



# Circuit Courier

October-December 2009

Vol. 2009-4

NEWS BULLETIN OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

**Judge John Kastrenakes' Investiture**

**Leonard Hanser Appointed to County Court**

**Meet the Magistrates**

**Juvenile Division in South County Opens**

**National Adoption Day**

**Columbus Day Training**

*And more...*





**On the Cover: Main Judicial Center, WPB**

*Photo by Linda Sims*

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## MESSAGE FROM TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR BARBARA DAWICKE

As the year draws to a close, we have an opportunity to reflect on the highlights of 2009 and to plan for opportunities to come.

Among many noteworthy events this year, the Circuit was honored to have four of its judges elevated to higher court appointments.

**Judge Jorge Labarga** was named to the Florida Supreme Court, with **Judges Cory Ciklin** and **Jonathan Gerber** moving to the Fourth District Court of Appeals, and **Judge Joseph Marx** transferring from County to Circuit Court. The Fifteenth Circuit welcomed the appointments of **Judges John Kastrenakes, Meenu Sasser, August Bonavita, and Caroline Shepherd**, all of whom began their terms in May and June. We were also pleased to learn in December that **Magistrate Leonard Hanser** was selected to fill the final county court vacancy (see page 4).

July brought the transition to a new chief judge, as **Judge Kathleen Kroll's** term concluded and the judges unanimously elected **Judge Peter Blanc** as her successor. Also this year, the Circuit created a new specialty mental health court division as well as a special foreclosure division (see page 5), added a juvenile drug court program and held successful foreclosure case conferences for pro se litigants. A new tradition was started with the first Columbus Day staff training seminars (see pages 15-16). To a greater extent than ever before, volunteers assisted our staff to complete projects that would have been otherwise unmanageable (see page 18).

Hiring restrictions were modified in November, so that vacant positions may now be staffed following fulfillment of various waiting periods. Unfortunately, budgetary restrictions still preclude travel and legislative consideration of salary raises.

In closing, on behalf of Court Administration, I again thank staff for their ongoing commitment to service and justice for our citizens. I wish the Judges, Judicial Assistants, Court staff, and the justice partners an enjoyable holiday season, with health and success throughout the new year.



Trial Court Administrator  
Barbara Dawicke

# INVESTITURE OF JUDGE JOHN S. KASTRENAKES

**Judge John S. Kastrenakes** was appointed to the Circuit Court by Governor Charlie Crist on June 1, 2009.

Prior to his judicial appointment, Judge Kastrenakes was a prosecutor with the Office of the United States Attorney in the Southern District of Florida from 1995 to 2009. Before that, he served as an Assistant State Attorney under Janet Reno in Miami from 1981 to 1995.

Judge Kastrenakes received his bachelor's degree in History from the University of Florida, and his law degree also from UF.

Judge Kastrenakes' first assignment is in Criminal Division "V" on the 10th floor of the Main Judicial Center.

His judicial assistant is **Karen Skodmin**. The office can be reached at 355-7875.

A large group of family, colleagues and friends gathered in courtroom 11A of the Palm Beach County Courthouse on October 16, 2009, for the investiture of **Judge John S. Kastrenakes**.

The ceremony opened with remarks by **Chief Judge Peter D. Blanc**, followed by the invocation by **Father Andrew Maginas**, St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church. Judge Kastrenakes' children, **Eleni, Alexis, and George**, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

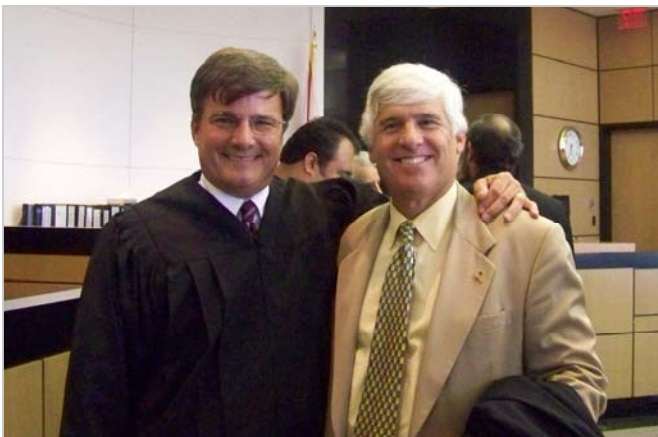
The presentation of the Judicial Commission was made by **Karen Heidtman**, on behalf of Sharon R. Bock, Clerk and Comptroller of Palm Beach County. **Judge Robin Rosenberg** presented a desk plate on behalf of the Florida Conference of Circuit Court Judges. The Bible was presented by **Gregory Coleman**, Esquire, Board of Governors of The Florida Bar.

