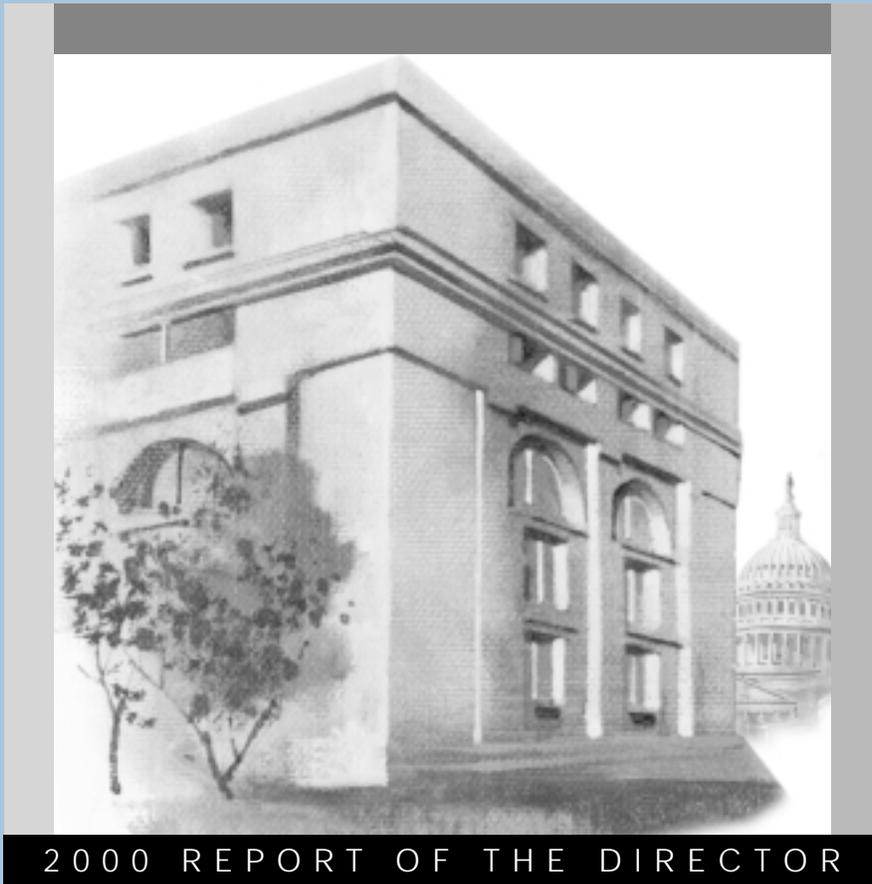


# Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts



Leonidas Ralph Mecham

# ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE U.S. COURTS

## 2000 Report of the Director

Leonidas Ralph Mecham



Produced by

Office of Public Affairs

Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building

Washington, D.C. 20544

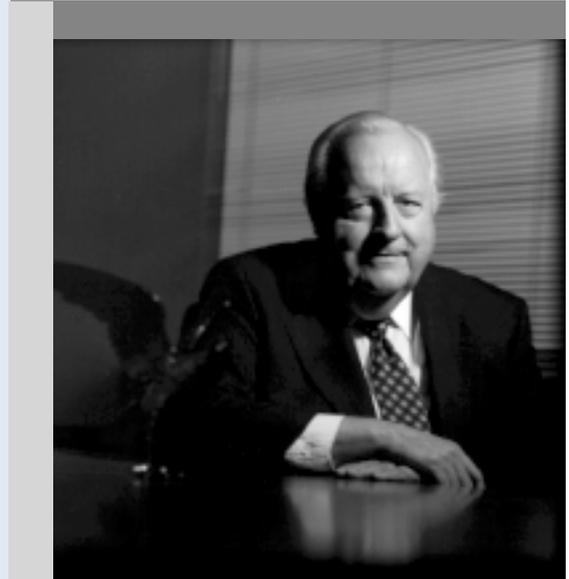
Phone: (202) 502-2600

# CONTENTS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE .....	1
THE YEAR 2000: Achievements and Challenges .....	5
Congressional Relations .....	5
Program and Management Assistance .....	11
Strategic Studies .....	15
Communications .....	17
Training .....	19
Benefits and Human Resources Management .....	20
Information Technology .....	21
IN PROFILE: The Administrative Office .....	25

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The uncertainty that plagued the other two branches of government and the public much of the year impacted Judiciary operations as well. The prolonged battle over control of the political branches meant that the Judiciary's needs—from new judgeships to funding—were at times relegated to the back burner.



Focus, persistence, and resourcefulness enabled the Judiciary to weather this storm. As key decisions were being made, the Administrative Office made certain the Judiciary's voice was heard. In the end, a budget was enacted that will provide additional resources for the courts and fully fund improved staffing levels. Funding will be available to build sorely needed new courthouses. Judges will re-

ceive the cost-of-living increase they have been promised, but far too often denied. Ten new district court judgeships will be created. Resources will be directed to the Southwest border courts to help address their caseload explosion.

“As key decisions were being made, the Administrative Office made certain the Judiciary's voice was heard. In 2000, the achievements were numerous and significant.”

Throughout my tenure as Administrative Office Director I have been involved daily in promoting the Judicial Conference's legislative agenda. I regularly meet in person, talk by phone, and communicate by letter with members of Congress and their staff. While I believe this is the right focus for my energies, this year a bit more effort was required by many to achieve the successes we did.

While the Judiciary depends on the legislative and executive branches for re-

sources, there is much we can accomplish on our own. In 2000, the achievements were numerous and significant.

The Case Management/Electronic Case Files system being developed to replace current federal court docketing and case management systems is an exciting undertaking that will revolutionize the way the courts conduct their business. While this project made great progress this year, we also are mindful that rapidly advancing technol-

ogy and personal privacy rights must be compatible. The Administrative Office is working closely with the relevant Judicial Conference committees to carefully study and address this issue.

Reacting to requests from judges, the Administrative Office built the Federal Law Clerk Information System, a national database to match interested judges with potential law clerks. The Electronic Public Access program expanded this year to provide access to information from more than 100 courts through the Internet. The Administrative Office has turned to the Judiciary's intranet, the J-Net, to place important information in the hands of those in the courts who most need it, achieving savings by eliminating certain paper documents and mailings. An increasing number of courtrooms are using video evidence presentation systems, videoconferencing, and electronic means of taking the record. The Administrative Office developed and distributed a courtroom technology guide to courts to support this effort.

In its second year of operation, the Federal Judicial Television Network reached 280 court viewing sites, providing thousands of court employees with easy access to training and other information. Since the network's inception, the Administrative Office has broadcast more than 110 different courses. The network also has been used successfully for educational and community outreach programs, which bring high-school students into courthouses throughout the country to learn more about the Judiciary.

