

National Association for Court Management
2010 Justice Achievement Award
Projects Submitted for Consideration

City of Milwaukee Municipal Court
Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability

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Summary

The Center for Driver's License Recovery and Employability was established by the City of Milwaukee Municipal Court, Legal Action of Wisconsin, Justice 2000*, and Milwaukee Area Technical College as a public-private partnership in March 2007 to increase the number of licensed low-income drivers in Milwaukee County, improving their ability to secure and sustain employment. The Center works to 1) provide direct service case management and legal services; 2) restore driver's education for low-income students statewide; 3) improve public policy to limit the use of license suspension and revocation to sanction unsafe drivers; and 4) increase community education about license suspensions among community leaders and low-income drivers. *Wisconsin Community Services replaced Justice 2000 as the Center's operating partner in 2010.

Los Angeles Superior Court
Court Appearance Reminder System (CARS)

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Summary

Each week thousands of traffic cases in collection status are scheduled for court appearances by the County and Court's collection vendor, GC Services. Of those cases scheduled, nearly one third of those defendants fail to appear on their court date. As a result, duplicate efforts and expenses are made by both court staff and GC Services to contact the debtor in an effort to collect the amount owed or to reschedule the court date. The Court Appearance Reminder System (CARS) is a telephonic automated system that was implemented to remind defendants of their scheduled court date. The goal of CARS is to reduce the number of defendants who fail to appear on their scheduled court date thereby decreasing the workload of court personnel and providing cost savings. CARS not only reminds defendants of their scheduled court date, as well as giving defendants an option to pay the citation in lieu of appearing in court. This enhancement provides a higher level of customer service for defendants. Currently, the Los Angeles Superior Court is the only court system in the state with this type of feature.

Cobb County Superior Court
Cobb County Family Law Workshop

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Summary

The Family Law Workshop was created to assist those pro se litigants in need of legal assistance to navigate through the often complicated and confusing court process. The workshop covers such legal topics as: Anatomy of a Family Lawsuit, Divorce, Paternity and Legitimation, Contempt and Modification. Volunteer attorneys lead a 1 hour workshop, free of charge, to attendees desiring to gain information on how to prepare and file legal paperwork. Form packets are sold at the end of the workshop to all those participants who desire them for a charge of up to \$15.00. At the conclusion of the workshop, attendees are given a list of attorneys who are willing to offer their services for a reduced rate, and also on a limited scope basis, to workshop participants.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Court Technology Services
Photo Enforcement Program

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Summary

The Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) began placing photo radar systems across the state of Arizona as part of Arizona House Bill 2210 that became effective September 26, 2008. DPS contracted with a vendor to place these systems. The photo radar system resulted in a significant increase in traffic filings. Court Technology Services developed a Photo Enforcement Application system that interfaces with the involved entities to efficiently process the substantial additional workload created by photo enforcement.

Maricopa County Juvenile Court
Juvenile Court of Maricopa County Collaborations Project

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Summary

In recognition of the need to provide a readily accessible and timely response to any request for information, referral to services and/or answers to questions from both the community and the judiciary, Maricopa County Juvenile Court established a collaborative team approach wherein various court departments, child welfare agencies and juvenile justice agencies and other court partners will work together to provide a comprehensive and consistent service delivery. This collaborative team is aptly named the Community Services Unit (CSU), consisting of representatives from Juvenile Court Administration, Juvenile Probation, Child Protective Services, Magellan (the mental health regional behavioral health authority), and Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law with projected expansion to include members of law enforcement, education and public assistance. The CSU members receive cross training and develop a working knowledge of information on the various services and resources available for assisting youth and families and an understanding of the diverse community being served. The goal is to provide quick, effective and creative intervention and/or solutions to the challenges faced by the families and judiciary and to avoid formal court involvement if at all possible. Services include: information on guardianship, emancipation, dependency, mediation, children's resource staffings, mental health and behavioral health services, family violence prevention, general court information and legal assistance, community-based service referrals, court contractual service referrals, family resolution conferences, detention alternatives, community and school service compliance monitoring. The Community Services Unit provides a comprehensive service delivery by means of a cross-functional team that is able to address the expressed needs of children and their families globally.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Court Technology Services
Remote Interpreters Project