The **Honorable Federico A. Moreno**, Chief United States District Judge, Southern District of Florida administered the Oath of Office. The honor of the enrobing went to Judge Kastrenakes' wife **Pia**, and his children, **Eleni, Alexis, and George**.

The gavel was presented by **Michelle Suskauer**, Esquire, President of the Palm Beach County Bar Association, and a gift was given by **Theodore DiSalvo**, Esquire, Director of the South Palm Beach County Bar Association.

Remarks on behalf of Judge Kastrenakes were made by **Ryon McCabe**, Esquire, Immediate Past President, North County Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association; **Stephen Carlton**, Esquire, Assistant U.S. Attorney; **Honorable John O'Sullivan**, United States Magistrate Judge, Southern District of Florida; **C. Michael Cornely**, Esquire, Hartman and Cornely, P.A. Miami, and **Andrew Lourie**, Esquire, Kobre and Kim L.L.P. New York.

The ceremony concluded with the benediction from Father Maginas.



Judge Kastrenakes and the Honorable Federico Moreno



Judge Kastrenakes' children, Eleni, Alexis, and George, lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

## GOVERNOR CRIST APPOINTS MAGISTRATE LEONARD HANSER TO PALM BEACH COUNTY COURT

### GOVERNOR CRIST APPOINTS LEONARD HANSER TO PALM BEACH COUNTY COURT

December 1, 2009

GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE  
(850) 488-5394

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Charlie Crist today appointed Leonard Hanser to the Palm Beach County Court.

“Leonard’s legal expertise, calm temperament and solid judgment will be of great benefit as he takes the bench,” Governor Crist said. “I am grateful that Leonard is ready and willing to serve the good people of Palm Beach County.”

Hanser, 57, has been a general magistrate for the 15th Judicial Circuit since 1993. From 1978 to 1982 and 1989 to 1993, he practiced as a sole practitioner. Hanser practiced privately with Mitchell, Hanser & Schwartz; Mitchell, Hanser, Schwartz & Winkler; and Mitchell, Hanser & Winkler, respectively, from 1982 to 1989. Hanser began his law career in private practice as an associate attorney with Levy, Pilsco, Perry, Shapiro, Keen & Kingcade from 1977 to 1978. He earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from the University of Virginia. Hanser will fill the vacancy created by the elevation of Judge Joseph Marx to the 15th Judicial Circuit.



## JUDICIAL ROTATIONS

Effective January 19, 2010, the following assignments will become effective:

### Circuit Court

TD Division and **Judge Lucy Brown** will relocate to Courtroom 11H and to office 11.2208.

**Judge Karen Miller** will remain in Division X, but will relocate to Courtroom 10F and office 10.2215.

### County Court

**Judge Sandra Bosso-Pardo**, currently in Criminal Division C, will switch divisions with **Judge Frank Castor**, currently in Civil Division RJ. Judge Bosso-Pardo will be assigned to Civil Courtroom 6B and her office will be in room 6.1204. Judge Castor will be assigned to Criminal Courtroom 9H and his office will be in room 9.2203.

**Judge Reginald Corlew**, currently in South County Criminal Division D, will switch divisions with **Judge James Martz**, currently in South County Civil Division RD. Judge Corlew will be assigned to Civil Courtroom 6 and his office will be in room 2W168. Judge Martz will be assigned to Criminal Courtroom 1 and his office will be in room 2E112.

**Judge August Bonavita** is now the Administrative Judge of the County Criminal Division.

**Judge Paul Damico** is now the Administrative Judge of the County Civil Division.

**Judge Barry Cohen** continues to fill the vacancy in Criminal Division L created by the appointment of Judge Joseph Marx to the Circuit Court. Once the pending vacancy is filled (see appointment above), it is anticipated that Judge Cohen will resume his duties in the TD Division.



## JUDGE MEENU SASSER PRESIDES OVER NEW FORECLOSURE DIVISION

Through innovative technology and best practices in case management, the new foreclosure division has made great strides in tackling the many incoming filings received on a monthly basis.

Standard form orders have been developed to streamline the process and provide for a higher level of efficiency. A dedicated case manager assists the Court by ensuring Court files are properly prepared prior to Court hearings.

A web-based calendar allows for on-line scheduling which avoids telephone calls and scheduling conflicts. Feedback from the Palm Beach County Bar Association is very positive.

*Please visit the web site: <http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/divisionaw/home>*



Judge Meenu Sasser

## FORMER YOUTH COURT ATTORNEY SWORN IN BY JUDGE LUCY CHERNOW BROWN

**Anthony Arash Arsali** was sworn in as a member of the Florida Bar by **Circuit Judge Lucy Chernow Brown**. As a Youth Court attorney, Mr. Arsali frequently tried cases before Judge Brown.