The Administrative Office continues to provide administrative support, program management, and policy development assistance to federal courts nationwide. Support of the Judicial Conference and its committees remains an essential function of the Administrative Office. Each committee has Administrative Office staff experts who work closely with it in conducting research and drafting agenda items. The Administrative Office also has responsibility for carrying out

Conference actions and for constantly exploring ways for Judiciary programs to run more effectively and efficiently. As a result, the agency is involved with studies of law books and libraries, court security, probation and pretrial services, information technology, and Judiciary employee training.

Recognizing that the men and women who work in the courts are responsible for the Third Branch's outstanding reputation, we continue to explore appropriate ways to recognize this excellence. This year the Administrative Office began work on a commuter benefits program, which in 2001 will allow judges and judicial employees to pay a fixed amount of public transportation and parking costs per month on a pretax basis. We have provided the funds to place automated external defibrillators in 400 court locations. These small semi-automatic voice-prompted devices deliver an electric shock to a person experiencing cardiac arrest. The Judiciary is a government leader in making this life-saving device available.

"Support of the Judicial Conference and its committees remains an essential function of the Administrative Office."

A year ago we were awaiting the Y2K crisis, which, thanks to the hard work of many, never materialized. While no similar "crisis" looms on the horizon, 2001 is certain to bring many unexpected challenges to the judicial branch. Fortunately, some issues recur, and others have been highlighted by the Judicial Conference and Administrative Office long-range planning processes. Strategies are being developed and employees mobilized to tackle the pressing needs of the coming year.

The Administrative Office will continue to present the Judicial Conference's

legislative agenda to Congress. We will continue to publicize the growing pay disparity between federal judges and attorneys in the private sector. We will press for passage of the Federal Courts Budget Protection Act, which was considered but not enacted by the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress. This legislation will assure that the Judiciary's annual budget request is submitted directly to Congress by the President, unchanged, as required by law. The ten judgeships created this year by an appropriations bill are not enough. An omnibus judgeship bill is needed, and long overdue. No new bankruptcy judgeships have been created since 1992, even though filings have jumped several hundred thousand since then. New courthouses are needed, and they must be built so as to provide each active judge with a courtroom. With more than a quarter of the federal criminal filings occurring in the Southwest border courts, we will continue to push for increased resources to meet the ex-

traordinary needs of these five district courts. This list will grow by the day, and so will the energy and commitment of the Administrative Office.

This year marked my fifteenth as Director of the Administrative Office. When I arrived, memos were laboriously prepared on typewriters, copied on mimeograph machines, and sent to court officials. Today, they are broadcast electronically. The budget of the Judicial Branch was just over a quarter of what it is today, as was the number of drug-related cases handled by the district courts. The changes in the volume of court business and the way it is carried out are vast. However, the mission and responsibilities of the courts and the Administrative Office have remained steady. In fact, it has become an annual rite in the Administrative Office to re-pledge our commitment to providing the best service possible to the courts and public. Expect more of the same in 2001!



# THE YEAR 2000: Achievements and Challenges

As the new century began, federal courts were facing record levels of work and a challenging budget environment. Administrative Office managers and staff focused on helping courts use effective technologies and develop innovative case-processing measures. They provided



guidance and support necessary for courts to continue to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently, supported the Judicial Conference of the United States and its committees, helped obtain necessary resources from Congress, and continuously looked for ways to improve the quality of services, manage Judiciary programs better, and economize.

This report describes the results of the agency's efforts.

## ***Congressional Relations***

### ***Representing the Judiciary***

One of the major ways Administrative Office staff support the Judicial Conference and its committees is by identifying and monitoring legislation that could have an impact on the federal Judiciary. They help articulate Judicial Conference policies to Congress and provide information on bills regarding the organization and operation of federal courts, jurisdiction, appropriations, courthouse construction and maintenance, and other topics affecting the Judiciary. They also prepare draft testimony, coordinate responses to inquiries from Congress, and meet regularly with House and Senate members and staff.

The second session of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress continued to consider a wide range of issues of importance to the Judiciary. Several chairs of Judicial Conference committees and other Conference representatives testified at congressional committee hearings during 2000. They typically advocated the passage of bills containing proposals of the Conference or explained why it opposed legislation that could adversely affect the Judiciary.

The 106<sup>th</sup> Congress ended with the passage of the final appropriations bills, which included several successes for the Judiciary. The Commerce, Justice, State, the Ju-

diary and Related Agencies appropriations bill contained the Judiciary's budget, which among other things, cleared the way for a cost-of-living adjustment for judges and created 10 new Article III judgeships. The Treasury, Postal Service and General Government appropriations bill included \$559 million for eight new courthouses. Congress also passed the Federal Courts Improvement Act of 2000.

**Fiscal Year 2000 Budget.** For the first two months of fiscal year 2000, the Judiciary was funded through a series of continuing resolutions. On November 29, 1999, the Consolidated Appropriations Act was enacted. This act, which included the Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary appropriations bill, provided \$3.95 billion for the entire judicial branch for fiscal year 2000. This level of funding provided the Judiciary with a 9 percent increase over fiscal year 1999 spending. In addition, the bill also included language creating nine additional district judgeships as well as a provision that authorizes the Director of the Administrative Office to use appropriated funds to pay for any increases in the cost of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance

(FEGLI) imposed on senior Article III judges after April 24, 1999. Also included in the bill was a \$5 increase in panel attorney hourly rates. This was only the second time in 15 years that an increase had been provided. The receipt of such a large increase in over-

Bankruptcy Judge David W. Huston III (N.D. Miss.), Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) and Administrative Office Director Leonidas Ralph Mecham discuss Judiciary-wide issues, among them a COLA for judges.



all funding was due mainly to the extraordinary effort of the Judicial Conference Committee on the Budget, other judges, Director Mecham, and Administrative Office staff.

**Fiscal Year 2001.** Because the Judiciary's appropriations bill is included with the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, and other federal agencies, the Judiciary's budget was delayed again in 2000 because of policy differences between Congress and the President. However, under the leadership of the Judicial Conference

### Budget Hearings



Federal Judicial Center Director Judge Fern M. Smith, Judge John G. Heyburn II (W.D. Ky.), Judge Robert C. Broomfield (Arizona), and Administrative Office Director Leonidas Ralph Mecham testify at House hearings on the fiscal year 2001 budget.

