



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As of March 31, 2005, NACM membership was 2,434 strong. If you enjoy the benefits of NACM and have not renewed your membership, please do so. If you know of someone who would enjoy the benefits, recommend a new member today! Regular membership in NACM is open to anyone serving in any court management, consulting, educational, or research capacity. Additional membership categories include associate, student, honorary, retired, and sustaining members. **Remember! You get one year of free membership dues for bringing in 10 new members!** You can obtain more membership information by contacting NACM: National Association for Court Management, c/o NCSC, 300 Newport Avenue, Williamsburg, VA 23185-4147, Attention: Administrative Services, or call (757) 259-1841. You can also visit the NACM Web site at [www.nacmnet.org](http://www.nacmnet.org).

Membership information for July 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005

1,578 renewed members  
 331 new members  
 82 reinstated members  
 251 deleted members  
 2,434 current balance of members

Top five states with new members

72	Mississippi	18	Washington
27	Texas	15	Arizona
18	California		

Deleted members

40	California	12	Washington
23	D.C.	11	Florida
19	Arizona	11	New Jersey

Leading sponsors of new members

6	Grace Herrera	4	Paul Burke
5	Collins Ijoma	4	Mary Sammon
5	Carla Smith	4	Suzanne Stinson

### A Word From Your Editor:

As Chelle Uecker begins ramping up for her new role as president of NACM, I have been appointed the new *Court Communique* editor. I look to you for information to share with your colleagues. Let me know what's going on in your court — drop me an email with innovations, projects, and interesting tidbits so I can get the word out. Tell me what you like/don't like and what you want to see in *Communique*. Help me make the *Court Communique* interesting — I want to hear from YOU!

Remember, good ideas can be replicated anywhere!

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## COMMITTEE PROPOSES BYLAW CHANGES

The NACM Planning Committee spent two years reviewing and updating the NACM Operational Manual and bylaws. The goal was to align the manual and the bylaws to NACM's strategic plan and more readily allow for future updates. Amendments to NACM's bylaws were produced, and a vote on them will take place at the July annual conference in San Francisco. The board of directors unanimously recommended adoption of all proposed amendments at its February meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. Join the planning committee in the conference Hospitality Suite at 4:30 p.m. Monday, July 11, for wine, cheese, and a session on the proposed amendments and accompanying changes to the NACM Operations Manual. Proposed bylaw changes will be in your conference packet and are on the NACM Web site: [www.nacmnet.org](http://www.nacmnet.org). Highlights include:

Article I	Updated mission and vision statement
Article II	Update of definitions of members and their service to NACM
Article VI	Simplification as to the types of committees and their role
Article XII	Update to issues surrounding contracts
Article XIII	Update to adhere to improved business practices
Article XVI	Update to accommodate new technologies in communication

## NACM AND MSU COLLABORATE TO ADD ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS TO NACM EDUCATION PROGRAMS

MAUREEN E. CONNER AND LAWRENCE G. MYERS

NACM gave its blessing to Michigan State University (MSU) to develop a Judicial Administration Program that would offer court administrative personnel the opportunity to gain academic credit by attending conference sessions offered by NACM and other partner providers associated with the court system. Following NACM's approval of the Judicial Administration Program, MSU sought and received support from the Conference of Court Administrators (COSCA), the National Association of State Judicial Educators (NASJE), Federal Court Clerks Association (FCCA), and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks (NCBC). Each of those groups and others were invited to have a representative on the national advisory committee that would guide the Judicial Administration Program. The NACM Board of Directors appointed Joi Sorenson as its representative.

### NACM-MSU PARTNERSHIP PLANS

Sorenson, along with the other national advisory committee members, contributed to the shaping of policy related to content and contact hour requirements, delivery mechanisms, and partner-provider course review processes. This open exchange helps create more collaboration opportunities across associations.

At the 2004 annual conference in Grapevine, Texas, the NACM Board of Directors unanimously passed a motion that NACM investigate and, if feasible, start offering courses at the July 2005 NACM annual conference in conjunction with the MSU Judicial Administration Program that would earn credits in that program. NACM will provide two core courses in San Francisco this year: Resources, Budget, and Finance and Information Technology Management. In order for attendees to receive credit for their attendance, they must attend all of the designated courses.