Youth Court is a unique juvenile diversion program run by the Palm Beach County School District's Police Department. The swearing-in ceremony was held in Judge Brown's courtroom in the Palm Beach County Courthouse, with friends, family, practicing attorneys, and supporters in attendance.

The ceremony held special meaning for Judge Brown and Mr. Arsali, who have remained in touch since their early days in Youth Court.



Anthony Arash Arsali, formerly one of Palm Beach County's most talented Youth Court trial attorneys, is sworn in as a full-fledged member of the Florida Bar by Judge Brown.

# MEET THE MAGISTRATES

Magistrates are quasi-judicial officers, who conduct formal court hearings, take testimony and evaluate evidence.

At the end of the hearing, he or she prepares a written report that contains recommendations on action the judge should take in the case. Either party may file a written exception to the report within 10 days. If no exceptions are filed, the court typically enters an order approving the recommendations.

The Chief Judge appoints magistrates, pursuant to Florida Family Rules of Procedures, to hear and make recommendations on post-judgment family law matters and specific prejudgment temporary relief family law matters. The magistrates and hearing officers serve under the direction of the administrative judge of the Family Law Division.

The Chief Judge also appoints a special magistrate to hear and consider Baker Act and Marchman Act proceedings. These proceedings are related to involuntary placement treatment based on a severe mental, emotional or behavioral disorder. The special magistrate serves under the direction of the administrative judge of the Guardianship, Mental Health, Probate & Trust division.



**Magistrate Diane M. Kirigin, Administrative Magistrate**

Appointed Domestic Relations Commissioner/General Master, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (1995); Private practice, Law Offices of Bosso & Bosso, P.A. (1984-1995); Nova University, School of Law, Juris Doctor (1984); Florida Atlantic University Bachelor of Science, History (1976).

*Currently assigned to: Family, Guardianship, Mental Health, South County.*



**Magistrate Thomas R. Baker**

Appointed Magistrate for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (2006); Private practice in Palm Beach County (1987 - 2006); Associate Attorney for insurance defense law firm in St. Lucie County (1985 - 1987); South Texas College of Law, Juris Doctor (1985); University of Florida, Bachelor of Science, Accounting (1981).

*Currently assigned to: Family, Guardianship, Mental Health, North County.*



**Magistrate Peter Bassaline**

Appointed Magistrate for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (2007); Assistant Attorney General, Office of Attorney General West Palm Beach (2000-2007); University of Florida, Juris Doctor (1992); University of Florida, Bachelor of Science, (1989).

*Currently assigned to: Department of Revenue, Main Judicial Complex.*

## MEET THE MAGISTRATES:CONT.

No  
Photo  
Available

### **Magistrate Judette N. Fanelli**

Appointed Magistrate for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (1999); Partner in Pickett, Fanelli and Marshall, P.A.; Nova Southeastern University, Juris Doctor; Undergraduate Syracuse University, Bachelor of Arts, Palm Beach Atlantic College, Communications/Psychology. *Currently assigned to: Mental Health, Guardianship and Family, North County.*



### **Magistrate Linda S. Goodwin**

Appointed Domestic Relations Commissioner for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (April, 1983); Staff attorney for Palm Beach County Legal Aid Society (1981-1983); Franklin County (Ohio) Public Defender's Office (1978-1980); Capital University Law School, Juris Doctor (1978); Bachelor of Science, Education, Ohio State University (1974). *Currently assigned to: Family, Main Judicial Complex.*



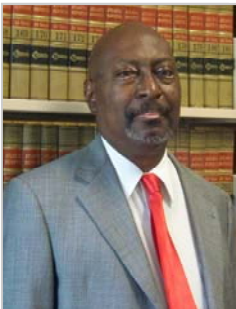
### **Former Magistrate Leonard Hanser**

Appointed as General Master in December 1993, Leonard Hanser's appointment to the County Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit was announced by Governor Crist on December 1, 2009. (see page 4).



### **Magistrate Joy Shearer**

Appointed General Master for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (March 1989); Assistant Attorney General, Department of Legal Affairs (1977-1989); University of Florida, Juris Doctor (1975); Florida Atlantic University, Bachelor of Arts, Communications (1973). *Currently assigned to: Family Division, Main Judicial Complex*



### **Magistrate Larry Weaver**

Appointed Magistrate, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (January 1985); Partner at Brown & Weaver Law Offices (1979-1985); University of Florida School of Law, Juris Doctor (1976); Brandeis University, Bachelor of Urban Studies (1974). *Currently assigned to: Department of Revenue, Main Judicial Complex.*



### **Magistrate Maxine Williams**

Appointed Magistrate, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (October 2006); Assistant Public Defender, Palm Beach County, FL (1994-2001); University of Florida, Juris Doctor (1993); University of Florida, Bachelor of Arts, English Literature (1990). *Currently assigned to: Family, Guardianship and Mental Health, South County.*



# SOUTH COUNTY JUVENILE DIVISION OPEN HOUSE

Open House for the new Juvenile Division (JS) in South County was held on Friday, October 16, 2009.