Committee on the Budget, chaired by Judge John G. Heyburn II, and Director Mecham, the Judiciary fared well in the Judiciary's fiscal year 2001 appropriations bill, which although passed by Congress in October, was not forwarded to the President until mid-

## THE JUDICIARY

## Summary of Fiscal Year 2001 Budget

*(total obligations in thousands of dollars)*

Appropriation Account	FY 2000 Actual	House Bill	Senate Bill	FY 2001 Estimated Total Available Resources
<b>Court of Appeals, District Courts, and Other Judicial Services</b>				
Salaries and Expenses	3,405,839	3,621,688	3,665,682	3,705,129
Defenders Services	406,982	428,417	424,447	445,861
Fees of Jurors	63,000	64,192	62,938	62,219
Court Security	200,917	199,161	203,033	206,462
Subtotal	4,076,738	4,313,458	4,356,100	4,419,671
Other Accounts	207,013	208,045	201,657	210,341
<b>TOTAL OBLIGATIONS</b>	<b>4,283,751</b>	<b>4,521,503</b>	<b>4,557,757</b>	<b>4,630,012</b>

December when it was enacted. The bill authorized 10 new judgeships, provided a 2.7 percent cost-of-living raise for judges, and for the first time in three years provided the Judiciary with significant funds to hire new staff and fully implemented new court staffing formulas.

courtroom sharing issue was reviewed in an Ernst & Young report that was completed under an Administrative Office contract and transmitted to Congress by the Director. The report recommended no change to the Judicial Conference policy of one courtroom for every active district judge. All judges with courthouse projects, Director Mecham, and Administrative Office staff worked with members of Congress to gain support.

Congress did not approve OMB's proposal for courtroom sharing. The Senate authorizing committee approved all 17 projects proposed by GSA at full funding levels. The House authorizing committee approved all but one of the projects, with most at full funding, but slightly reduced a few projects to eliminate any modifications from the *U.S. Courts Design Guide*. The total funds appropriated, however, did not cover all of the projects that were authorized. The final appropriations bill provided funds in fiscal year 2001 for only the top four projects on the Judiciary's prioritized plan (Los Angeles, California; Seattle, Washington; Richmond, Virginia; and Gulfport, Mississippi). It also provided funding to be available in fiscal year 2002 for four more projects (Washington, D.C.; Buffalo, New York; Springfield, Massachusetts; and Miami, Florida). Congress appropriated funds for 11 courthouse repair and alteration projects in fiscal year 2001.

**Courthouse Construction.** For the first time in four years, the President included a request to fund a portion of the Judiciary's courthouse construction program in the unified budget proposal submitted to Congress for fiscal year 2001. The request, however, was to fund only eight of the 17 courthouse projects recommended by the General Services Administration (GSA) at a lower funding level than GSA's estimates.

Judge Jane Roth, chair of the Judicial Conference Committee on Security and Facilities, met with congressional leaders and testified before both the House and Senate authorizing subcommittees and a House Appropriations subcommittee to urge full funding of all courthouse projects with adherence to Judicial Conference policy of one courtroom for every active district judge. The

**Judicial Operations & Jurisdiction.**

In the closing days of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, both houses passed an amended version of the Federal Courts Improvement Act of 2000. On November 13, 2000, the President signed the act, which includes numerous provisions enhancing the Judiciary's effectiveness and efficiency. Among other things, the act

- Amends the contempt authority of magistrate judges and the petty consent requirement of cases before them.
- Authorizes the Judicial Conference to establish magistrate judge positions in the district courts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands.

## Judicial Operations



Chief Judge Edward R. Becker (3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit), top right, told the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts that after thoroughly studying the issue, the Judicial Conference takes the position that permitting cameras in federal courts is not in the best interests of justice. Also testifying before the subcommittee were Associate Justice Hiller Zobel of Massachusetts (foreground) and Judge Nancy Gertner (Massachusetts). The Federal Courts Improvement Act of 2000 was enacted without a provision that would have allowed cameras in courtrooms with the consent of all parties.

- Allows senior judges to participate in circuit judicial councils.
- Gives the Director of the Administrative Office authority to appoint certifying officers in court units, which will help aid the implementation of a Judiciary-wide financial accounting system.
- Increases certain bankruptcy fees.
- Makes permanent the statutory authority for bankruptcy administrators in Alabama and North Carolina.
- Permits the chief judge to authorize the clerk of court to determine whether persons are qualified, unqualified, exempt, or excused from jury service.
- Increases the case compensation maximum amounts for panel attorneys.

The enacted version of the bill did not contain a provision that would have allowed cameras in courtrooms with the consent of all parties.

**Criminal Justice.** As a result of increases in law enforcement activity, the explosion of illegal drug and immigration cases along the U.S./Mexico border triggered a need for congressional action to provide more resources to the southwest border courts. Administrative

Office staff worked extensively with members of Congress to press the urgency of the situation. On May 11, 2000, Chief Judge Carolyn Dineen King (5<sup>th</sup> Circuit), Chief Judge Stephen M. McNamee (Arizona), Chief Judge Marilyn L. Huff (California-Southern), Chief Judge John Edwards Conway (New Mexico), Chief Judge George P. Kazen (Texas-Southern), Judge Edward C. Prado (Texas-Western), and Judge W. Royal Furgeson, Jr. (Texas-Western), briefed members of the Congressional Border Caucus regarding the crisis. On June 30, 2000, Judge Furgeson testified before the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources concerning the impact of dramatically increased drug trafficking on the border courts. As a result of these and other efforts, four new district court judgeships and significant additional resources were provided for the border courts in the Judiciary's fiscal year 2001 appropriation bill.

**Judges Pay.** Judges received a 2.7 percent Employment Cost Index adjustment along with members of Congress and Executive Schedule employees on January 1, 2001. Judges have received cost-of-living increases

in three of the past four years, following a period of four years in which there were no increases. The Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary and Related Agencies appropriations bill contained the required waiver of section 140 of P.L. 97-92, clearing the way for the increase.

**Judicial Resources.** During the second session, 39 nominees for Article III judgeships were confirmed—eight court of appeals judges and 31 district court judges. That action brought the total number of judicial confirmations for the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress to 73, but left 63 judicial vacancies pending.

#### Article III Judgeships

On July 31, 2000, the Judicial Conference transmitted to Congress a revised request for federal judgeships. The new proposal requested six permanent judgeships and four temporary judgeships for the courts of appeals and 30 permanent district judgeships and 23 temporary district judgeships. The Conference also recommended that seven temporary district judgeships be made permanent and that one be extended. On September 19, 2000, Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced the Judicial Conference proposal as S. 3071. Although Congress did not take action on this bill before its adjournment, 10 district judge-

ships were added to the Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary appropriations bill.

#### Bankruptcy Judgeships

During the first session of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Judicial Conference recommended the creation of 24 new bankruptcy judgeships, conversion of two temporary judgeships to permanent judgeships, and extension of the terms of three other existing temporary judgeships. Both the House and Senate incorporated a modified judgeship provision into the bankruptcy reform bill. The President, however, vetoed the bill after Congress adjourned.

On October 25, 2000, Representative Nick Smith (R-MI) introduced H.R. 5540, a bill consisting of the judgeship provision of the reform legislation and a provision to extend the family farmer chapter of the bankruptcy code. The House passed this bill on October 31, 2000, but it was never taken up in the Senate.

