

COURT COLUMN

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Full Court Press



The Chief Justice and the Associate Justices of the Louisiana Supreme Court (l to r): Justice Jefferson D. Hughes, Justice Greg G. Guidry, Justice Jeannette Theriot Knoll, Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson, Justice John L. Weimer, Justice Marcus R. Clark, Justice Scott J. Crichton.

Court Column Newsletter is Back!

Court Column, the electronic newsletter featuring the good news of the Louisiana state judiciary, is back! And it is back to send the constant message that Louisiana courts and judges are working hard with a vision toward making the Louisiana judiciary the best it can be. Check your inbox for the latest edition each month and keep up with exciting things happening in the courts regarding:

- Advancements in Court Technology
- Effective Community Outreach Programs
- Court Grants and Awards At Work
- Specialty Court Success Stories
- And More

Judges, Clerks of Court, and Court Administrators...We Need Your Help!

Send your good news stories to *Court Column* at vsw@lasc.org.

Tell us about what's happening in your court and *Court Column* will tell the world....

Louisiana Legislature Issues Joint Resolution on Drug Courts

In a joint resolution issued June 5, 2015, the Louisiana legislature commended the Louisiana Supreme Court for administering drug courts in the state since 2001 and for collaborating with Louisiana Association of Drug Court Professionals (LADCP) to ensure accountability and promote best practices in Louisiana drug courts. House Concurrent Resolution No. 216, was authored by Representative Chuck Kleckley and Senator John Alario.

The resolution noted, “The partnership between the LADCP and the Louisiana Supreme Court has made Louisiana’s drug courts some of the best and most progressive in the country and the information on national best practices shared at staff training opportunities has drawn interest from drug courts in other states.”

According to Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson, “National research has shown significant reductions in recidivism for participants in drug courts compared to those sentenced to conventional justice interventions. The success of Louisiana drug courts is proven in the 2014 numbers. More than 90% of the drug court clients had no new criminal convictions two years after graduation from Louisiana drug courts in 2012.”

Nearly 5,000 individuals participated in Louisiana drug courts in 2014 and more than 11,500 have graduated from Louisiana drug courts since their inception. As of January 1, 2015, there were 50 drug court programs - 30 adult, 17 juvenile and three family preservation – operational in 42 parishes in Louisiana. Each program is comprised of a drug court team, which is led by a drug court judge, as well as drug court professionals that include: a drug court coordinator, treatment staff, prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement representatives, case managers and others. The team works together to operate pursuant to all applicable standards and policies while providing each participant with the substance abuse treatment and ancillary services they need.

“Louisiana Drug court judges preside over these time-consuming drug court dockets in addition to their civil, criminal, juvenile or family court dockets without any extra compensation. This commendation is a much appreciated recognition of their ongoing efforts and hard work,” Chief Justice Johnson added.

Law Day 2015 Events

Louisiana Supreme Court



(Clockwise from above): Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson meets with students from R.K. Smith Middle School prior to their visit to the Louisiana Supreme Court as part of Law Day 2015; (top right): Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson speaks to students from Ben Franklin High School prior to their mock trial at the Louisiana Supreme Court as part of Law Day 2015; (bottom right): Justice Jeannette Theriot Knoll meets with students from Avoyelles Public Charter School prior to their sitting in on oral arguments.

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Law Day 2015 Events

Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal



Judge Joy Lobrano presided over a Law Day Mock Trial presented by Project LEAD...Legal Enrichment And Decision-making...sponsored by the Plaquemines Parish District Attorney's Office.

26th Judicial District Court



The 26th Judicial District Court (JDC), located in Bossier and Webster Parishes, hosted the Benton Middle School Student of the Year finalists as part of a Law Day celebration. Judge Parker Self spoke to the students about the judicial process and court operations. The students also had the opportunity to tour the courthouse.

Louisiana's First Certified Court Interpreters Sworn-In

Louisiana's first certified court interpreters were sworn-in by Justice Jeannette Theriot Knoll, Thursday, June 25, 2015, in a ceremony which took place in the courtroom of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Certified court interpreters taking part in the courtroom ceremony were: Elisa Brodbeck, Catalina Zuleta, Lisbeth Philip, Esther Deihl. All were certified in the Spanish language. Not present at the ceremony was Rosinda Morales (Spanish), who is also among the first certified court interpreters in Louisiana.

Certification is the highest level court interpreter in the Louisiana judicial system. In order to become a certified a candidate must already be a registered court interpreter and additionally must pass the National Center of State Court (NCSC) Oral Certification Examination as administered in Louisiana in accordance with NCSC testing protocols. A certified interpreter has tested skills in simultaneous and consecutive court interpreting as well as in sight translation and has scored at least 70% on each testing section.

In Louisiana, a court interpreter is "registered" in a language if the interpreter: completes a two-day training course, passes a standard written English examination as provided by NCSC, passes a written translation examination, agrees to be bound by The Code of Professional Responsibility for Language Interpreters, and pass a criminal background check. Currently in Louisiana there are registered court interpreters in Arabic, French, Italian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese and American Sign Language.

A roster of certified and registered court interpreters is available on the Louisiana Supreme Court web site at www.lasc.org.



Certified court interpreters taking part in the courtroom ceremony were: Elisa Brodbeck, Catalina Zuleta, Lisbeth Philip, and Esther Deihl. Joining them were Justice Jeannette Theriot Knoll, Justice John L. Weimer, Justice Marcus R. Clark, Justice Jefferson D. Hughes and Justice Scott J. Crichton.

Louisiana Legal Services to Benefit From Change in Supreme Court *Pro Hac Vice* Rule

The Louisiana Supreme Court announced, that upon recommendation of the Louisiana State Bar Association, a \$200 increase in fees collected by the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board through applications for *pro hac vice* admission has been ordered by the Court. A *pro hac vice* application is filed by out-of-state lawyers not licensed to practice law in Louisiana in order to practice law in Louisiana for a particular case. The funds generated by the fee increase will be directed to the Louisiana Bar Foundation for distribution to the Legal Service Corporation's programs providing civil legal aid in Louisiana.

"Raising Louisiana *pro hac vice* fees to a level more in keeping with the *pro hac vice* fees assessed Louisiana lawyers by other states was a necessary fix and it provides a win/win in that the additional funds will benefit non-profit civil legal aid programs in our state. In a time when funding for civil legal aid in Louisiana has suffered a critical decline, these funds will breathe life back into the important work of these struggling programs." Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson said.

According to Louisiana State Bar Association President, Joseph L. Shea, "Due to the funding crisis, some legal aid providers such as Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, have been forced to impose staff and attorney layoffs. The New Orleans Legal Aid Bureau closed its doors a few years ago. These cuts and closures have ripple effects whereby our poorest citizens must go without services or without legal representation or advice in civil legal matters."

Currently, Louisiana's state courts charge \$250 for *pro hac vice* admission that goes to the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board. Similarly the newly ordered \$450 fee will also go to the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board, and by agreement, the Louisiana Bar Foundation will distribute the funds to the Legal Service Corporation's civil legal aid program statewide.

