The clearance rate compares the number of cases filed in comparison to the number of cases disposed. The goal is to dispose of more cases than were filed and thereby achieve a clearance rate of 100% or above. A clearance rate of less than 100% results in case backlog. A clearance rate over 100% ensures cases are flowing timely through the courts.

Mecklenburg 's clearance rate for FY2010-2011 was 129%

Median Pending Age

The median pending age is an indicator of how quickly domestic lawsuits are moving through the court system from the filing of the initial legal claim(s) to the disposition of the legal claim(s). At the end of FY 2010-11, the median pending age of Mecklenburg County domestic filings was 132 days compared to 198 days statewide.

Percentage of Cases Pending Over One-Year

A time standard used to measure case flow efficiency is the percentage of cases pending over one year. While there are complex domestic cases that justifiably take longer than one year to resolve, the goal is to ensure as many cases are resolved within one year as possible. The percentage of cases pending over one year in Mecklenburg is 20% compared to 35% statewide.

The SelfServe Center: Access to Justice

The Self-Serve Center is an ever expanding operation designed to provide services at the grass-roots level to those who cannot afford traditional legal representation. There is much to be said about the growth and outreach of the Center, but three areas deserve highlighting: attorney volunteerism; student involvement and building new community partnerships.

This year the SSC sponsored two Continuing Legal Education courses designed to recruit and train attorneys to volunteer in the center. A total of 24 attorneys were recruited, trained and registered for 96 volunteer hours!

This year also marked a higher level of engagement by Charlotte School of Law students. Over 50 students enrolled in an Access to Justice course that prepared them to teach free legal clinics on topics of divorce and child custody. This partnership was recognized by the North Carolina Bar Association as a "win-win" for the community and the students. While bridging the gap between academics and action, students have an opportunity to serve the underserved and marginalized members of our community, strengthen their legal skills and develop leadership capacities.

This year we are excited about a new feature added to the Center's menu of services: Divorce & Child Custody Clinics offered in Spanish. Through a partnership with the Latin American Coalition and the diligent recruitment of attorneys volunteers, the Center began serving Spanish speaking customers through free legal clinics.

Juvenile Court

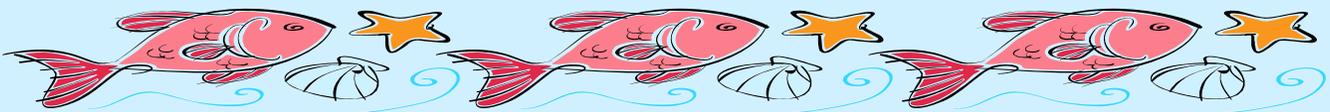
The Juvenile Court section of Family Court spearheaded two major initiatives during FY2010-2011.



Justice Initiatives, Inc. sponsored a symposium on Friday, January 28, 2011 at The Charlotte Westin. The symposium provided an opportunity for judicial officers, systems' experts, and community partners to come together and discuss the disproportionate representation of families and children of color in our juvenile justice court system. Attendants were allowed

to ask questions as everyone tried to put forth an effort to reduce such racial disproportionality and disparities, while ultimately moving toward a goal of improving outcomes for ALL children and families. Since that time, a Collaborative Leadership Group was formed to map out a system approach to change. This initiative has become known as Race Matters for Juvenile Justice.

Another initiative affects courtroom procedures. The juvenile court judges began using a new "benchcard" this year to identify and consider unique cultural factors in decision-making from the bench. This research-based tool was developed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in an effort to improve outcomes for minority families. The Family Court sponsored several training events to prepare attorneys and social workers for the use of the benchcard.



Custody Visitation and Mediation

The longest serving court program in NC is custody and visitation mediation.

In FY 10-11, our Custody Mediators received 1,338 referrals and conducted 829 mediation sessions. They assisted parents in reaching 492 parenting agreements.

Our Mediators are now also taking a lead role in routing parents to Mediation after Rule 7 Violation hearings. This practice has significantly lessened delays in resolving custody cases.