The Judicial Conference submitted its report on the fourth biennial survey of the continuing need for bankruptcy judgeships to Congress December 31, 2000. The report reflects the Judicial Conference position that no authorized bankruptcy judgeship should be statutorily eliminated, but that circuits should be advised to continue the practice of filling bankruptcy judgeship vacancies when

there is a demonstrated need to do so. In the year 2000, seven authorized bankruptcy judgeships in five circuits were intentionally left vacant. Also during the year, one temporary bankruptcy judgeship lapsed under

the terms of the statutory provisions governing such judgeships.

#### Magistrate Judgeships

In fiscal year 2000, there were 447 full-time, 68 part-time, and three combined clerk/magistrate judge positions. Another nine new full-time magistrate judge positions were authorized for fiscal year 2001.

“Administrative Office staff worked extensively with members of Congress to press the urgency of the situation.”

ships were added to the Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary appropriations bill. The new positions were created in the districts of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas-Southern, Texas-Western, Florida-Southern, Nevada, Virginia-Eastern, Kentucky-Eastern, South Carolina, and Wisconsin-Eastern. Congress last created new judgeships in 1999 by including nine in the omnibus appropria-

Five of the nine new positions were conversions of part-time positions to full-time status. The increase is due to growing caseloads and expanded use of magistrate judges by the district courts.

**Other Legislation.** The Judiciary also has considerable interest in several proposals that could affect its operations but that were not passed. However, Judicial Conference committee chairs, other judges, the Director, and Administrative Office staff succeeded in raising awareness in Congress of the Judiciary's position on the issues involved. The 106<sup>th</sup> Congress ended with these bills still pending:

- **Federal Courts Budget Protection Act.** Designed to close a loophole in existing law that allows the executive branch to reduce indirectly the Judiciary's budget request to Congress and prevent the executive branch from eliminating budget requests for courthouse construction projects needed by the Judiciary. The Judicial Conference supports this legislation.
  - **Legislation responding to the Supreme Court's decision in *Lexecon v. Milberg Weiss*.** The Judicial Conference supports a proposal to allow a judge with a transferred case from the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation to retain it for trial or transfer the case to another district.
  - **Federal Agency Compliance Act,** which would require federal agencies, in civil cases, to adhere to existing precedents announced by the court of appeals in that circuit, except under certain circumstances, thereby discouraging intra-circuit non-acquiescence. The Judicial Conference supports this legislation.
  - **Private Property Rights Implementation Act,** which is intended to expedite federal court consideration of claims by private property owners who allege that their property rights have been violated by final agency actions either by the federal government or state and local governments.
- The Judicial Conference continued to reiterate its concerns with this legislation.
- **Managed care legislation.** The Judicial Conference urged Congress to provide that the state courts be the primary forum for the resolution of personal injury claims arising from the denial of health-care benefits, should Congress determine that such legal recourse is warranted.
  - **Class action legislation.** The Judicial Conference opposed the class action provisions as introduced because of the potentially significant caseload impact and because such provisions would conflict with long-recognized principles of federalism.

"Judicial Conference committee chairs, other judges, the Director, and Administrative Office staff succeeded in raising awareness in Congress of the Judiciary's position on the issues involved."

- **Asbestos legislation.** In 1991, the Judicial Conference encouraged Congress to consider a national legislative solution to streamline the resolution of asbestos personal injury cases.
- **Proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution** granting rights to victims of crime. The Judicial Conference strongly prefers a statutory approach over a constitutional amendment on the issue of victims' rights.
- **Juvenile justice bills.** The Judicial Conference has expressed its concern over legislation that is intended to shift traditional state criminal prosecutions into federal courts.

## Program and Management Assistance

*Providing Effective Solutions*

Offering new management strategies, as well as enhancing ongoing programs, is a major contribution of the Administrative Office in its quest to provide effective solutions for the Judiciary's changing administrative needs. Standing advisory groups and cross-cutting advisory councils of court representatives provide advice on programs and policies to Administrative Office managers and staff. In addition, the agency organizes ad hoc working groups to identify requirements for new systems, review policies, develop plans, or complete other tasks.

Management achievements in 2000 included the following.

**Updated Funding Formulas.** The Judicial Conference approved new staffing formulas in September 2000. The new formulas, based on work measurement studies completed by Administrative Office staff, reflect the work requirements and the impact of automation and changes in work processes. They are being used for staffing allocations for fiscal year 2001, which will be fully funded, and for budget preparation for fiscal year 2002.

Updated formulas for non-salary funding, developed by Administrative Office staff with the advice of a working group of 16

court representatives, were incorporated into the fiscal year 2001 financial plan. They were used to determine individual allotments to the courts for fiscal year 2001 and are being incorporated into the fiscal year 2002 budget submission to Congress.

**Southwest Border Courts.** The district courts located along the Southwestern border—California-Southern, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas-Southern, and Texas-Western—currently handle 26 percent of all criminal federal filings in the United States. In response to the workload crisis in these courts caused by this overwhelming workload associated with illegal immigration and drug smuggling, Administrative Office staff have responded by working with Congress to garner support for supplying these courts with additional resources, including new judgeships in these districts. In addition, the courts have been provided with increased staff, including interpreters, court reporters, and probation and pretrial services officers.

**Long-Range Planning.** The Administrative Office supported two long-range planning meetings of Judicial Conference committee chairs in 2000, as well as long-range planning and budgeting activities by individual committees. Planning meetings in March and September were led by Judge Ralph G. Thompson (Oklahoma-Western), the Executive Committee's planning coordinator. The various Judicial Conference committees examined trends, events, and policies that will affect their programs; they identified over 40 strategic issues of concern; and they considered possible courses of ac-

### Border Courts

The district courts located along the Southwestern border—California-Southern, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas-Southern, and Texas-Western—currently handle 26 percent of all criminal federal filings in the United States. In response to the workload crisis in these courts caused by this overwhelming workload associated with illegal immigration and drug smuggling, Administrative Office staff have responded by working with Congress to garner support for supplying these courts with additional resources, including new judgeships in these districts.



tion to address them. As a group, the committee chairs focused on broad trends and issues that cut across committee lines affecting the work, resources, and operation of the courts.

**International Judicial Relations.** The Administrative Office conducted briefings for 57 foreign delegations, including 263 judges and court administrators from 60 countries. Highlights included

- A program for judges from the Russian Council of Judges and Judicial Department on court administration, with particular emphasis on the role of clerks of court.
- A program for judges from the Russian Arbitrage (commercial) courts on commercial litigation and the bankruptcy courts, with emphasis on the use of automation to promote case management.
- A program for judges and court officials from Tanzania on judicial ethics and corruption.
- A program in Washington and Chicago for Russian officials involved in court administration on judicial and court administration from national, regional, and local perspectives.
- A program for judges from China on federal judicial administration and the use of automation and technology in the federal courts.