Atlantic High School students volunteered as greeters.

The presiding judge, **Judge Moses Baker, Jr.** welcomed and introduced the following division leaders:

Judicial Assistant, **Dee Daniels**;  
Deputy Clerk of Court, **Sabrina Valdez**;  
Deputy Sheriff, **Lorenzo Brooks**;  
Unified Family Court (UFC), **Kathy Sanchez**;  
Judicial Reviews, **Magistrate Leonard Hanser**;  
State Attorney **Daniel Funk** and **Luis Delgado**;  
Public Defender, **Karen Ehrlich**, **Diahanne Chester** and **Paul Scala**;  
Criminal Conflict & Civil Regional Counsel, **Joyce Cohen** and **Kelly Ziegler**;  
Guardian ad Litem, **Vicki Tucci**, **Kevin Walsh** and **Judith Horowitz**;  
Children Legal Services, **Karen Goddard**, **Donna Johnson** and **Tiffany Greene**;  
Department of Juvenile Justice, **Karen Frederick**;  
Court Education Liaison, **Maxine Dupont**.

Volunteers from Atlantic High School served as hosts to the visitors.



Judicial assistant Dee Daniels and Judge Moses Baker, Jr.



South County case managers for UFC:  
Kathy Sanchez and Eddie Dionne.



Judge Moses Baker introduces the volunteers from Atlantic High School.  
Far R: Sarah Sanchez, daughter of Kathy Sanchez (UFC), also volunteered .



# IN THE COMMUNITY: JUDGE RONALD ALVAREZ

## A JUDICIAL TOUR OF PLANET JUVENILE

“We will be leaving Earth and traveling to, what I loving refer to as, Planet Juvenile” Judge Ron Alvarez told a Master’s level class in Criminal Justice at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. As a guest lecturer, he discussed the role of the judge in the juvenile delinquency system.

“In order to fully understand the role of the judge in juvenile court, one needs to know the parties and participants in a typical juvenile proceeding,” Judge Alvarez stated. The normal nonjury criminal proceeding includes: the State Attorney, the defendant, the defense attorney, the judge, clerk of court, and a Sheriff’s deputy.

By contrast, a juvenile delinquency matter may involve the State Attorney, the child, the Public Defender, the Office of Regional Counsel or private counsel, the parents or legal custodians, Legal Aid’s Juvenile Advocacy Project attorney, the Department of Juvenile Justice probation officer, Palm Beach County School Board courtroom liaison, a Sheriff’s deputy, Department of Children and Families case manager, Substance Abuse/Mental Health providers, Office of the Guardian ad Litem attorney, the Guardian ad Litem and Family Violence Intervention Program representative.

Judge Alvarez went on to explain that the role of the judge in juvenile delinquency matters includes keeping the parties and participants organized, acting in the best interest of the child and the safety of the community. Additionally, as the proceedings in juvenile are all non-jury matters, the judge acts as the finder of fact and law and sentencing or disposition authority. When not operating in the delinquency arena, the juvenile judge presides over specialized courts such as delinquency drug court and independent living court.

In order to effectively execute the role of judge in the juvenile division, the judge must have, at the very least, a working knowledge of a number

of different disciplines. Knowing the applicable law and procedure accounts for approximately twenty percent of these. The other areas include psychology, psychiatry, anatomy and physiology, child development, pharmacology, sociology, education, vocational training and social services.

In addition to the responsibilities in the courtroom, the juvenile judge functions outside of the courtroom and in the community in various ways.

In the courthouse, the juvenile judge provides those other members of the Court who are not familiar with Planet Juvenile with practical information concerning the rules and procedures applying to juveniles.

In the community, the juvenile judge serves on the board of directors of various nonprofit organizations dealing with the needs of children or the community in general. Also, from time to time, it becomes necessary to lobby local legislators and those in the state capital for constructive changes to the laws affecting children.

Education of the community and its leaders concerning children and those issues that touch upon their safety and wellbeing and that of the community is another responsibility of the juvenile judge.

(cont. p.10)



Judge Ronald Alvarez

***Judge Alvarez stated that his years in the juvenile division made clear that there existed one most important responsibility---to encourage the children and their families to be successful, both in and outside of the family.***

(cont. from previous page)

His final remarks concerned a young lady who was in his juvenile division for two or three years, with whom he had lost contact until about two years ago.