Permanency Mediation

Permanency Mediation directly engages parents in helping them to understand and address the situation that has brought their parental rights into question. It provides for better and more orderly outcomes. In FY 10-11, the Permanency Mediation Program accepted referrals on behalf of 178 children. A total of 108 mediation sessions were scheduled.

OPERATIONS



Jury Service

In Mecklenburg County, jury management has expanded and modernized to ensure excellent communication with jurors, provide comfortable and accommodating jury assembly areas, and increase the yield of jurors attending on their assigned dates of service. Jurors are randomly selected from a combined list comprised of licensed drivers and registered voters. All county residents are eligible for jury service with the exception of those who have served within the past two years, are under the age of 18, are not physically or mentally competent, have been convicted of a felony and have not had their rights restored, or are not United States Citizens.

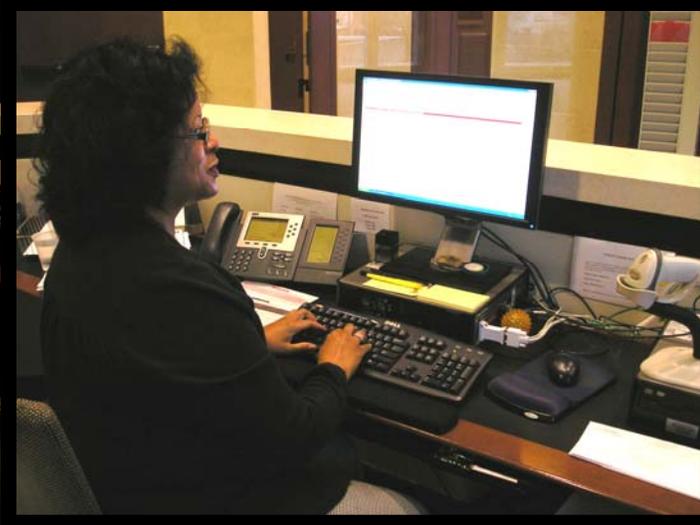
To make service more convenient and efficient, Mecklenburg County employs the use of the “One Day or One Trial” approach, meaning that a person will be asked only to serve the length of one day or, if selected to sit on a trial, the length of that trial. This enables almost all jurors summoned to complete their service within one to three days. Mecklenburg County also utilizes an interactive voice response system, which allows summoned jurors to check their status by telephone to see if they need to report to the courthouse the following day; reschedule their service once within six months of the original service date without question; and obtain general information with regard to parking, location and jury pay. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Additionally, jurors are shown recently released movies during the course of the day and served complimentary popcorn, in an effort to make the experience more enjoyable.

The Jury Management office is located in Suite 5450 of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse. For more information, call **(704) 686-0199**.

Interactive Juror Website

Residents summoned for jury service in Mecklenburg County courts can now access detailed information about their jury service and submit requests to the Jury Management Office online with a new interactive application created by the Mecklenburg County Information Services & Technology (IST) Department, in conjunction with the Trial Court Administrator’s (TCA) Office, called the Jury Manager System.

Residents who receive a summons for jury service can access and manage their information online at jury.mecklenburgcountync.gov, as an alternative to contacting the TCA’s Jury Management Office by phone or mail. The Jury Management Office is staffed by only two Jury Coordinators (one full-time and one part-time) who are responsible for issuing approximately 6,000 summonses per month and performing all jury management functions, which includes responding to a high volume of requests and inquiries pertaining to jury service. The TCA’s Office sought assistance from IST with developing an interactive online jury management



application that would reduce staff time involved with answering calls and processing mail, decrease the cost of communicating with jurors by mail when a request to be deferred or excused is submitted, improve response time (jurors are notified automatically by email when their request has been processed) and the overall level of customer service provided to jurors, thereby increasing customer satisfaction.

