



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils Quarterly News October-December 2015

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Save the Date

2016 Community Improvement Council Summit

September 28-30, 2016

National Judicial College

University of Nevada, Reno

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CIC Summit 2016 is scheduled for September 28 – 30, 2016 in Reno. The Summit's Judicial Facilitator will be Judge Deborah Schumacher (retired). Judge Schumacher will join Justice Nancy Saitta to facilitate the Judges' Roundtable the afternoon of September 28th. Each judicial district will be asked to invite a team of six to represent their Community Improvement Council at the Summit. Topics to be discussed will be determined by a survey of the judiciary conducted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Mediation Demand Up - Mediator Supply Low

Training Scheduled



Margaret M. Crowley, Esq.

The supply of quality, certified mediators has become scarce as most of the judicial districts in the State turn to mediation as an alternative to traditional child welfare case processing. CIP is working with the 2nd Judicial District's Mediation Director, Mary Herzik, and

Margaret M. Crowley, Esq., a certified mediator and mediation instructor, to provide a 40 hour dependency-specific mediation course on March 7 – 11. The class size is limited to 20 people who dependency Judges have nominated to take the course and conduct mediations in

their district. The tuition is funded by CIP. Travel, room, and per diem will be the student's expense.

For More
Information
Contact:
Kathie Malzahn-Bass

Special Judicial Training Announced

CIP is funding a judicial training on “Best Hearing Practices in Child Abuse and Neglect cases for Nevada” on January 29 and 30, 2016 in Las Vegas. The Blue Ribbon for Kids Commission’s Court Reform Workgroup recommended a Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (CANI)-type training for the judiciary with specific training materials for each hearing in the dependency process. Additional topics to be covered will include enhancing reasonable efforts in dependency

cases, trauma, the specifics of Nevada law, judicial leadership, child safety decision-making, engaging families, permanency for older youth, and ICWA.

In addition to Judge Stephen Rubin, (retired) and Dr. Sophia Gatowski, Judge Michael R. Key, Troup County, GA will join the faculty for this full two-day training. Judges and masters throughout the state are welcome to attend.

For Additional Information or to Register Contact:
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Need for Adoptive and Foster Homes Highlighted During National Adoption Month

For Additional Information Contact:
Judge Porter at:
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The 4th Judicial District’s Community Improvement Council celebrated National Adoption Month by engaging the entire community of Elko to highlight the need for adoptive and foster homes. The Boys and Girls Club of Elko held the celebration bringing together families, birth parents, adoptees, and those considering adoption. The Boy Scouts designed a

flier for the event. Activities included live music, therapy dogs, a bounce house, face painting, games and food, child identity kits, the SWAT team, police K-9 dogs, the fire department, and a booth where people could learn about adoption. Sierra Java, Khoury’s Market, Domino’s Pizza, Coca-Cola, and Premier Adoption Agency sponsored the

highly successful event. Judge Porter reports that she overheard a man tell his 3 young children, “we’re just going to go in and have fun”. The oldest child, a boy about 7 asked, “You mean we’re not going to go in and adopt a kid?” She thought, “It was really cute and told me that we got our message across.”



National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Membership Beneficial

**Developing Professional
Relationships**

Resources

Assistance

Services

On-Line Publications

Easy Access

In a survey conducted by CIP to determine if it should continue funding NCJFCJ membership, members of the Nevada Judiciary report they make good use of their memberships. One judge shared that he was able to obtain assistance and information addressing “Best Practices” in child welfare cases. Another judge shares NCJFCJ information with attorneys

practicing in the child welfare area. Another finds the resources and services invaluable in improving the quality of the court’s hearings. Several take advantage of the trainings and the on-line publications. One judicial officer appreciates how the topics are delineated to allow easy access to a resource. Several also mentioned the value of the *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*.

One judge referenced an article from the *Journal* during a county discussion regarding doing away with shackling kids in court. Many mentioned the value of developing professional relationships with other members to help inform their own practices.

On-Line Attorney Training for Those Practicing in Child Welfare Cases Coming Soon

The on-line attorney training for those practicing in child welfare cases is soon to be released. Several years ago Judge William Rogers (retired) asked CIP to develop a training to help attorneys understand the uniqueness of dependency cases. He intended to require any attorney appearing in his court to have completed the course. The resulting five modules, for which CLEs will be available, total 4 hours and 15 minutes of training, not including the quizzes. The topics covered include the following:

Module 1 - Federal and State Law (90 minutes)

Module 2 – Adoption and Safe Families Act Permanency Options (75 minutes)

Module 3 – Roles and Responsibilities of a Parent’s Attorney (75 minutes)

Module 4 – Important Topics in Child Welfare Proceedings (75 minutes)

Module 5 – Child Safety Decision Making: An Introduction to Key Concepts (60 minutes).

The judiciary will be informed when the training is available. The attorneys will register for the course through CIP.



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In 2010, each of the State’s ten judicial districts created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) that focused on identifying barriers to timely permanent placement of children at risk. July 2015, the 11th JD was created. The CICs have been meeting regularly in their communities and at annual Summits where they have learned to interpret data specific to their districts, while creating strategies to reduce the amount of time that it takes to move cases involving children at risk through the court process. The overriding focus, in addition to the safety of the child, is to create an environment where the best decisions are made for each child.

CIP Working for the Protection & Permanency of Dependent Children
Visit Our Web Site
<http://nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/courtimprovementprogram>

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