One day, she called to tell him that if anyone ever wondered, he had made a difference in at least one life, hers. Although she had been committed to a maximum security program in the juvenile system and successfully completed it in eighteen months, she went on to receive a scholarship to Palm Beach Community College to play softball, receive her associate's degree, enroll at Florida Atlantic University and receive her bachelor's degree. The next fall she would commence her law studies.

Some six months later, she, Ms. Veronica Limia, visited him at the courthouse to tell him that she had completed her first semester in law school, was in the top fifteen percent of her class and had been given the book award in her real property class. She will graduate and take the Florida Bar Exam in 2011. Judge Alvarez volunteered to administer her oath.

He closed his remarks with the following quote of William Arthur Ward:

*Flatter me, and I may not believe you.*

*Criticize me, and I may not like you.*

*Ignore me, and I may never forgive you.*

*Encourage me, and I will never forget you.*

General Counsel **Amy Borman** taught seven classes of Third-graders at Morikami Park Elementary School in Delray Beach as part of the Justice Teaching Initiative and the school's unit of inquiry into government.

The classes went through various scenarios including "Who Spilled the Milk?," "The Marker Game," "No Vehicles in the Park," and "Alien Invaders," as part of a discussion of evidence, laws, rules, judicial interpretation, and the Bill of Rights.

Following the classroom discussion, students took a field trip to the courthouse where they observed court proceedings and spoke with **Judges Peter Evans, Barry Cohen, Paul Moyle, Joseph Marx and Paul Damico**. They also met with the Sheriff's Office K-9 unit and participated in the mock trial of B. B. Wolf v. Curly Pig with **Judge Meenu Sasser**.

For more information on Justice Teaching, please visit the web site:  
<http://www.justiceteaching.org/>



Melanie Dorfman and Deputy Russ Jackobawitz with K-9 Chris.



General Counsel Amy Borman and her daughter Madison Borman.



Third-grade students from Morikami Park Elementary with Deputy Lawrence Shepard of the PBSO following a weapon and canine demonstration. l-r: Andrew Sasser, Josh Brensel, Michael Betty, Christian Hernandez, Deputy Shepard, Blake Feit, Oliver Zimring and Madison Borman.



# INAUGURAL DELINQUENCY DRUG COURT GRADUATION

Delinquency Drug Court held its first graduation ceremony on November 18, 2009. The ceremony honored the first two graduates from the program, which began in June 2008 and currently has seven participants.

Delinquency Drug Court is an eight-month (minimum) program comprised of three phases. The program targets youth between the ages of 12 and 16 that have violated their probation, often as a result of misdemeanor drug-related charges. Successful completion requires participation from both the youth and their families who work with treatment providers.

The program requires individual, group and family counseling, as well as regular court appearances, frequent and random urinalysis, written assignments and attending school daily. Progress is reviewed weekly by the Drug Court Team.

The program is administered and monitored by participants from multiple agencies and the current members are:

Circuit **Judge Ronald Alvarez**;  
Drug Court Specialist **Carie Abreu**;  
Alternative Sanctions Coordinator **Cristy Altaro**;  
Assistant State Attorney **Debra Coltun**;  
Palm Beach County School District Police **Major James Cummings**;  
Assistant Public Defender **Karen Ehrlich**;  
Drug Testing and Counseling Services **Kole Gillespie**;  
Juvenile Probation Officer **William Hutchings**;  
Court Education Liaison **Kenneth Johnson**;  
Assistant Chief Probation Officer **Geeta Loach-Jacobson**;  
Unified Family Court Case Manager **Gabriel Munoz**;  
Director of Treatment Services **Nicole Playton**;  
Clerk and Comptroller representative **Michelle Powell**.

*For more information on the Delinquency Drug Court Program contact Cristy Altaro at (561) 355-6586.*



Gage Fogle, seen here with Judge Ronald Alvarez, is the first person to graduate from the program which began in 2008.

***"It is because of these dedicated people who care so much about what they do, that I now have my daughter back."***

Mother of graduate Melanie Alter



Judge Ronald Alvarez congratulates the second person to graduate from the program, Melanie Alter.

# JUVENILE FACILITIES TOUR

On November 2, 2009, **Judge Kathleen Kroll** and **Judge Moses Baker** were joined by Unified Family Court (UFC) Juvenile Case Managers, Assistant State Attorneys, Public Defenders, Office of Regional Conflict Counsel and Department of Juvenile Justice personnel on a tour of juvenile residential facilities.

The tour began in Okeechobee County, where the first stop was at Vision Quest. Vision Quest is a low to moderate-risk girls program that serves female offenders 13 to 18 years of age. The average length of stay at this facility is six to nine months.