Most interaction between residents who receive a summons to appear for jury service and the Jury Management Office involves requests for deferral of jury service, excusal from jury service, and summons information, when lost or misplaced. The new application was designed to manage these common requests and offers many helpful features for

jurors, including the ability to look up a lost juror number and obtain reporting instructions; view current reporting status or the status of a request for deferral or excusal submitted via the online application; access jury service history; verify or update personal data; request a deferral or an excusal; request special assistance; learn about the “no pay” option; request a jury service reminder; view and contribute to the “Employer Honor Roll,” for employers who continue to pay

jurors while they serve; complete a pretrial questionnaire or an exit questionnaire; print jury service notifications; and print an employer letter, verifying service dates and the amount to be paid; or a jury service verification certificate after service has been completed. Since the online application went live on April 1, 2011, in excess of 1,500 requests for deferral and excusal have been submitted and processed via the website.

IST created the application in-house at no additional cost to taxpayers. It is estimated that the internal labor cost for the project was \$95,000. The TCA’s Office anticipates the application will significantly reduce its costs and the staff time required to process mail and answer calls, which will enable the Jury Coordinators to be more attentive to those who report for jury service.

“I appreciate the efforts made by the Jury coordinators and sheriffs to be friendly and informative (where and when appropriate). I believe that the courthouse personnel acted professionally at all times. I have a high opinion of the courthouse staff and professionals that I interacted with. If I ever hear any complaints or criticisms of our courthouse staff, police, or professionals (judges/attorneys), I will be able to let them know with my firsthand experience what an accomplished and professional group of people they are. Thank you Meck County for the opportunity to serve- it has been not only an education, but a pleasure.”

- Mecklenburg County Juror

The Post-Judgment Services Center

The Post-Judgment Services Center (PJSC) assists clients in complying with court orders or judgments through an efficient, effective and timely process that holds the court, clients and providers accountable. In practice, it was designed to provide a single point of contact where a defendant's sentence is coordinated and monitored by various court-related agencies. It functions as an alternative to incarceration or assignment to supervised probation.

Among its purposes are to enforce court-ordered sanctions, such as financial sanctions and community service; to reduce the number of cases sentenced to supervised probation; and to make efficient use of court resources, i.e. eliminate the time judges spend reviewing cases for compliance.

The PJSC addresses the enforcement of sentences and fines of at least \$200.00 imposed upon defendants in misdemeanors from District Court and low-level felonies from Superior Court. Some of the offenses covered by this are: Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Traffic Offenses, Driving While Impaired, Driving While License Revoked, Worthless Checks, Simple Assault, Tax Fraud, Breaking and Entering, Larceny, Simple Possession of Stolen Goods, Property Damage, Concealment, Sex Offenses, Aiding and Abetting, Resisting and/or Obstructing a Public Officer, and Food Stamp Fraud.

The collection rate continues to steadily improve even in difficult economic times. Over \$852,000 in fines was collected during FY2010-2011. This is an increase from FY2009-2010 during which \$840,000 was collected.

PJSC Receives New Technology

A new system has been installed in the Post-Judgment Services Center that makes waiting time more efficient for defendants making appearances in the Center. Q-Flow is a real-time, web-enabled customer flow tool for directing, organizing and optimizing the servicing of customers.

The way the system works is that customers are assigned a number and entered into virtual queues and segmented by services. Q-Flow minimizes wait times and prevents defendants

from standing in lines waiting to be served. When agency representatives are ready to serve the defendant, an audible message with the customer's ticket number is announced and displayed on a monitor in the Center. This process is duplicated for each agency the defendant needs to see.