The overall program offering includes certificate and degree-granting programs, information sharing, networking and mentoring, judicial administration research and publications, and global engagement for working court professionals. The director of the School of Criminal Justice, Dr. Ed McGarrell, supported the Judicial Administration Program and agreed to take it into the MSU School of Criminal Justice, as well as provide the existing Internet criminal justice masters degree program as its base for the credit-bearing course options. ◆

# CRAWFORD ELECTED CHAIR OF F.A.C.T.

Chris Crawford was elected chair of FACT (Forum on the Advancement of Court Technology) at NACM's 2005 midyear conference in Biloxi, Mississippi. First organized in 1988, FACT is a collaboration of public and private sector court professionals whose mission is *"to improve the quality of justice through communication between those who develop and provide technology and services and those who manage the courts."*

The election of a single chair results from a reorganization that replaced two co-chairs: one from private industry and one from the public sector. Previous chairs were Ron Warfield (Forseti Consulting Services), who served more than eight years as FACT Industry Co-chair, and Bob Wessels (Harris County, Texas, Criminal Courts) who served as Public Sector Co-chair for six years.

Crawford has 31 years of court management experience, which includes 21 years managing various limited jurisdiction courts in Los Angeles County, California. He is currently president of Justice Served ([www.justiceserved.com](http://www.justiceserved.com)), a court management and information technology consulting firm based in Eureka, California. In addition to active membership in

NACM, Crawford is a member of the Integrated Justice Information Systems Institute ([www.IJIS.org](http://www.IJIS.org)) and an elected director of the Humboldt #1 Fire Protection District.

FACT provides a neutral forum for vendors and court managers to collaborate on product development, streamlining of procurement processes, and education. Among its many activities, FACT sponsors educational programs at NACM conferences and contributes articles on court technology topics in the *Court Manager* magazine. For more information, visit the FACT Web site at <http://fact.ncsc.dni.us> ♦

*"Strive not to be a success,  
but rather to be of value."*

– ALBERT EINSTEIN

## NEW INCENTIVE PROGRAM BEGINS

The NACM Board of Directors has approved a new membership incentive program for the coming year. The board will award two stipends totaling \$2,400 for NACM members who recruit the most new members in excess of 10:

- An amount not to exceed \$1,000 to the NACM member who recruits the most new members in excess of 10 for the period from July through December to reimburse the expenses of registration, travel, lodging, and per diem to attend the mid-year conference, typically in February.
- An amount not to exceed \$1,400 to the NACM member who recruits the most new members in excess of 10 for the period from January through June to reimburse the expenses of registration, travel, lodging, and per diem to attend the annual conference, typically in July.

### **The following criteria will govern the awards:**

- All NACM members except the officers and board of directors are eligible for this award.
- Renewal of a current member for a new year will not be counted as a new member.

- Signing up a former member whose membership has elapsed for a period greater than six months will count as a new member.
- In the case of a tie, the winner of the award will be determined first by the earliest date of the last new member recruited by the winner and second by a drawing of one name by the president for all members who remain in the tie.
- The travel portion of the reimbursement must be used for the lowest coach airfare, and if the recipient elects to drive, the amount will be the lower of either the actual mileage at the current federal rate or the lowest coach airfare.
- The award may not be transferred to another person.
- If the winner is unable to attend the next conference, the winner must use the award to attend any one of the next three conferences. If not used by that time, the award will be forfeited and re-issued during a future year.

Paul J. Burke  
Pamela S. DeVault  
Co-chairs  
Membership Services Committee

# IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO BE THINKING ABOUT A DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

**N**ACM always needs involved members to declare their candidacy for the board of directors and for the open officer positions. It's not too late to be thinking about declaring your candidacy.

The NACM Nominations Committee is responsible for presenting nominations for officers and directors of the association at the annual meeting. We encourage any and all qualified candidates to fill out a Declaration of Candidacy form. These forms were available at the midyear conference and are available on the Web page, in the *Court Manager* and *Court Communiqué*, and from Associations Services at the National Center for State Courts.