The next stop was Okeechobee Juvenile Offender Corrections Center which is a program that serves 64 male high-risk sex offenders. The ages of the youth are 13 to 18 years of age. This is a highly structured program, where the average length of stay is 12 to 18 months. Some of the offenders prepared a delicious

lunch before the group moved on to the next stop.

Red Road Academy is a low to moderate risk residential program located in a wilderness setting. The program serves committed male offenders, 14 to 18 years of age.

The final stop was the Palm Beach Juvenile Correctional Facility located in West Palm Beach. This facility is a 118 bed residential treatment facility for male offenders between the ages of 13 to 18. Youth Services International operates the program for the Department of Juvenile Justice.

The tour was informative and interesting and gave everyone a unique opportunity to see the variety of services being offered to local youth, and also to observe the dedicated people that work closely with them, providing guidance and discipline.



Jacquie Marshburn, Judge Moses Baker, Feirmon Johnson, Department of Juvenile Justice; Judge Kathleen Kroll, Assistant Superintendent William B. McCullough, Maria Giuliano, Lisset Pino, Kathy Sanchez, Louis Delgado, Public Defender's Office (PDO), Jane Sullivan, PDO, Karen Ehrlich, PDO, Dan Funk, State Attorney's Office (SAO), Jason Siegel, Office of Regional Council, Noah Tennyson, SAO.

Photo by: Gabriel Munoz



# NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

National Adoption Day (NAD) took place on November 20, 2009, with a total of sixteen adoptions being finalized during the special ceremony.

This annual event marks one of the happiest that take place in the Palm Beach County Courthouse and the judges were presented with red sashes to celebrate the occasion.

The Fifteenth Circuit was privileged to have **Judge Karen Martin** make the opening remarks.

The keynote speaker was **Michelle Suskauer, Esq.**, President of the Palm Beach County Bar Association.

**Linda Norris**, NAD Chair, and **Stephen Bardy**, Executive Director, Children's Home Society and Co-Chair, presented **Ms. Mary Frances Jones** with the JIM SACKETT AWARD based on her numerous years of dedication to the safety and well-being of the children of Palm Beach County as a foster and adoptive mother.

The Fifteenth Circuit extends gratitude to the juvenile judges who assisted with all adoption finalizations: **Judges Moses Baker, Jr., Ronald Alvarez, Karen Martin, and Kathleen Kroll.**

**Maria Giuliano**, UFC Manager, would like to thank participating attorneys, all NAD committee members and all agencies that made this day possible.

*For more information, please contact UFC Operations Manager, Maria Giuliano at (561) 355-1764.*



Judge Ronald  
Alvarez



Judge Moses  
Baker



Judge Kathleen  
Kroll



Judge Karen  
Martin



Kitty Callan (Heart Gallery), Linda Norris (NAD Chair), Maria Giuliano, UFC Manager, Stephen Bardy (NAD Co-Chair), Camille Beckford (UFC Intern), and Linda Coffin (Heart Gallery).

# TRIAL COURT LAW CLERKS

This fall the Fifteenth Circuit welcomed three new trial court law clerks: **Jeremy Dicker**, **Ari Bargil**, and **Santo DiGangi**, as well as intern **Michele Nihiser**. The new attorneys have toured the Palm Beach County Jail, and observed first appearances, juvenile drug court, shelter hearings, and detention hearings. Attorneys **Jennifer Printz**, **Adelina Ruiz Baez** and **Devon Bennett-Ward** assisted with and participated in the Inns of Court jury selection seminar with **Judge Jack Cox**. Attorneys **Cristina DeCelestino** and **Jennifer Chamagua** are members of this chapter. Jennifer Chamagua is also actively involved in the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Bench/Bar planning committee, working on the county civil presentation.

## ARI BARGIL, Esq.

Ari joined the Fifteenth Circuit in November, 2009. He received his degree in Sports Management from the University of Florida, where he was a Leadership Scholarship recipient and a graduate of the Honors College. Ari attended law school at Florida State University, where he was a member of the Business Law Review and a student member of the American Inns of Court. During law school, Ari worked as a research assistant at the James Madison Institute, a Florida public policy think tank, and published an article entitled, "A Disturbing Erosion of Property Rights." Ari also clerked at the Legal Aid Society of Broward County and interned for Judge Ronald Rothschild in the Seventeenth Circuit.