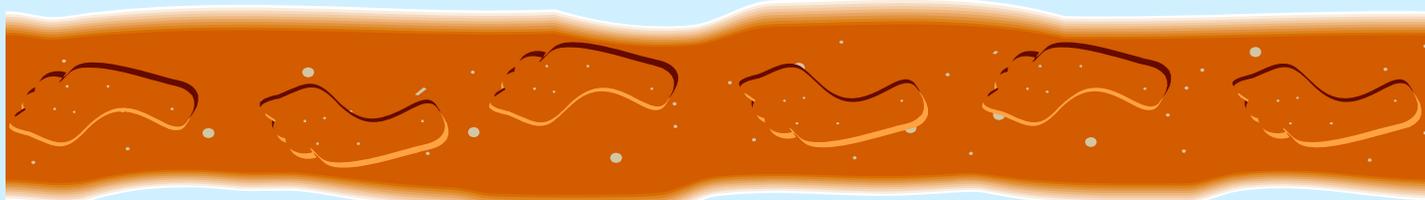
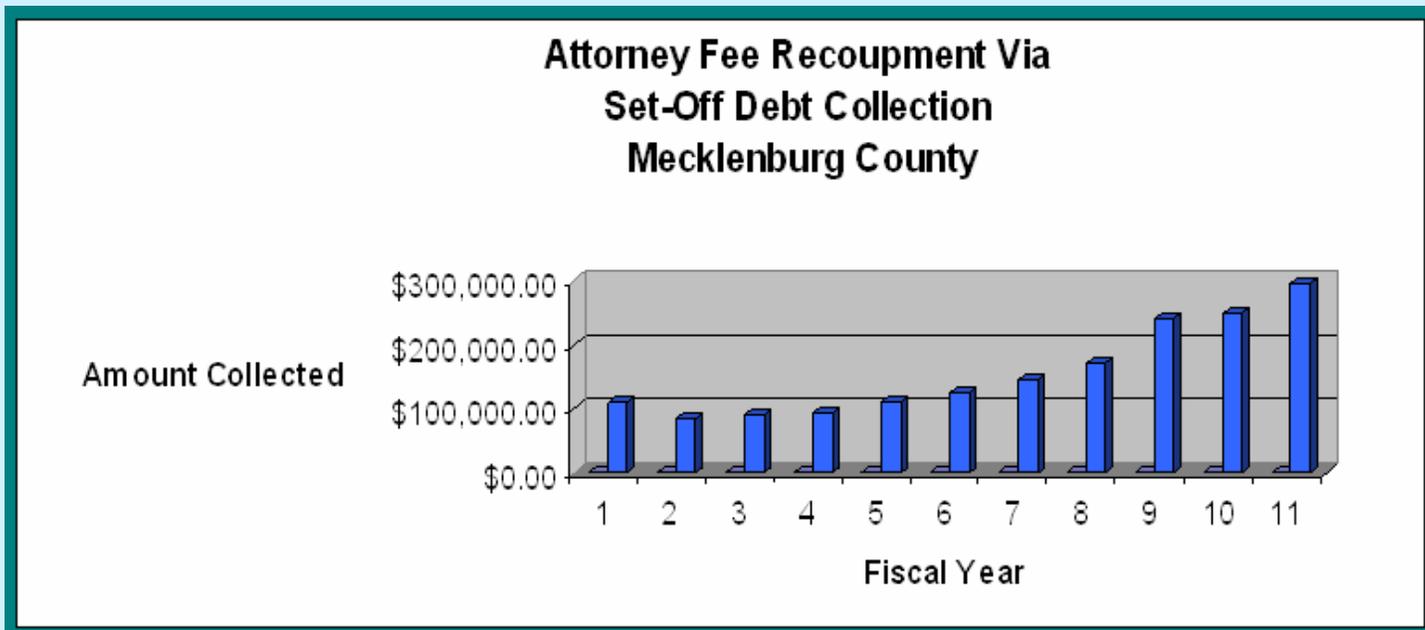
Q-Flow provides the means to improve the quality of customer service in both wait times and transaction times. Another feature of this system is that management has the ability to analyze transaction metrics and make recommendations for improvements.

Attorney Fee Coordination

This is one of a few programs in place that provide a net financial gain to the State. Under the direction of the Trial Court Administrator, the Attorney Fee Coordinator is charged with two main objectives: 1) Reviewing all attorney fee applications submitted by a Panel attorney before they are submitted for payment to the Administrative Office of the Courts and 2) collaborating with Judges, Clerks, and others to improve recoupment of attorney fees in Mecklenburg County.