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Summary

The Remote Interpreter Program, developed by Court Technology Services, provides high quality, cost effective and efficient interpreter services to non-English speaking individuals involved in court proceedings. This program facilitates judicial proceedings by providing timely interpreter services throughout the county during scheduled courtroom proceedings, as well as providing interpreters the ability to respond spontaneously, to requests for services for unscheduled proceedings. Ultimately, this technology allows for more efficient responses for language services and more cost effective utilization of resources for over a very large geographical area.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Court Technology Services
Case Address Application

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Summary

The 'Case Address' screen, developed by Court Technology Services, provides a simple, yet highly detailed, view of all address for parties associated to a case, allows for ease of data entry, and enforces important legal and business rules. The application features multiple security levels, supporting different departments of the court's individual need and use in layers of access to the same screen. Ultimately, the application manages all party addresses, from juveniles, to parents, to those protected by court order.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Court Technology Services
Protective Orders Application

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Summary

The Protective Orders Application, developed by Court Technology Services, leads litigants through a simple interview process that automatically generates necessary Order of Protection forms that are ready for filing with the Clerk of the Superior Court and review by a judicial officer. The application facilitates judicial officers in making rulings by providing litigant inputted petition information into appropriate court orders. Ultimately, the application sends information gathered on served protective orders to the FBI's National Crime Information Center system through the Arizona Supreme Court.

**Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
*Court Security Redesign and Enhancement***

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Summary

Arizona is in the middle of one of the worst budget crises of all times. Crime rates are up and staff resources for Court departments, particularly services, are down. The number of weapons being brought into the Court increases each year (80,000 in 2009) as does the number of court visitors (5,000,000 in 2009). Staffing reductions and increased security demand required the Court Security department to systematically review its operations and make improvements to facilities, equipment, training, communication through electronic notification and security networks, and evacuation procedures. As a result, Court Security was redesigned and enhanced by 1) redesigning and remodeling court entrances including eliminating any extra entrances; 2) redesigning and enhancing court evacuation procedures; 3) improving court security training and communications; 4) upgrading security equipment; and 5) establishing an interagency security network. These improvements 1) fill gaps in the availability of existing services; 2) improve the administration and cost effectiveness of court security by approximately \$750,000; 3) upgrade the working conditions and level of training for employees; and, 4) promote intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in addressing shared problems.

**Maricopa County Adult Probation Department
*Annual Review of Juvenile Sex Offenders***

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Summary

The Superior Court in Maricopa County conducts an annual review hearing for juvenile sex offenders sentenced to probation in the adult criminal justice system. Juveniles sentenced under adult sex offender laws are placed on lifetime probation, required to register as sex offenders, and are subject to community notification laws. The annual review process recognizes that youthful sex offenders respond well to treatment, have low recidivism rates, and that their maturation and progress deserve individual review and recognition. The Maricopa County Adult Probation Department identifies and tracks the probationers eligible for an annual review hearing and notifies the Court when a hearing is to be scheduled. Prior to the hearing, the Adult Probation Department prepares a brief, balanced report on the probationer's status and progress, after seeking input from multiple sources including the treatment provider(s), victim, and family members. Defense counsel and the prosecutor participate in the hearing. Other relevant parties provide information at the hearing, when needed. At the hearing, the Court has the following options: continue, modify or terminate probation; continue, suspend or terminate the sex offender registration requirement; and continue, suspend or terminate community notification. The Annual Review of Juvenile Sex Offenders provides an incentive for youthful sex offenders to make progress in treatment and on probation. The Court is able to review all factors and determine what legal options are in the best interest of the youthful sex offender and the community.

**Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of Maricopa County
and Maricopa County Superior Court Technology Service
Volunteer-centric Website Design**



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Summary

When faced with the expansive size of Maricopa County, the varied schedules of hundreds of volunteers, the vast amounts of information, communication and documents that need to be exchanged, all combined with both limited staff size and budget resources, the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program of Maricopa County and the Maricopa County Superior Court Technology Service (CTS) Department collaborated to develop a website through which volunteers and staff would be able to perform all their required duties. By utilizing an Internet-based application, this CASA program has been able to reduce program costs significantly, to assist volunteers in performing better advocacy for children, to provide staff with the ability to work outside the office and within the community itself while remaining connected to the office and each other and has provided different methods of reducing time and money costs for many community stake holders.