## JEREMY DICKER, Esq.

Jeremy started with the Fifteenth Circuit in November, 2009. He received his undergraduate degree in Finance from Florida State University and received his law degree from Nova Southeastern University. Jeremy graduated Magna Cum Laude from law school and was a merit scholar recipient, having received the book award in Torts, Professional Responsibility, Conflict of Laws, Florida Constitutional Law and Remedies. During law school, Jeremy served as Executive Editor of the Nova Law Review and a teaching assistant in Torts. Prior to attending law school, Jeremy interned at the Fifteenth Circuit's State Attorney's Office. Jeremy recently became a member of the Palm Beach County Bar Association.



## SANTO DIGANGI, Esq.

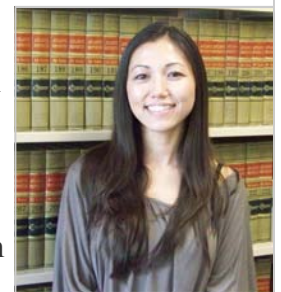
Santo is a double graduate of the University of Florida. Santo graduated magna cum laude with a double major in Political Science and Criminology and a minor in Business. In law school, Santo was a Student Works Editor on the Entertainment Law Review, a teaching assistant for Legal Research and Appellate Advocacy and was also a Certified Legal Intern in the Juvenile Law Clinic. Santo also interned for Magistrate Stafford in the Eighth Circuit and the Fifteenth Circuit's State Attorney's Office. Santo is also a member of the Palm Beach County Bar Association.



## FALL INTERN

### MICHELE NIHISER

Michele Nihiser interned this fall with the Fifteenth Circuit as part of the Palm Beach County Bar Association Minority Internship program. Michele is a third-year law student at Nova Southeastern University, where she is a member of the American Bar Association (holding the office of Fifth Circuit, Lt. Governor of Programming), the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund (Event Coordinator), Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity, and the Criminal Law Society. Michele graduated cum laude with a degree in Honors Criminology from Florida State University.





# COLUMBUS DAY TRAINING

The first annual employee Columbus Day training was held on October 12, 2009, at the Main Judicial Center. **Trial Court Administrator Barbara Dawicke** assembled a range of training seminars designed to help staff improve their skills while enjoying a day together.

Employees chose training sessions from a variety of topics offered, including Beginning Spanish, Westlaw, and Yoga, and enjoyed the opportunity expand their knowledge in an informal setting.

Thanks go to staff presenters, **Magistrate Diane Kirigin, Amy Borman, Krista Garber, Noel Chessman** who presented sessions on Court Structure, Protecting your Privacy, Improving your Writing Skills, and PowerPoint Skills, respectively.

**Judges Thomas Barkdull and Jack S. Cox** (foreground) and **Magistrate Diane Kirigin** were among several judges and magistrates who attended the Columbus Day training events.



**Chief Judge Peter D. Blanc** welcomed employees and thanked them for their continuous hard work. He also relayed comments of praise received from court visitors.

Trial Court Administrator **Barbara Dawicke** introduces plenary speaker Brian Blasko.



# COLUMBUS DAY TRAINING

**Brian Blasko**, author and motivational speaker, presents material from his book, “Cruisin’ Through Life at 35 MPH.” Mr. Blasko’s latest publication is “Sending Signals: Cruisin’ Through Life with Leadership.”



**Martha Martin**, Chief of Court Education, OSCA and the **Honorable Scott Brownell**, Twelfth Judicial Circuit, led a morning-long session for 25 attendees on the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory.

Clockwise: Lynda Salvetti, Matt Alston, Paula Avila, Omar Rodriquez, James Montada, Miguel Baque, Renee Johnally, Mary McLean, Kimberly Murray, Glenn Reed and Matt Dreiss enjoy the day’s plenary session.



Feedback on the sessions was very positive, with suggestions already being submitted for topics for next year’s training. Any staff member who would like to request training on a particular topic should contact Krista Garber at 355-2154.



# FLORIDA STATE COURT AND COUNTY LAW LIBRARIES ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On October 9, 2009, **Linda Sims** and **Sara Jones** represented the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit at the annual meeting for Florida State Court and County Law Libraries (FSCCLL), held this year in Tampa, and hosted by Norma Wise, Hillsborough County Law Librarian.

Florida law librarians from the Supreme Court, Federal Courts, Appellate Courts and Circuit Courts were there to discuss strategies to ensure that court law librarians are doing all they can to provide optimum services to the courts and the citizens, especially the self-represented litigants.

**Judge Manuel A. Lopez**, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Criminal Division, and former board member of the Hillsborough County Law Library, swore in the new FSCCLL officers, with Linda Sims as President-elect.



I-r: President Sue Ernst, Marion County; Treasurer Kelly Devlin, US Court of Appeals Eleventh Circuit; Judge Manuel Lopez, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; President-elect Linda Sims, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.

## FLORIDA COURT PERSONNEL FACULTY TRAINING PROGRAM

As part of a program to implement distance learning for the Courts, the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA) partners with the National Judicial College to periodically offer instruction on the creation and delivery of web-based, staff training programs.