The Attorney Fee Coordinator reviews Non-Capital Criminal Case attorney fee applications for accuracy and completeness, as well as reviews attorney timesheets to ensure work hours correspond with application. If errors are flagged, the Coordinator returns incorrect or incomplete fee applications to attorneys and judges. Once applications have been verified as correct, the Coordinator then submits the approved fee applications to Indigent Defense Services for payment.

The Attorney Fee Coordinator also works to recoup attorney's fees from defendants who received their services. The Coordinator screens fee applications to applications that are eligible for recoupment. Once it has been determined the fee applications do not have an existing order for recoupment, the Coordinator then submits eligible fee applications for docketing as civil judgments. The chart below demonstrates a steady increase in the recoupment of attorneys fees.





Community
Access and Outreach

Community Access and Outreach

Under the direction of the Trial Court Administrator, the Community Access and Outreach Division focuses on three major areas: public access to the courts, public education and outreach, and volunteer and internship coordination. The Speakers Bureau, Annual Community Report, Annual Statistical Report, Trial Court Administrator's Office Newsletter, courthouse tours, web site development and content maintenance, public relations plans for the Trial Court Administrator's Office and 26th Judicial District, media inquiries and requests, camera authorization requests, inclement weather and emergency operations, intern and volunteer coordination, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, community support, and other special projects are captured by the Community Access and Outreach division. For more information, call (704) 686-0269.

26th Judicial District Hosts International Visitors

The Trial Court Administrator's Office hosted several visitors from abroad through a partnership with International House in FY2010-2011. A delegation of three government and human rights officials from Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan were in Charlotte April 7 through May 1, 2011 for a professional exchange program through the Legislative Fellows Program, a U.S. State Department Program, in collaboration with International House in Charlotte.

The Legislative Fellow Program is designed so participants can engage in meetings related to legislation, the role of civic society, and the relation between communities and local government. These particular participants were interested in observing legislation in action, attending meetings with local judges and/or court officials, gaining a better understanding of the role of government, the electoral process, and how legislation affects communities.

The participants included Ms. Fahima Quoreshi from Dhaka, Bangladesh. She is the vice president of Dhaka University, Joint Secretary of Gulshan Society, Executive Member of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, among others. She is currently involved in human rights as an activist and also filing public interest litigation for women and children's rights. Mr. Oleg Nikolaevich is currently the Deputy Head at the Department of International Policy of Almaty City in Kazakhstan. He implements policies to promote unity between communities and local government. He also implements democratic principles of social harmony and political stability, foster civic patriotism, development of a common strategy and coordinated interaction of all structures of local executive authority in the field of public relations, social sphere, science, education, culture, health, media, youth, language policy, tourism, and sport. Ms. Dilorom Saidjonovna hails from Khujan, Tajikistan. She is a Local Government Specialist, Member of Mercy Corps and Brandy Westerman. The delegates visited the Mecklenburg County Courthouse on Friday, April 15 and were given a tour of the building. After the tour, they met

with Trial Court Administrator Todd Nuccio who gave them a presentation on the structure of North Carolina court system, as well as information as to how legislation is created in North Carolina. The delegates enjoyed their visit and indicated that they learned a great deal. The information they received can be used to further their efforts in their respective countries.

An international delegation of 8 professionals also visited the Mecklenburg County Courthouse on Friday, September 18th. These visitors were invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. The theme of this Multi-Regional Project was "Accountability in Government". The multi-regional participants wanted to learn about the process and challenges of dealing with political corruption, ensuring fair and transparent elections and financial accountability in government. This group wanted to learn more about the role of city-level government systems in ensuring transparency, the role of NGOs and local Watchdog organization in monitoring the government, public servants and their accountability to citizens. The multi-regional group of professionals represented the countries of Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Panama, Latvia, Jamaica, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Romania.