**Maricopa County Superior Court
eCourt**

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Summary

With over 3.5 million residents in Maricopa County, the Maricopa County Superior Court strives to explore technologically innovative ways to provide access to justice. eCourt was developed to improve the quality of Family Court pleadings filed by self-represented litigants in Maricopa County as well as to provide a more user-friendly and efficient mechanism than the standard print legal form. By using this dynamic online form production application, self-represented litigants with access to computers can quickly and easily prepare their legal pleadings online in the convenience of their home or neighborhood to then bring to the Court for filing. Litigants can interface as a user with the application in a question and answer format, similar to dynamic online tax form products such as TurboTax. eCourt allows users to save partially completed forms and access them at a later date with a user identification and password. After successfully completing the user interface of questions and answers, the user prints the automatically generated legal pleadings and accompanying instructions. The instructions provide filing procedures as well as direction on what to do with documents after they are filed. The users are surveyed upon completion of eCourt to assess user satisfaction.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Putting Safeguards in Place to Utilize Social Networking as a Court Communication Tool

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Summary

Sites like Facebook and Twitter have become some of the most popular web sites in the world with hundreds of millions of people visiting them each month. To better communicate with the customers of the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County (Court), the Court set up Twitter and Facebook pages. But before it did so, the Court thoroughly researched the potential pitfalls of social networking sites. With any new technology, problems arise. Stories of misuse of social networking sites in the workplace appeared in the media. Judicial ethics questions arose regarding whether or not judges should allow attorneys who practice before them to become Facebook “friends.” To avoid these pitfalls, the Court established a policy on Facebook and Twitter that complies with public record retention laws, the Court’s Electronic Communications Policy, the Arizona Supreme Court rules on retention and destruction of Court records, and the codes of ethics for judicial officers and Court employees. To ensure compliance with these rules and policies, the Court created strict parameters on which employees would be able to create and post court information on behalf of the Court on these sites. The policy also provides unambiguous direction to enable authorized employees to feel comfortable using social networking sites. It also allows the Court the opportunity to speak with one voice and connect to a large audience, including the media and court employees, through a group of employees who are highly skilled professionals in public information.

Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department
Juvenile Probation Policy and Procedure System

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Summary

To direct staff in the performance of their duties and to ensure consistent and legal operations, the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department (MCJPD) developed a policy and procedure system that is current, clear, comprehensive, user friendly, and easily accessible to all Department staff. Policies present the Department’s philosophy, while procedures provide the foundation for staff to complete tasks in support of the Department’s philosophy and statutory and court mandates. Protocols offer detailed, step-by-step instructions or processes. A standardized format was developed, which includes citations and active links to all applicable authorities (i.e., Arizona Revised Statute, Arizona Code of Judicial Administration, Judicial Merit System Resolution and Rules, Administrative Orders, etc.). Once promulgated, policies, procedures and protocols are placed on the Juvenile Probation Department’s intranet site to ensure all probation department employees have easy access to the most current version of each document. Policies, procedures and protocols are developed via one of three workgroups. Once drafted, they are sent electronically to all Department staff for review and comment. All suggested edits are reviewed by the workgroup that drafted it and incorporated where appropriate. The Department’s Policy and Procedure Coordinator oversees the entire policy and procedure system, ensuring that all policies, procedures and protocols are reviewed annually and where necessary, updated. Staff is also provided an opportunity to offer comment and offer suggestions for change at the time of annual review.

Arizona Superior Court in Pima County
eNotes Portal

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Summary

Program Summary: eNotes is an electronic data storage portal developed to assist court reporters and court managers to store and retrieve electronic stenographic notes and other records to safeguard the reporters' ability to make the court's record. The creation of this portal allows the court to transition from an environment where physical notes are stored in a large dusty warehouse to a digital environment where the creation and retrieval of the record is within the control of the actual user. At a minimum, reporters must upload their electronic notes on a regular basis. This process ensures that notes are not lost through a failure of a reporter's equipment. Reporters may elect to store other records including draft or final transcripts and audio files. Notes are stored in a translated format in the event a reporter leaves the organization or is otherwise unable to produce a transcript. In addition to records access, this portal was designed to streamline the records destruction process. Previously, when the records retention period expired, physical records would need to be culled at the warehouse and discarded. This process could take days to accomplish. This same process can now be performed on the managing court reporter's desktop within hours.