Among the topics OSCA identified for this format are Microsoft Office applications, writing skills, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. **Noel Chessman**, Court Technology Officer, and **Krista Garber**, Chief Deputy

Court Administrator, were invited to represent the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit at the most recent faculty training program in Tallahassee on December 3-4, 2009. Twenty-five attendees from across the state created presentations on a range of topics and each of these will be expanded to full-length training sessions for court staff throughout 2010.



I-r: Blan Teagle, Deputy State Courts Administrator, OSCA; Krista Garber, Joseph Sawyer, Distance Learning and Technology Manager, National Judicial College; Susan Morley, Senior Attorney, Court Education, OSCA. Photo by: Noel Chessman.

## SCHOOL TOURS



**Gordon Cohen** with students from the Palm Beach Gardens High School Global Business and Entrepreneurship program.



Volunteer tour guide **Gordon Cohen** with students from All Saints Catholic School, attended by Judge Bonavita's daughter.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## **CAMILLE BECKFORD**

Camille Beckford is currently pursuing a Master of Social Work degree at Florida Atlantic University. She has been an Intern for the Unified Family Court since early fall and will continue her Foundation Field Studies until May 2010.

Camille has been involved in learning and shadowing UFC operations and procedures, and assisting with Family Connections Supervised Timesharing Program.



## **NELLY DAMASCHKE**

Nelly is a new volunteer to the Guardianship Visitor program. She is originally from Ecuador and is a Certified Nurse Assistant.

Her occupation suits her perfectly to be a visitor to the wards of the court as this is an area where volunteers are especially needed.



## **AKIRIA JONES**

A recent graduate of Florida State University's Criminal Justice program, Akiria volunteers to assist with projects for Criminal Court case management and for Court Administration.

She has assisted in compiling information on services for individuals with disabilities and has conducted research on programs in other Circuits.



## **PENNY ORANBURG**

Penny Oranburg, a resident of Palm Beach County for 26 years, is well known to the community for her dedication to volunteerism regarding the welfare of children. She is a licensed mental health counselor and mediator. Recently, she received her certification as a Supreme Court Family Mediator and is now volunteering with the Alternative Dispute Resolution Office, at the Main Judicial Center.



***It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference.  
~Tom Brokaw***

## **BRADLEY SORTE**

Bradley graduated from Rice University in 2006 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology. He is currently a graduate student at Florida Atlantic University pursuing a Master of Social Work degree.

Bradley is currently an intern working under Mental Health Manager, Mary Quinlan and assisting with Marchman Acts and Mental Health Court.



## **ALLAN WEINER**

Allan works as a volunteer mediator for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Office. He also provides support for video traffic hearings held at the South County Civic Center.

He has on many occasions "saved the day" when other volunteers have been unable to assist at the hearings.





## HR HUDDLE

### WELCOME:

**Cynthia Myers Rubin**, Family Mediator: Nov. 9  
**Michelle Diaz**, Administrative Assistant II: Nov. 16  
**Valencia Spells Anderson**, Magistrates' Assistant:  
Dec. 7  
**Stewart Saalfeld**, County Court Case Manager:  
Dec. 21  
**Shilpa Vuppalanchi**, Court Technology Systems  
Administrator: Dec. 22  
**Geralde Michel**, County Court Judicial Assistant:  
Dec. 28  
**David Simmons**, Court Analyst: Dec. 28

### RETIRING:

The Circuit extends best wishes to Judicial Assistant **Dee Daniels** on the occasion of her retirement, following 35 years of service, the longest of any court employee in Palm Beach County. Ms. Daniels initially worked for **Judge Edward Rodgers**, who was the first black judge. Following a brief retirement, Ms. Daniels resumed her duties as judicial assistant to **Judge Moses Baker**.



**Alice Garfinkel** retires on December 31, 2009 after serving as secretary with the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office for 17 years. Through both her skills and her caring, she became the heart of the ADR office. She will be sorely missed by the ADR staff, as well as the pro bono and contract mediators and the parenting coordinators.



## ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS

For updates to the latest Administrative Orders (AO's) for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, please see our website at:  
<http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/guest/ao>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### January

26 Legislative Delegation  
27 Westlaw training  
29 Diversity training

### February

15-17 National Center for State Courts  
Case Manager Training-Orlando  
19 Bench-Bar

### March

5 Diversity training  
TBA Mental Health Facilities Tour

## COURT HOLIDAYS JANUARY— APRIL

### January

1 New Year's Day  
18 Martin Luther King Day

### February

15 President's Day

### April

2 Good Friday

### *The Circuit Courier*

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