A publication about the federal courts has been published for an international audience- *The Federal Court System in the United States: An Introduction for Judges and Judicial Administrators in Other Countries*.

Administrative Office staff also participated in a program on court administration and court management for judges and court administrators from Armenia, Georgia, and Tajikistan; visited the Director of the Office of the Hungarian National Council of Justice and his staff to discuss the Hungarian judiciary's new management structure and exchange views on court administration and

management; and assisted the newly established bankruptcy court in Thailand in establishing case management procedures and support mechanisms.

**Amendments to the Federal Rules of Practice and Procedure.** In 2000, the Judicial Conference approved 14 amendments to the federal rules of practice and procedure and the abrogation of the copyright rules. It submitted the recommendations to the Supreme Court for its approval.

Administrative Office staff continued to monitor pending legislation affecting the rules. It kept the rules committees advised of developments in about 30 bills in the past year. The staff prepared correspondence to congressional Judiciary committee chairs raising concerns and conveying Judicial Conference positions on rules-related issues.

**Intercircuit Assignments.** In support of the Committee on Intercircuit Assignments, Administrative Office staff assist with the processing of assignments for Article III judges to serve outside their home circuits, or in the case of judges of the Court of International Trade, to serve on any other Article III court. During 2000, a total of 153 intercircuit assignments, undertaken by 89 Article III judges, were processed by the committee and approved by the Chief Justice. Of the 153 assignments approved, 82 were for the courts of appeals, 70 for the district courts, and one for the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. Administrative Office staff also assisted in maintaining rosters of both active and senior judges who are willing to take intercircuit assignments, and in identifying and obtaining judges who can help courts in need.

**Enhanced Integrity for Probation and Pretrial Services Officers.** As part of a new initiative to ensure the quality and success of the probation and pretrial services system, the Administrative Office is implementing two new Judicial Conference policies:



Administrative Office staff prepared correspondence to congressional Judiciary committee chairs raising concerns and conveying Judicial Conference positions on rules-related issues.

- Pre-employment background investigations for officer assistants and updated investigations every five years for both officers and officer assistants.
- Pre-employment and random drug testing for officers and officer assistants. (The Administrative Office implemented pre-employment and random drug testing for agency staff responsible for federal corrections and supervision programs.)

The Administrative Office also has created a working group to help develop a comprehensive national officer safety program that will include national safety training standards and a curriculum for an officer defensive tactics program.

**Court Interpreting.** The Administrative Office issued an annual report on court reporting. It showed that in fiscal year 2000 there was a significant increase in the number of events requiring the use of interpreters in federal courts. District courts reported that

they used interpreters in 190,127 events, an increase of 15 percent from 1999. The number of languages required rose from 103 in 1999 to 106 in 2000. Spanish remains the most used language for interpreters in the courts, accounting for 94.2 percent of all reported events (179,271 events), followed by Mandarin (2,092 events). Other frequently used languages were Vietnamese (931 events), Cantonese (847 events), Russian (755 events), Korean (585 events), and Arabic (538 events).

On January 3, 2000, the interpreter fees were raised from \$250 per day to \$305 per day for federally certified or professionally qualified interpreters, and from \$120 per day to \$145 per day for language skilled interpreters.

In fiscal year 2000, 75 new Spanish interpreters received certification. There now are 812 federally certified Spanish interpreters, 13 Haitian Creole, and nine Navajo federally certified interpreters. The National

## Court Interpreting

Telephone interpreting provides remote interpreting in situations where on-site interpreters are not available or cost-effective. While precise costs of telephone interpreting are difficult to calculate, the use of telephone interpreting costs around \$40 per hearing. This represents considerable cost savings to the Judiciary and also ensures that only Administrative Office certified and professionally qualified interpreters are used.



Court Interpreter Database, maintained by the Administrative Office, helps courts locate interpreters in a multitude of languages through J-Net.

The Judiciary's Telephone Interpreting Program provides remote interpretation in situations where on-site court interpreters are not available or cost-effective. Telephone interpreting is used for short proceedings such as pretrial hearings, initial appearances, arraignments, motion hearings, and probation and pretrial services interviews.

In fiscal year 2000, telephone interpreting was used in 1,234 hearings and in 244 out-of-court events in a dozen districts nationwide, as compared to 1,000 court hearings and 250 out-of-court events in fiscal year 1999.

While precise costs of telephone interpreting are difficult to calculate, the use of telephone interpreting costs around \$40 per hearing. This represents considerable cost savings to the Judiciary and also ensures that only Administrative Office certified and professionally qualified interpreters are used.

**Court Reviews and Internal Controls.** In fiscal year 2000, the Administrative Office expanded its audit program, completed 108 financial audits, conducted 63 on-site reviews, and visited 198 courts and related offices to provide specific technical assistance.

The Judiciary continued its emphasis on reviewing and strengthening internal controls. Agency staff developed a website to help courts design and manage their internal control programs.

Administrative Office staff also developed a set of questions, surveys, and checklists to help courts assess the effectiveness of their information technology programs. The self-assessment tools are available on J-Net.

**Digital Audio Recording Technology.** Administrative Office staff developed guidelines for implementing this technology as a means of taking the official

record of court proceedings. The guidelines include technical and functional system requirements and a self-assessment tool for courts to use in deciding whether to purchase such systems.

**Bankruptcy Noticing Center.** The center electronically retrieves data from participating courts' case management systems and prints, addresses, batches, and mails paper notices to attorneys, creditors, and others at a fraction of the time and cost required to produce manually the notices.

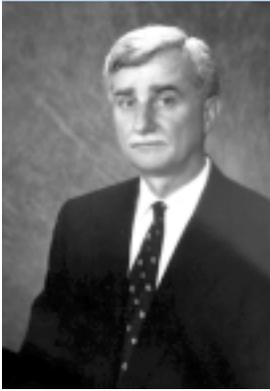
In fiscal year 2000, lower pricing generated cost avoidances totaling more than \$1.2 million. In addition, options for court and BNC notice file exchange were expanded to include Internet-based transactions that provide better file transmissions in a fraction of the time required by dial-up connection. It also provides better support for documents formatted for the Case Management/Electronic Case Files system.

**Bankruptcy Administrator Program.** The Administrative Office provides program direction and oversight to the bankruptcy administrators in the six judicial districts of Alabama and North Carolina, where this program is established by statute. To fulfill that role in 2000, agency staff conducted regular telephone conferences with the bankruptcy administrators and made on-site visits to address ways to enhance NewBATS, the electronic case administration program used by the bankruptcy administrator offices. In addition, the Administrative Office participated with the bankruptcy administrators in a training program for trustees, court staff, and the bar, and conducted a training session for trustees in conjunction with a national seminar for chapter 13 trustees.