The nominating committee, keeping in mind and recognizing the diversity of NACM's membership and the need for the board of directors and officers to represent that diversity, will use, in addition to interest in and ability to attend board meetings, the following criteria to evaluate candidates:

- Number of years employed in a position of court leadership;
- Number of years of membership in NACM;
- How active candidate has been on committees, other activities, and projects while a member of NACM; and
- Specific criteria based on the position for which the candidate has declared their candidacy, i.e., Rural Court Director, Elected Court Director, etc.

In 2005, candidates will be accepted for the following positions:

- President-elect
- Vice President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Appointed Director (2005-2008)
- General Jurisdiction Court Director (2005-2008)
- At Large No. 1 Director (2005-2008)
- Large Court Director (2005-2006)

As you consider filling out a Declaration of Candidacy, please keep in mind that you are making the following **minimum time commitment**:

The board of directors has four meetings a year: one immediately before the annual conference, one at the end of the annual conference, one in the fall, and one immediately before the midyear conference.

Your cost to attend the board meetings immediately before and after the annual conference is at your expense, because it is anticipated you will attend the annual conference and your organization will pay for this expense.

The cost for your travel, per diem, and room for the fall board meeting and the midyear are paid by NACM. In addition, your conference registration is waived for the midyear, if you choose to attend.

Travel that you might do on behalf of NACM as assigned by the president, the board, and your committee assignment is either paid for by NACM or the organization that has requested NACM's involvement.

In addition to the board meetings, the board has three conference calls each year that are held during the month immediately prior to the board meeting. These are usually scheduled in the months of October, February, and June depending on the dates of the meetings.

In addition, the officers have five conference calls each year. These are scheduled for the months of September, December, January, April, and May. As you can see, with the officer conference calls, the board conference calls, and the board meetings, the officers as a group are in contact each and every month of the year. Again, these calls may be for an hour or less or may last for several hours.

All of the above are figured into the following estimated monthly average minimum time required to be a board member and an officer.

Board Member	2 hours a month
Officers:	
Secretary/Secretary	2 hours a month
Vice President	3 hours a month
President-elect	4 hours a month
President	6 hours a month
Past President	4 hours a month

Candidates are required to complete the Declaration of Candidacy form and to **submit the Declaration of Candidacy form along with a résumé postmarked before midnight on Friday, June 17, 2005**, in order to be considered an active candidate by the committee.

Lawrence G. Myers, Chairperson  
Nominating Committee

# Thinking Out Loud

AN OCCASIONAL LETTER FROM **Alex Aikman** (FROM THE NOVEMBER 2004 ISSUE)

Why not....rethink how we select managers?

Almost all courts select managers through review of an application form and possibly written answers to supplemental questions and then a personal interview. Sometimes there is a panel of interviewers who screen down to the final two or three, followed by a final round of interviews by appropriate senior managers and/or judges. The interviews almost always are highly structured, with pre-set questions asked of all applicants and almost no deviation from those questions. Thus do courts – and almost all public entities – believe they are being both effective and “fair” to applicants. Limit discretion, limit different treatment for different

people and, the lawyers tell us, no one can criticize the final selection or the process. Wrong!

In terms of predicting performance, personal interviews are accurate 7 percent of the time (Jennifer Merritt, “Improve at the Interview,” *Business Week*, Feb. 3, 2003, p. 63.). Seven percent! With courts’ highly structured and inflexible approach, the percentage might be even lower. It seems it’s mostly dumb luck when we hire good managers using this common technique.

*The Handbook of Industrial & Organizational Psychology* tells us the following about the success of other techniques in predicting on-job performance:

INTERVIEW STYLE	ACCURACY IN PREDICTING
RESUME ANALYSIS (QUASI-SCIENTIFIC RÉSUMÉ “sifring”)	37%
WORK SAMPLE TEST (WRITTEN SKILLS TEST)	44%
ASSESSMENT CENTER (LENGTHY, OFF-SITE SKILLS/PERSONALITY WORKUP)	44%
SITUATIONAL INTERVIEW (ROLE-PLAYING MOCK SCENARIOS)	54%

Situational interviews involve people acting as customers or colleagues bringing characteristic problems or issues to the manager who has no preparation for the encounter. Examples would be a problem finding files, a tardiness problem, or a proposal to overlook an ethical issue.

