

THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

CIRCUIT COURIER

APRIL - JUNE 2023

Scott and Sherriff Appointed as Judges



On May 17, the office of Governor Ron DeSantis announced the appointment of Reid Scott and Danielle Sherriff to the Circuit Bench and County Bench, respectively.

Scott, since 2006, most recently served as an Assistant State Attorney in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit. Previously, he was a partner at Freeman, Goldis & Cash P.A. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his juris doctor from Stetson University. Scott fills the judicial vacancy created by the elevation of Judge Paige Kilbane to the 5th DCA. He currently presides in Circuit Civil Division AH.



Sherriff served as the Senior Litigation Attorney for the Palm Beach County School District since 2022. Previously, she was an associate at Lesser, Lesser, Landy & Smith PLLC, and prior to that she served as an Assistant State Attorney for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit. She earned her bachelor's degree from Florida International University and her juris doctor from Florida State University. Sherriff fills the judicial vacancy created by the elevation of Judge John Parnofiello to the Circuit Bench. She currently presides in County Civil Division RB.



15THCIRCUIT.COM



The Fifteenth Circuit Health and Wellness Committee held its inaugural Health and Wellness Day on May 19, 2023 to celebrate Health and Wellness Month. The event was held at the Main Courthouse and organized in conjunction with Baptist Health. The all-day event featured various activities including yoga and tai chi classes; a nutrition lecture; therapy dogs; healthy food trucks and a zen room. The event was well attended with positive feedback.

Additionally, the committee has launched smaller interactive initiatives, e.g., onsite yoga classes, a step challenge, and community based events, just to name a few. The initiatives are aimed at supporting and nurturing the health and wellness of the court staff and judicial officers.

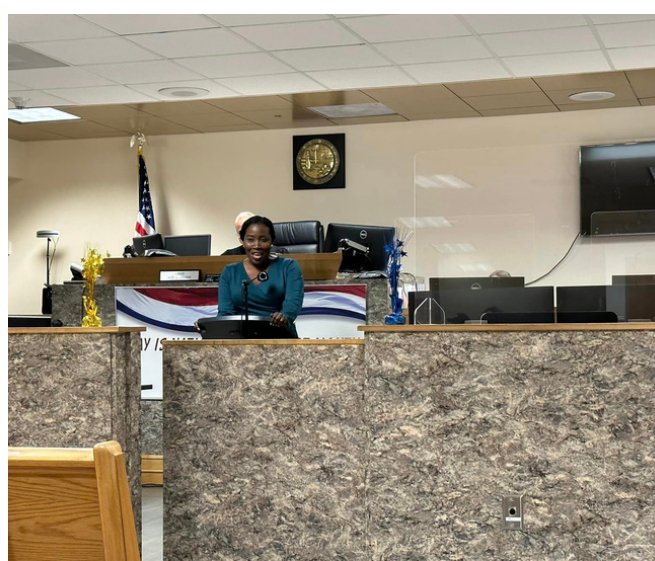
Mark your calendars: October 20, 2023 will be the next Health and Wellness Day featuring activities and vendors.



Circuit Events



On Thursday, April 20, the Circuit welcomed the children of Circuit employees to the Main Courthouse for the annual Take Your Child to Work Day. The day included guest speakers and judges, arts and crafts, a mock trial, a K9 demonstration and tours of the Palm Beach County Historic Courthouse.



On Thursday, May 25, the Circuit held its Drug Court Graduation in conjunction with National Treatment Court Month. The ceremony included guest speaker Gayle W. who congratulated and encouraged the five graduates. The Honorable Kirk Volker presided over the ceremony.

Judges in the Community



On April 3rd, the Honorable April Bristow spoke to students from Palm Springs Elementary School for Career Day.



On April 12, the Honorable Ted Booras spoke to Leadership Palm Beach County's Engage Class of 2023 about First Appearance Court during their Public Safety Day.



In April 2023, the Honorable Bradley Harper presided over the 2023 Law Honor Society Induction Ceremony at Palm Beach Lakes High School.

Judges in the Community Continued



On Friday, March 5, the Honorable Cymonie Rowe led the annual mock trial event at Carver Middle School. The trial included groups of 7th grade students as well as school staff, members of the Circuit, as well as partners from the State Attorney's office, Public Defender's Office and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.



Several of the 15th Circuit's judges participated in the preliminary rounds of the 50th Anniversary of the Robert Orseck Moot Court competition on June 22 during the The Florida Bar's Annual Convention, which was held in Boca Raton.

Pictured here is the Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer and the Hon. Daliah Weiss. Both served as judges on the panel critiquing the arguments and presentation of the student competitors.

Mock Trials & Courthouse Visits



April 11-13, three groups of pre-law high school seniors from American Heritage Schools, Palm Beach Campus shadowed the Hon. Sarah Shullman and the Hon. Caryn Siperstein.