Additionally, an international delegation of Ukrainian professionals visited the courthouse on Monday, September 19th. The theme of this program was "Accountable Governance and NGO Development". Our Ukrainian visitors hoped to learn about the role of a transparent government in society, tax policy and financial accountability in government, and how citizen involvement helps ensure fair and transparent elections. Some specific interests of the delegates included the role of the government in addressing social problems and citizens' role in local governance; The Mass Media and transparency in government; The American electoral process; NGO Development and the NGO interaction with government bodies; Youth participation in the socio-political process. The visitors were also given a behind-the-scenes-tour of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse.



Todd Nuccio poses with the multi-regional group representing Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Panama, Latvia, Jamaica, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Romania



Todd Nuccio poses with the Ukrainian visitors

Teens Learn About Judicial System Through Court Camp

Court Camp is now in its third year of operation. The pilot Court Camp was held in the summer of 2009. What began as a one week event with eight students has now grown to three one-week sessions with twenty students each. This summer, the first session of Court Camp took place the week of June 13th-17th and the second session took place the week of June 27th-July 1st. The third and final session is due to take place the week of July 18-22. Once again, participants were given the opportunity to visit the large law firm of Parker Poe where they took a tour of their uptown offices, including their library, and were given a unique opportunity to hear from practicing attorneys about what it is like to work as an attorney for a large law firm.

Participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions during a lunch and learn session while at Parker Poe. Students also visited The Charlotte School of Law where they took a tour of the school and participated in hands-on activities that exposed them to real-life cases often discussed in law school. The curriculum also included a visit to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department's Crime Lab. While at the crime lab, participants learned about how documents are reviewed for authenticity, the importance of DNA in solving crimes, how guns and other items collected from crime scenes are tested, as well as how fingerprints are collected and used to solve crimes. This activity was paired with a mock crime scene exercise during which students were given a scenario and then taken to the location of the crime to record details, take photographs, and collect physical evidence. Afterward, students were challenged to solve the crime based on the evidence they collected. Another field trip involved a tour of the Mecklenburg County Jail Central facility. This two hour tour allowed students to see how arrestees are processed from the time they enter the jail to the time they become an inmate. Students visited the on-site infirmary, kitchen, and laundry facilities, as well as the housing pods where actual inmates are held. In addition the field trips, participants were also visited throughout the week by guest speakers such as Chief District Court Judge Lisa C. Bell who spoke about the role of the judge and quizzed the students on their knowledge of the North Carolina court system. Chief Public Defender Kevin Tully also took time to speak with the students about the role of the Public Defender. Deputy Henderson with the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit and his K-9 partner Dax also spoke with the students about the bomb unit and the role of the Sheriff's Office. Other speakers included a courtroom bailiff and a court reporter, both of whom educated the participants on their roles.

Throughout the week, Court Camp participants were able to observe actual trials and court proceedings, including first appearance court, a small claims lawsuit, several criminal misdemeanor trials, and a portion of a jury trial in criminal court. The week concluded on Friday with a mock trial and a graduation ceremony presided over by District Court Judge

Tyyawdi M. Hands. Participants were asked to complete an anonymous survey at the end of the week. One student remarked that “the mock trial, meeting new people, and the ability to make new friends were the most rewarding parts of the program.” Another student suggested that “you should keep this (Court Camp) up for many years to come, it is an amazing experience.” One student took the time to write “Thanks for a great week at Court Camp. It is really a great program that I would recommended to anyone who is interested in the legal system.” Parents were also pleased with Court Camp. On the survey, one parent stated “the activities were something that could not have happened without this program” and that she “loved the time that Judge Hands spent with the participants at graduation.” Another parent wrote, “ My daughter attended the first session of Court Camp this summer. The other day while she was finishing up To Kill a Mockingbird, she said, "Ya know mom, that Court Camp, really helped me to understand this book better." Overall, Court Camp proved once again to be an educational an enjoyable experience for all involved.