Everyone has a list of the qualities – not the knowledge, but qualities – a good manager should possess. Mine includes: a high threshold for stress; strong ethics; imagination; a customer-service orientation; persuasive verbal and written skills; an ego willing to accept contrary views; understanding of honest mistakes together with insistence on learning from them; acceptance of diversity in work styles and personalities; and a willingness to make a decision. How one addresses a problem or issue also is critical. Whether your list is similar or different, consider the last management hire you did and ask yourself how effective the interviews were at identifying and assessing these qualities (or the ones on your list).

I know of one court who hired a senior manager who interviewed very poorly. The evaluators figured, correctly, as his years of on-the-job success demonstrated, that someone with the successes exhibited in his current position should be given credit for those over a “bad day or bad interview.” Dion DeLoof, co-founder of a technical staffing firm, says, “Some of our best hires have been people who have little or no experience, but come with a history of overcoming adversity and learning new skills.... Past success and performance is a predictor of future success and performance” (Business

Week Online, Sept. 22, 2004). Performance and references should get at least as much weight as a pleasing demeanor and the “right answers” to the pre-set questions during a one-hour encounter.

Courts also tend to hire for skills or knowledge they believe they need today, too often diminishing the probability that tomorrow’s problems will be different, because change is the only constant. Asking one to describe experiences and responses to date is like looking in a car’s passenger-side mirror; performance-based selection is looking through the windshield.

Many things could be done differently. First and foremost, plan on most of a day or even two or three interviews for each semi-finalist rather than a single 45- or 60-minute interview. Ask for a memo written while in their current position that analyzes and proposes a solution(s) to a problem. Ask for an analysis and proposal regarding a problem or issue your court currently has (after providing relevant data and background), either written on site or presented orally, and ask follow-up questions. Have an applicant visit a division or courthouse to assess a problem and see how he/she interacts with staff as well as how he/she goes about identifying possible solutions. Ask for a one- or two-page memo written after the fact addressing the job opportunity, their approach to the issues your court is facing, and laying out a high-level plan for making the court successful (Liz Ryan, “How a Memo Can Beat an Interview,” *Business Week Online*, Oct. 4, 2004). Look for capacity to examine problems strategically, not tacti-

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## COMMITTEE FOCUS – MEMBERSHIP SERVICES COMMITTEE

The NACM Membership Services Committee wishes to congratulate those members who won the raffle conducted during the vendor show at the annual conference in Grapevine, Texas. The committee would also like to thank FACT for its donation of two registration packages to the conference in San Francisco where there will be another chance to win!

- Kathryn Seymour, Bonney Lake, Washington
- Mildred M. Mitchell, Norristown, Pennsylvania
- Margo D. Wells, Dallas, Texas
- Kay F. Morlen, West Bend, Wisconsin
- Juana J. Harlan, Dallas, Texas

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### Thinking Out Loud, *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5*

cally. Devise a “situational interview” with a member of your staff or an outside HR consultant. (You could even set it up during what appears to be a traditional interview and ask the applicant to handle it to demonstrate what he/she would do if appointed to the desired position.) Find ways to observe how people perform rather than have them tell us how and what they have done. Seek opinions from the current employer and/or colleagues in other courts with whom the applicant has worked regarding collegiality, problem-solving skills, and responses to stress. Seek references from two or three past employers, as the qualities identified above do not change much over time. And consider a lunch or dinner at the court’s expense. One can learn a lot about a person during an informal discussion over a meal. And this is an excellent way to involve and get input from staff, judges, and other managers.

I’m sure HR experts have many ideas beyond those offered here. The more ideas the better. The key is to come up with some new ones. ♦

PLEASE VISIT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR COURT MANAGEMENT’S HOME PAGE ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT [WWW.NACMNET.ORG](http://WWW.NACMNET.ORG).