**Prisoner Civil Rights Videoconferencing.** The use of videoconferencing in prisoner civil pretrial proceedings enables courts to reduce costs associated with having inmates transported



In fiscal year 2000, the Administrative Office expanded its audit program, completed 108 financial audits, conducted 63 on-site reviews, and visited 198 courts and related offices to provide specific technical assistance.



Jesse D. Cannon, Jr.



Barry K. Lander



F. Dan Wieser



Brenda K. Argoe

## Director's Awards

Each year, Director Mecham invites nominations for and honors court employees with two awards. The Director's Award for Administrative Excellence honors federal court employees for outstanding achievements in improving the administration of the federal Judiciary. The Director's Award for Outstanding Leadership recognizes employees who have made long-term contributions to increase managerial effectiveness and who have developed improvements in the administration of the federal Judiciary.

Recipients of the 2000 Director's Award for Administrative Excellence:

- Jesse D. Cannon, Jr., Assistant Circuit Executive, U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit.
- Barry K. Lander, Clerk of Court, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, California-Southern.
- F. Dan Wieser, U.S. Probation Officer, Florida-Middle.

Recipient of the 2000 Director's Award for Outstanding Leadership:

- Brenda K. Argoe, Clerk of Court, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, South Carolina

from correctional facilities or having judges and court employees travel to correctional facilities. It helps eliminate potential security risks to judges, court staff, and the pub-

lic. And, in several district courts with a large number of prisoner cases, videoconferencing has enhanced their ability to move cases more efficiently.

## Strategic Studies

### *Considering New Approaches for the Future*

Assessing strategic program issues and identifying future requirements and opportunities for improvement are important to program management. In conjunction with Judicial Conference committees, Administrative Office staff directed studies by independent consultants or undertook studies of several major program areas in 2000.

**Space and Facilities.** In May 2000, the Judiciary received a final report from Ernst & Young following a year-long independent assessment of the Judiciary's space and facilities program. The contractors recognized that the Judiciary already has taken

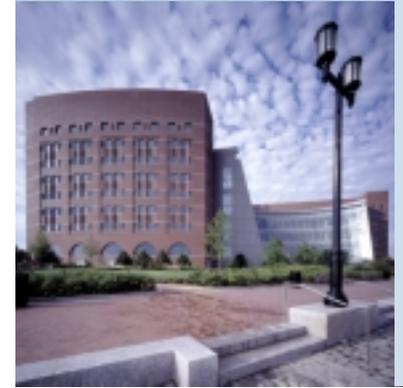
steps to achieve savings and made suggestions and recommendations for further efficiencies in the use of the Judiciary's space and facilities.

**Judicial Security.** An independent assessment of the Judiciary's security program was begun in February 2000 to review the effectiveness and efficiency of current security standards, policies, and procedures. A final report with recommendations for physical security of courthouses, the feasibility of replacing contract court security officers with a federal security force, and records checks for court employees is due in early 2001.

## *Independent Study of the Space and Facilities Program*

Principal findings and conclusions from the study include the following:

- **Planning.** The consultants concluded that the Judiciary's long-range facilities planning process has produced reasonably accurate predictions of judges, staff, and associated facilities needs. They recommended several refinements to the planning process.
- **Courtrooms.** Ernst & Young found that new courtroom policies adopted in 1997, particularly regarding the provision of courtrooms to senior judges for 10 years, resulted in a reduction in the number of courtrooms planned for new facilities—with an average of four courtrooms planned for every five judges. Ernst & Young identified important factors that necessitate a high degree of flexibility in the scheduling and use of courtrooms, and, consequently, limit the ability to share courtrooms. Ernst & Young recommended 1) retaining the national policy of planning one courtroom per active Article III judge, 2) on a case-by-case basis, considering whether fewer courtrooms may be feasible in courthouses with more than 10 district judges, and 3) for senior district judges, providing access to a dedicated courtroom for the first two years and, thereafter, one courtroom for every two working senior judges.
- **Funding Courthouses.** Ernst & Young recommended alternative funding approaches that would give the Judiciary more direct control.
- **Design and Construction of Facilities.** Ernst & Young found that the *U.S. Courts Design Guide* is a useful document and recommended some further cost-control options and the development of separate standards for renovation projects. Ernst & Young concluded that the cost benchmarks and escalation rates used by the General Services Administration (GSA) are outdated, and noted that GSA's plans for public spaces in courthouses can constitute a significant part of the overall cost.



The consultants concluded that the Judiciary's long-range facilities planning process has produced reasonably accurate predictions of judges, staff, and associated facilities needs. They recommended several refinements to the planning process.

**Information Technology.** An independent contractor examined the Judiciary's information technology needs and objectives, considering anticipated changes and enhancements in technology in the marketplace. A final report was received in November 2000, and the contractor concluded that the Judiciary has been able to put in place a national information technology program with significantly fewer resources than other government organizations, especially considering its complex information environment and highly distributed operations. The report recommends ways the Judiciary can take advantage of new technologies to meet its future operational requirements.

**National Training Needs.** A contractor analyzed, documented, and prioritized training needs and prepared a training plan for the development of future training programs.

**Bankruptcy Mega-Cases.** Administrative Office and Federal Judicial Center staff studied the weighted caseload formula to determine the adjustment needed to reflect more accurately the judicial workload implications of mega-case chapter 11 filings.

**Lawbooks and Libraries.** The study is reviewing alternatives related to lawbooks, defining core collections for libraries and judges' chambers, and examining size guidelines for libraries. Consultants surveyed judges, law clerks, staff attorneys, and pro se law clerks on the use of lawbooks and libraries. Survey

"The contractor concluded that the Judiciary has been able to put in place a national information technology program with significantly fewer resources than other government organizations."

results, along with spending, inventory, and other data will be used to develop a report that will be discussed by the Committee on Automation and Technology at its June 2001 meeting.

**Postage and Mail Management.** Consultants reviewed the Judiciary's mail management practices and concluded that there were no major cost inefficiencies and that court mail units are using prudent judgment in their mail operations. As a result of a pilot project, conversion of all courts to commercial postage accounts will begin in fiscal

year 2001, upon approval of Director Mecham.

**Probation and Pretrial Services System.** The purpose of the study is to make recommendations for ensuring the future quality and success of the probation and pretrial services system. Consultants will identify strategic issues; define core functions and work; identify resources; suggest ways to enhance effectiveness or efficiency; and assess alternative approaches for program services.

## Communications

### *Disseminating Information About the Judiciary*

An important part of the work of Administrative Office staff is communicating effectively with federal courts and the public. Agency employees use electronic and paper methods of communicating to distribute information and reach out to Judiciary employees, the public, and Congress.

at 34 court locations across the country participated in a Law Day program sponsored by the Administrative Office. The program, Judicial Independence and You, won an Outstanding Law Day Activity Award from the American Bar Association.