The students were able to watch court hearings and jury trials, tour the courthouse and meet Chief Judge Glenn Kelley.

Pictured here with the students is Chief Judge Kelley (center) and Judge Sarah Shullman (second from the right).



During the month of April, the Honorable Daliah Weiss, joined by ASA Nicholas Kaleel, welcomed a group of 7th grade students from the Gulf Stream School to the 15th Circuit. The students, who have been learning about American History and the Bill of Rights got the opportunity to learn about the judicial process up close.



During the month of April, the Honorable James Sherman hosted students from The King's Academy in his courtroom. They were also joined by PBSO - Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Deputy Mo and K9 Sultan for a special demonstration.

Mock Trials & Courthouse Visits Continued



On April 21, the Honorable Darren Shall presided over a mock trial with 8th grade students from the Classical Homeschool.



On May 17, the Honorable Sherri Collins welcomed a group of the Boca Chamber's Leadership Program to her courtroom.



On May 31, the Honorable Sherri Collins presided over the final rounds of the Florida Middle School Mock Trial Competition that included students from American Heritage Broward and Miami Arts Studio.



Honoring Judges of the 15th Circuit

On Friday, April 28, the Honorable Samantha Schosberg Feuer was honored with the Civility Award at the Project Nuremberg Lawyers Luncheon hosted by Temple Beth El of Boca Raton.

Our congratulations to Judge Feuer, pictured here with Judge Ori Silver (left) and Chief Judge Glenn Kelley (right).

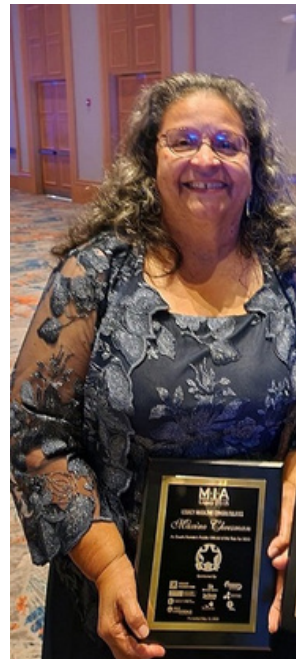


On Thursday, May 11, the Honorable Ori Silver was awarded the Woman Lawyer of the Year Award by the South Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers (FAWL). The award recognizes a woman lawyer who epitomizes FAWL's mission to actively promote gender equality and the leadership roles of FAWL's members in the legal profession, judiciary and community at large.

Our congratulations to Judge Silver, pictured left.

On Saturday, May 13, the Honorable Maxine Cheesman was awarded with the South Florida's Public Official of the Year Award by Legacy South Florida.

Our congratulations to Judge Cheesman.



Honoring Judges of the 15th Circuit Continued



On Thursday, May 18, the Honorable Charles Burton was named Jurist of the Year by the North County section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association. Each year, nominees are reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors.

Our congratulations to Judge Burton.



On Tuesday, June 13, the Honorable Ted Booras received the Judicial Action award from the Safety Council of Palm Beach County, Inc.

Judge Booras' work with the Circuit's Veterans Court helps veterans navigate through the criminal justice system.

Our congratulations to Judge Booras.

Installation Ceremony for JA Association



The Honorable Maxine Cheesman presided over the installation ceremony for the 2023-2025 PBCJAA Board of Directors on June 26, 2023.

Pictured here are (L to R): Marsha McClendon, Recording Secretary, Monique Harris, Vice-President, Marianna Contreras, President, Carey Helmes, Treasurer and Kimberly Wolf, JAAF Representative.

Circuit Member Serves as Pro Bono Consultant for Bahamas DCR Program Launch

The National Center for State Courts (“NCSC”) has organized the “Caribbean Anti-Crime Program”, funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy in Nassau. NCSC in conjunction with the Judiciary of The Bahamas implemented an 11-day site visit from Tuesday, April 11 to Friday, April 21, 2023. Ms. Melissa M. Sotillo, Director of Administrative Services for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, was invited to participate and act as a Pro Bono Consultant for the NCSC.

Ms. Sotillo, was as a primary resource for multiple discussions on the role and management of a digital court recording division as well as expertise on practical use of the Digital Court Recording system in courtrooms. Additionally, Ms. Sotillo participated in an expert discussion panel that reviewed how Court Reporting Hybrid models function. On Friday, April 21 the DCR Project Site Visit culminated with the official launch of the DCR program, which was broadcasted on local news and live-streamed on social media.