Superior Court of New Jersey
Essex/Union Fugitive Safe Surrender Program

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Summary

In November 2009, the Superior Court of New Jersey Essex and Union Vicinages partnered to manage the court operations of the Fugitive Safe Surrender (FSS) program in Newark. FSS is a national program organized by the United States Marshal's Service that encourages persons wanted for non-violent felony or misdemeanor crimes to voluntarily surrender to law enforcement in a faith-based or other neutral setting. By resolving outstanding warrants in this manner, FSS reduces the risk to law enforcement officers who pursue fugitives and assists fugitives in getting their life back on track. The Essex/Union FSS program was the sixteenth FSS site since the program began in 2006. The program required months of planning by about forty agencies and other organizations including the Superior and Municipal Courts, the prosecutors, public defenders, and the Police Institute of Rutgers University. Planning and organizing culminated in a four day event from Wednesday, November 4th through Saturday, November 7, 2009. To facilitate judicial processing for FSS, court managers and key judges established the Court Operations Committee (COC) to focus on developing and improving FSS workflow processes and procedures. As a result of the COC's efforts, the FSS was successfully implemented and resulted in over 4,100 surrendering fugitives and 12,000 executed warrants. The procedures developed by the COC will be utilized at future FSS sites. Several lessons learned by the COC have been implemented in the Essex Vicinage to improve resolution of outstanding warrants.

**Utah Administrative Office of the Courts
Transcript Management**

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Summary

Prior to the development of the Transcript Management System, the Utah State Courts relied upon a combination of court reporters and digital recording systems to maintain the verbatim record of court proceedings. As one of many cost saving measures, employment of court reporters statewide was discontinued and transcription was externalized to independent transcribers. Prior to the development of the Transcript Management System, 50 clerks across the state were managing transcript requests and preparation essentially each in their own way. This resulted in delay and confusion for all involved. This process lacked standardization, effectiveness, and workflow. It became apparent with the elimination of court reporters' positions, that a statewide management system was necessary that could be managed by a single entity. By consolidating the management of transcripts into a single entity, the court would experience additional cost savings by freeing up clerk time for other duties. This led to the design and development of an innovative web-based Transcript Management System as a means to efficiently and effectively manage the life cycle of transcripts from initiation of the transcript request through the e-filing of the transcript. Transcripts are now managed by 1.5 employees rather than 50, and what used to take an average of 138 days from transcript request to delivery, now takes an average of 12 days for cases not on appeal and 22 days for cases on appeal. Cost savings are estimated to be approximately \$1,350,000 / year excluding savings from eliminating court reporter positions.

**North Dakota Judiciary
Around Town Interviews
Educating the Public about the Court System in North Dakota**

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Summary

Working adults is the most ignored group in judicial branch outreach programs but based on their voting patterns, service club memberships and discretionary income, they are also our most important and supportive constituents. However, they are not an easy group to reach. This interactive DVD, done in a "person on the street" format is designed to deliver education and entertainment directly to working adults through television and the internet.

King County District Court
Knowledge Center Initiative

Hon. Barbara Linde, Chief Presiding Judge
Tricia Crozier, Chief Administrative Officer
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Summary

The King County District Court (KCDC) **Knowledge Center Initiative** created a fresh and innovative resource that empowers District Court judges and District Court clerks to efficiently and conveniently access court documents and procedures at any Court location from any computer throughout this complex court system. Utilizing Microsoft SharePoint as the presentation medium, KCDC leveraged best practices, process improvement, and the synergy of having the entire court focused in one place to standardize and consolidate the documents and procedures necessary to handle over a quarter of a million legal proceedings annually with impartiality, efficiency, and consistency for all parties.

Tulalip Tribal Court
Parent Advocacy Project

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Summary

The Tulalip Tribal Parent Advocacy Project provides holistic and collaborative legal representation to parents whose children are wards of the Tulalip Tribal Court. Under certain circumstances the Project also represents children who are involved in the child welfare/dependency proceedings. Clients are represented by a Parent Advocate Attorney who guides parents and children through the legal proceedings and related processes. Advocacy includes meeting with parents and children to explain their legal rights, investigating the bases of allegations used to justify dependency proceedings, counseling parents or children regarding legal issues so that they may make informed decisions, and providing zealous representation in mediations and court hearings. The legal representation provided by the Project focuses on mediation, empowerment, and culturally appropriate advocacy. The Project recognizes the importance of family preservation and reconstruction as well as the maintenance of Tribal ties. It is the belief of the Tulalip Tribes that this representation will increase the reunification of Tulalip families, foster stronger involvement of Tulalip families in Youth in Need of Care proceedings, and enhance community support of the Tulalip Tribes' child welfare system.

**Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
California JusticeCorps Program**

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Summary

According to the California Judicial Council Task Force on Self-Represented Litigants, over four million people come to court each year in California without an attorney to represent them, typically because they cannot afford one. Legal matters involving family, housing and financial stability can be complex, usually involve multiple essential steps to reach full resolution, and can include filling out several pages of forms, serving official notice on other parties, participating in mediation and sometimes appearing in the courtroom before a judge or a commissioner. When emotions and anxieties run high among litigants going through difficult personal situations, the court environment becomes even more unfamiliar and intimidating. Add language barriers or limited education to the mix and challenges only intensify. The California JusticeCorps program was created to improve the capacity of our judicial system to provide access to justice for all Californians. A unique application of the AmeriCorps program structure, JusticeCorps recruits, trains and places over 200 undergraduate college students per year in service in court-based legal access self-help centers. With the invaluable assistance of JusticeCorps members, self-help centers can provide services aimed not just at resolving legal matters, but equally important, at listening to concerns, reducing anxieties and clarifying confusing circumstances. This in turn improves public trust and confidence in our judicial system.

**Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
Remote Court Interpreting**

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Summary

Remote Court Interpreting in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida is a program that utilizes innovative technology to reduce costs and improve efficiency of court interpreting services. The system allows a court interpreter to provide interpreting services to any of the circuit's 67 courtrooms from literally any touch tone phone. It offers on demand, clear and meaningful interpretation services for court proceedings while significantly reducing travel time and the need for contractual services. It is an example of the leadership, innovation, creativity and fortitude of a court that is doing more with less to meet the needs of the people it serves.

Criminal Court Clerk's Office of Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee
Online Crime Mapping & Criminal Records

Warner Hassell
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Summary

Crime mapping is a new way for a multitude of people to access important arrest and court related information via the Davidson County Criminal Court Clerk's user-friendly website <http://nashville.gov>. A satellite map indicates the addresses of all persons arrested within the previous seven days. The user may choose to narrow the search by zip code. The user will easily find court date information relating to each arrest as well as the Davidson County criminal history of the person arrested. This project was developed as the result of ideas, suggestions, and requests from local neighborhood watch groups and associations who wish to be able to research and utilize crime and arrest data for their communities. Without spending or requesting any additional tax dollars, the Criminal Court Clerk of Davidson County created a tool for the community at large that creates transparency and aids active citizenship.

Lubbock County Office of Dispute Resolution
Juvenile Accountability Project

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Summary

What do you get when juvenile delinquency collides with the juvenile justice system within the Lone Star State? Not too long ago, the answer would invariably be penal in nature – often generating criminal records and imposing confinement for technical violations and non-violent juvenile offenses. Today, the outlook is much brighter. Fortunately for West Texas, the Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) for Lubbock County has excellent youth initiatives to address juvenile delinquent behaviors. The ODR offers effective alternatives to the traditional treatment of juveniles before, during, and after contact with the juvenile justice system – with an emphasis on problem-solving and preventing juvenile delinquency. Compared to traditionally-imposed confinement and pecuniary penalties, ODR's problem-solving initiatives encourage the youth (and all necessary parties) to accept full responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Now as for juvenile delinquency in West Texas, restorative justice is the answer.

Lubbock County Office of Dispute Resolution
Civil Resolutions to Criminal Accusations

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Summary

During the University of Texas School of Law's 2003 Dispute Resolution Symposium at the Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution, Robert Mitchell referred to Lubbock as the "phenomenon" of public ADR systems in Texas. The Lubbock County Dispute Resolution System began in 1985 and currently boasts the most comprehensive delivery system of any ADR system in Texas. The organization is under direct authority of the Lubbock County Board of Judges and has its own Dispute Resolution Advisory Board. Relationships with prosecutors allow for cases to be referred to mediation prior to a decision being made regarding whether or not to file criminal charges. Parties to a dispute are given an opportunity to come to an agreement to address the situation. This process helps to alleviate and filter through the cases processed by the district attorney.

Lubbock County Office of Dispute Resolution
Lubbock ADR: The Phenomenon

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Summary

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is nothing new, although most people who are not involved in the day-to-day dealings with courts are probably unfamiliar with the broad range of ADR options and delivery systems in Texas. For example, some ADR programs are public while others are private; some systems are non-profit and others are run by governmental entities; and some are multi-faceted while others are focused. However, there is one exceptional delivery system that combines the best of all features: the Lubbock system.