Students collect evidence in a mock crime scene



Students post with District Court Judge Tyyawdi Hands



Students learn about courthouse security and the role of the Sheriff's Office in the court system



Students hold a mock trial

Community Support

If you tuned into Latina 102.3 FM in the morning or Radio Formula 1310 AM at 2:00 in the afternoon during FY2010-2011, you may have heard Maura Chavez, Community Support Coordinator—that is, if you happen to speak Spanish.

During her morning session, Ms. Chavez answered questions from listeners about jury service, among other topics. Hispanics are also often taken advantage of by paying unnecessary fees to translation agencies to write a request for excusal for jury service. Maura explained the correct procedure to submit an excuse in the event a Hispanic individual does not speak English receives a jury summons.

This initial foray into the Spanish radio can be used as a way to reach various other diverse communities, as well. This was the first of what has become on-going, educational spotlights that afford non-English speakers the opportunity to learn about the resources available if they have to interact with the Mecklenburg County court system, as well as general information about our justice system. This, in turn, will enable the court to operate more efficiently.

Judges and Court Personnel Learn About Native American Community

In FY2010-2011, judges and court personnel attended the fifth in a series of presentations on improving communications and interactions with diverse communities and cultures in Mecklenburg County. This presentation included practical cultural information presented by Kara Jones with the Metrolina Native American Association about the various Native American groups within our community. Attendees were treated to a sampling of traditional Native American foods, including corn, chicken, sweet potatoes, and rice. Several ceremonial dances were performed in traditional clothing. Participants also learned about various cultural nuances and views about government that could be useful in day-to-day encounters with Native Americans in the court system.

The Trial Court Administrator's Office received funding from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation through its Front Porch Grants program, which is managed by Community Building Initiative, along with matching funds from Justice Initiatives, Inc. The program is an effort to build informal social capital within our community. Front Porch Grants are awarded to organizations and partnerships for specific programs and projects that foster bridge-building between individuals, communities, neighborhoods and organizations. The goal is to increase trust and expand social connections and informal networks in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

For more information about Community Support efforts, call **(704) 686-0268**.



Larry King's Clubhouse

Children's play & care center

At one point, children were seen everyday in the hallways and courtrooms of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse. These children were often exposed to frightening and potentially psychologically damaging court testimony. Their presence was also distracting to family members and court officials who were conducting judicial business. Many children who come to the court-

house with their families are some of the most vulnerable.

To meet the needs of children, families, and court officials, *Larry King's Clubhouse: Children's Play and Care Center, Inc.* was created. This drop-in child care center serves two purposes: *Larry King's Clubhouse* is a safe, secure, and enriching place for children whose family members are conducting business at the courthouse or serving as jurors. It also serves as a point of access to link children and families to needed community services.

Larry King's Clubhouse offers high quality drop-in childcare from 8:00 am-5:00pm on all days that the court is in operation. The Clubhouse serves up to twenty nine children at one time who are between the ages of six weeks and twelve years. While in care, children participate in enriching activities under the guidance of trained and experienced early care and education professionals. Finally, the Clubhouse provides community support service referrals to families who need and are eligible for, but are not already connected to these resources.

During FY2010-2011 the center cared for 8,921 children.



What Have You Heard About Larry King's Clubhouse?

"It was great because I have never heard of a courthouse having a daycare. It made taking care of business go a lot faster/smoothier. It is a great service. Keep up the great work."

"It made an already bad situation easier."

"My children felt safe. The children had a safe place to enjoy themselves while I conducted business."



Contact Us!

Visit us on the Web!

www.nccourts.org/County/Mecklenburg/Default.asp



Trial Court Administrator's Office

704-686-0260

Caseflow Management Division

704-686-0185

Community Access and Outreach Division

704-686-0269

Drug Treatment Court Division

704-686-0150

Family Court Division

704-686-0200

The SelfServe Center

704-686-0210

Operations Division

704-686-0267

Fine Collection Department

704-686-0240

Jury Management Office

704-686-0195

District Court Judges Office

704-686-0101

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