Speakers and key personnel at the Judiciary DCR Launch Event and NCSC Consultants. From left to right – Katina Russell, INL Program Specialist; Ken Cook - NCSC Consultant; Melissa Sotillo – Director of Administrative Services, Florida 15th Judicial Circuit; JoAnne Richardson – NCSC Project Director/Senior Program Manager; Sir Brian Moree – former Chief Justice of The Bahamas; Sir Ian Winder – current Chief Justice of The Bahamas; Bridget Premont – INL Director; Adoit Pradhan – FTR Product Manager; Gillian Lawrence – NCSC Consultant; Renaldo Toote – Deputy Registrar/Director of Court Service (ag). Not shown – Emma Nicolletta – NCSC Senior Program Associate.

Juvenile Team Members Continue Studies with FSU



Several members of the juvenile division team were able to take advantage of a continuing education opportunity with Florida State University's Professional Development Center. Certifications were offered in the following areas: Trauma and Resilience – Level I, Trauma and Resilience – Level II, and Human Trafficking Prevention and Intervention. Additionally, OSCA offered a course on Advanced Domestic Violence for Judges and Court Staff.

Congratulations to the following juvenile team members for increasing their knowledge and earning certifications, including: Anna Branney, Brandon Richardson, Bell Cirius, Debbian Livingstone, Kelly Gould and Sarah Freglette.

Not pictured: Angela Monk and Cristy Altaro

Caring Canines Therapy Dog Program Returns



The Juvenile Division is excited to announce the return of the Circuit's Caring Canines therapy dog program. Implemented in 2012, and sidelined by COVID, the program invites certified-therapy dogs inside the Courthouse, alongside their human companions, to provide extra comfort from a furry-four legged friend. The dogs can be found in the hallways, Courtrooms, hearing room and Child Friendly Room, offering love and support to everyone – children, parents, attorneys, case managers and Court staff. Caring Canines will operate in juvenile hearings at the Main, South County, and West County Courthouses. For any questions about Caring Canines, please contact Sarah Freglette at SFreglette@pbcgov.org.

Human Resources Lunch & Learn Recaps

On May 15, Judicial Assistant Sabrina Valdez presented on the topic of Couponing For Beginners to Circuit employees.



Other Lunch & Learn Dates:

April 2023: Wellness with Nutrition, presented by Baptist Health South Florida

June 2023: Identity Theft, presented by Investigator Derrick Young of the Palm Beach County Public Safety Department, Division of Consumer Affairs

Intern Lunch & Learn



On June 20, the summer interns, along with General Counsel Katie Mullinax and County Criminal Judge Sherri Collins, visited the Fourth District Court of Appeal for an Oral Argument Observation.

Panel members Chief Judge Klingensmith, Judge Forst, and Judge Artau were kind enough to speak with our interns after oral argument about the work at the Fourth DCA and their legal journey.

New Hires | Employees On the Move | Retirements

Welcome to the Circuit's newest employees:

April 2023

Brandon Ficarra, Digital Court Reporter
Jeanne Diniz, Digital Court Reporter
Denise Prieres, Assistant to Judge Martz

May 2023

Shanece Coppin, Assistant to Magistrate Klee

June 2023

Christopher Verderosa, Court Program Specialist
Christina Hero, Magistrate
Brenda Gleason, Administrative Assistant III, OPS
Merin Seifer, Mediator
Kwame Ratliff, Digital Court Reporter
Danielle Sherriff, County Judge
Melissa Tellez, Assistant to Magistrate Hero

Employees hired into a new position/position reclassified:

April 2023

Nicolas Smith, Judicial Assistant to Judge Weiss
Sabrina Valdez, Judicial Assistant to Judge Bristow

May 2023

Alejandro Camacho, Supervising Court Interpreter
Reyaz Ali, Program Coordinator, Foreclosure
Jasmine Valdez, Court Program Specialist II, Juvenile

June 2023

Barbara Calafell, Court Program Specialist III
Erin Berlingo, Court Program Specialist II, Civil
Nicole Karlecke, Assistant to Magistrate Fanelli
Dionne Sybblis, Judicial Assistant to Judge Sherriff
Laura Lavoie, Court Program Specialist II, Family
Connie Thomas, Court Program Specialist II, Family

Retirements

May 2023

Kathy Sanchez, Court Program Specialist

June 2023

Judge Laura Johnson, Circuit Court Judge

Administrative Orders

The following AOs were updated or created April - June 2023 (most recent to oldest):

06-30-2023

11.109

Duty Judge Roster

11.106

Alternate Assignments

11.104

Seniority Listing Of Judges

11.102

Assignment of Administrative Judges and Executive Committee

11.101

Assignment of Judges

06-26-2023

5.104

UFC Magistrates

06-14-2023

4.802

Persons in Custody for Out of County Holds

06-12-2023

11.203

Appointment of Magistrates

04-03-2023

2.306

Motions, Orders and Judgments



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