Another initiative is the Outreach to Colleges and Universities project. Targeted at college and law-school graduates, a CD-ROM was developed for universities and placement offices, which provides information about the wide variety of career opportunities within the Judiciary. This initiative will enable the Judiciary to compete with the private sector and other federal agencies for quality talent in the current competitive job market.

**Internet.** The Administrative Office manages and coordinates policy and procedures related to Internet access and maintains its own Internet site, [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov). A new feature of this site is Judiciary Now, which is used to bring the latest news to the media and the public. Many courts make information available to the public via the Internet. As a result, they receive fewer calls regarding

### Judiciary Now

The Administrative Office manages and coordinates policy and procedures related to Internet access, and maintains its own Internet site, [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov). A new feature of this site is Judiciary Now, which is used to bring the latest news to the media and the public.



**Community Outreach.** Community outreach programs increase the public's understanding of the federal Judiciary. This year, more than 1,300 high-school seniors

## Publications

This year's publishing achievements include

*Annual Report of the Director: Reports of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States; Activities of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; Judicial Business of the U.S. Courts.*

*District Clerks Manual* was revised and made available to all district courts electronically via J-Net.

*Fair Employment Practices Report.* This annual publication provides overall demographic statistics about the court work force and reports on court achievements in making the courts model employers.

*Federal Court Management Report.* Written and edited for court managers, this periodical reports on developments and trends of interest in the Judiciary.

*Federal Probation.* A scholarly journal published twice a year.

*The History of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts: Sixty Years of Service to the Federal Judiciary* documents the Administrative Office's history and achievements since its creation in 1939.

*Judicial Security Systems Manual* identifies physical and electronic security system requirements for space occupied by the Judiciary. It also provides direction and consistency for the design and implementation of security systems during construction of new courthouses and major renovations.

*Organization Design Resource Guide.* This document is now available on the J-Net, under Human Resources. Numerous links to other human resources sites relating to Organization Design are also available on the web site.

*News and Views.* The bi-weekly newsletter for federal probation and pretrial services officers.

*Report to Congress on the Optimal Utilization of Judicial Resources* is an annual report on the Judiciary's economy efforts.

*Retirement Benefits for Bankruptcy Judges and Magistrate Judges*, Judges Information Series No. 5, is designed to guide judges through the complexity of the applicable laws and to assist them in the retirement planning process.

*Judges Manual, Guide to Judiciary Policies and Procedures.* This new version of the Judges Manual replaces Volume III (Judges Manual), Volume V (Bankruptcy Manual), and Volume IX (Magistrate Judges Manual).

*The Third Branch.* The monthly newsletter of the federal Judiciary.



This year, more than 1,300 high-school seniors at 34 court locations across the country participated in a Law Day program sponsored by the Administrative Office. The program, Judicial Independence and You, won an Outstanding Law Day Activity Award from the American Bar Association.

office hours, directions to the courthouse, and questions concerning local rules, saving staff time and money. The Judiciary also uses the Internet for research and acquisition activities.

- Electronic Public Access (EPA). In fiscal year 2000, implementation of the Public

Access Network, which provides access to court case information from the Internet, expanded to over 100 sites. In addition, the BANCAP Web PACER product was enhanced to provide real-time access to court case information, a NIBS Web PACER system was developed, and several

courts began offering images of their case documents on the Internet. The Administrative Office also worked with Wade Systems, Inc., to incorporate the Judicial Conference approved Internet access fee into their RACER product, which offers access to imaged documents.

- **Federal Law Clerk Information System.** In 2000, the Administrative Office launched the Federal Law Clerk Information System, a new database accessible through the Judiciary's Internet web site that allows prospective law clerk candidates to obtain information about upcoming or existing

days of the system going live, information on more than 300 law clerk positions was posted on the web site.

- **J-Net.** The Judiciary uses an intranet for internal communications that offers a collection of information that can be shared electronically. The Administrative Office maintains a site on this intranet called J-Net, which is helping to achieve savings as it disseminates greater amounts of information electronically in place of paper documents.

ListServ, a feature added to J-Net in 2000, provides weekly e-mails on the 10 most recent listings to Judiciary employees who sign up for this service. Also, courts now can submit job opportunity announcements using an automated program that converts files to HTML and ensures prompt posting.

## Federal Law Clerk Information System

In 2000, the Administrative Office launched the Federal Law Clerk Information System, within days of the system going live, information on more than 300 law clerk positions was posted on the web site.



employment opportunities as law clerks to federal judges. Judges and chambers staff can post vacancy announcements through a chambers module on J-Net, reducing substantially the need to respond to individual inquiries about clerkship opportunities or the application process. Within

### ***Electronic Broadcast of Correspondence to Court Officials.***

In September 1999, Administrative Office staff began sending official correspondence and other important information to all chief judges or court unit executives electronically. Unlike regular e-mail messages, the broadcast system provides fully formatted and signed correspondence. The electronic broadcast of correspondence from the Director and other Administrative Office officials has been a positive step for both the Administrative Office and the courts. It has reduced printing and postage costs and enables the courts to receive important information quickly.

## Training

### *The Key to a Skilled Workforce*

A corps of skilled practitioners, pragmatic problem solvers, and experienced professionals is critical to success for the Judiciary. To help ensure that federal courts have employees with the skills necessary to meet the challenges of expanding workload, growth, increasingly tight funding, and rapidly changing technology, the Administrative

Office maintains an extensive training program employing both traditional instructor-led and distance learning methods. The primary goal of the program is to provide a wide variety of quality training opportunities to meet the Judiciary's educational needs as cost effectively as possible.

Courses offered in 2000 were linked

directly to the timely implementation of Judiciary policies and programs, such as

- Financial management.
- Retirement planning.
- Statistical reporting.
- Firearms instruction.
- Facilities management.
- Contracting.
- Administrative and operational procedures.
- Court reporting, including realtime court reporting.
- Court Personnel System.
- Automation systems.
- Benefits and benefits administration.
- Panel attorney training.
- Electronic bankruptcy noticing.
- Procurement procedures.
- Workplace drug testing.
- Employment dispute resolution.
- Law clerk appointments.
- Orientation programs for chief judges, probation officers, court managers, and federal defenders.

Administrative Office staff began developing training in budgeting and financial internal controls for the Judiciary, which are scheduled for release in 2001. Development of training for accounting operations and appropriations law began in fiscal year 2000 and will continue in 2001.

## Training



To help ensure that federal courts have employees with the skills necessary to meet the challenges of expanding workload, growth, increasingly tight funding, and rapidly changing technology, the Administrative Office maintains an extensive training program employing both traditional instructor-led and distance learning methods.

**FJTN.** The Federal Judicial Television Network continued to be an integral part of the Judiciary's training efforts in 2000, converting training programs previously offered in a traditional classroom setting to a format using the television network. The Administrative Office is the biggest user of FJTN, now broadcasting to more than 280 viewing sites throughout the Judiciary, making the Judiciary's broadcasting network one of the largest in the federal government. Live broadcasts use push-to-talk capability, allowing viewers to participate interactively during the broadcasts. Other distance learning courses employed web- and paper-based supporting materials, and videotape footage featuring demonstrations and virtual field trips.

## Benefits and Human Resources Management

### *Among Efforts to Attract and Retain a High Quality Workforce*

Administrative Office staff develop and administer personnel, payroll, retirement, and insurance programs for Judiciary employees; provide counseling related to benefits and retirement; and communicate with Judiciary employees through a variety of media to explain new benefits or changes to existing programs.

**Flexible Benefits.** The Flexible Benefit Program gives judges and Judiciary employees the ability to pay for certain health-care and dependent-care expenses on a pre-tax basis. The first annual open election period was held early in fiscal year 2000. Employee response was overwhelming, with 20 percent of the workforce electing to participate.

**Long-Term Care Insurance.** More than 4,500 employees and their relatives applied for coverage during the first open season, held in November 1999.

**Commuter Benefit Program.** The Administrative Office developed and introduced a commuter benefit program in 2000 that consists of a transportation reimbursement account and a parking reimbursement account. Now, courts can offer judges and Judiciary employees the option of paying for mass-transit and vanpooling expenses and parking costs incurred for commuting to and from work on a pre-tax basis.

**Public Transportation Subsidies.** The Director delegated to chief judges the authority to establish subsidies, using local court funds, for employees' use of public transportation to commute to and from work. A number of courts throughout the Judiciary have decided to adopt such a program for their employees.

Flexible benefits, long-term care insurance, and public transportation subsidies are among the Judiciary's efforts to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.

**Professional Liability Insurance Reimbursement Program.** Beginning in February 1999, judges were allowed to be reimbursed for up to half the cost of the annual premium for professional liability insurance, or \$150, whichever was less. The Judicial Conference extended this program to several other groups of court officials in April 2000. Later in the year, the \$150 reimbursement limit was lifted for judges.

**Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS).** A new personnel and payroll system for the Judiciary was successfully implemented in the Administrative Office, Federal Judicial Center, and U.S. Sentencing Commission in 2000. Known as HRMIS, the new system was developed with Peoplesoft, a commercial software package. A contractor modified the software to meet Judiciary-specific needs. The most significant modification was integrating it with the Judiciary's Central Accounting System.

The successful testing and implementation of the system in the Administrative Office will help with full court implementation.

## Information Technology

### *Increasing Efficiency and Streamlining Operations*

During 2000, Administrative Office staff continued to devote considerable attention to information technology initiatives aimed at moving courts toward the coming era of electronic case files; making networks faster and more secure; replacing outmoded systems; and improving planning, budget, and project management processes for information technology programs. Working

closely with the courts, the agency is helping the Judiciary harness technology to bring the courts new, more efficient ways of doing business and communicating with each other, the Administrative Office, and the public.

**Y2K.** Months of careful planning and preparation by the Administrative Office Y2K project team, as well as court staff,

## *Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Case Files*

Privacy and public access to electronic case files continues to be a topic of interest to the Judiciary. Administrative Office staff conducted extensive research on this issue in 2000 and provided it to members of the Subcommittee on Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Case Files. Staff continue to monitor efforts in Congress to pass legislation dealing with electronic privacy issues as well as the efforts of state court systems. A new web site, [www.privacy.uscourts.gov](http://www.privacy.uscourts.gov), was set up to detail various policy options and to encourage public comment.

paved the way for a smooth transition into the new century for the Judiciary. More than five dozen agency employees and contractors were on duty and ready to deal with potential problems January 1, 2000. A few minor problems were resolved quickly, and the roll over to the year 2000 was successful and uneventful.

### **Case Management/Electronic**

**Case Files.** Over the next few years, the Administrative Office will continue a major effort to develop and implement the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. CM/ECF is replacing the aging existing case management systems and beginning to provide new capabilities for case filing over the Internet. Installation of CM/ECF in 14 bankruptcy courts was completed or underway by the end of 2000.

CM/ECF service will be expanded throughout federal courts in the coming years. The benefits for the courts and the public include

- New case management capabilities.
- Internet access to case file pleadings.
- Immediate docket entries.
- Immediate local or remote access from any location.
- No waiting for file room retrieval.
- No lost folders or documents.

**Infrastructure.** Administrative Office staff made several improvements to the Judiciary's information technology infrastructure during the year. One of those was to begin an effort to convert the Data Communications Network (DCN) to frame-relay technology. In addition to being more reliable than the leased-line network, it offers other benefits including affordable rates, improved Internet access, and better accommodation of new requirements such as the upcoming move to electronic case filing.

**E-mail System Replacement.** In December 1999, a contract was awarded to IBM/Lotus for the Judiciary-wide implementation of the Lotus Domino/Notes electronic mail product to replace

### Information Technology



CM/ECF service will be expanded throughout federal courts in the coming years. New capabilities will mean no waiting for file room retrieval, seen here, and no lost folders and documents.

the existing cc:Mail infrastructure and other e-mail systems currently installed throughout the courts. During the year, Administrative Office staff developed a detailed migration plan and contracted with an outside consultant to conduct an independent as-

## E-mail System Replacement

Court staff, working at the Administrative Office e-mail project lab, prepare for the migration to the Judiciary's new e-mail system. Agency staff expect to complete the transition to Lotus Notes by October 2001.



assessment of the project's progress. Agency staff expect to complete the transition to Lotus Notes by October 2001.

**Electronic Bankruptcy Noticing.** Electronic bankruptcy noticing functions like a sophisticated e-mail system, eliminating the production and mailing of paper notices. It speeds public service while eliminating postage costs. In June 2000, the Judiciary began offering Internet e-mail and fax options.

Electronic bankruptcy noticing usage increased each month in fiscal year 2000, and comprised about 2 percent of the overall monthly notice volume by year's end.

"Electronic bankruptcy noticing usage increased each month in fiscal year 2000, and comprised about 2 percent of the overall monthly notice volume by year's end."

**Server Backup Software.** The Administrative Office completed licensing for Veritas server backup software, which provides 24-

hour-a-day call-in support. The new software, Backup Exec, provides high performance, reliable data protection for servers on the Data Communications Network. Distribution of the software to the courts was completed in September.

**Computer Security.** Agency staff established the Judiciary Automated Systems Incident Response Capability, which is a team

that helps courts investigate and resolve computer security incidents. A number of alerts were sent out to court systems managers during the year, which helped staff protect the Judiciary's networks and systems from viruses that affected other organizations.

### **Financial Accounting System for Tomorrow (FAS<sub>4</sub>T)**

FAS<sub>4</sub>T provides the Judiciary with a single integrated financial system that meets fed-

eral accounting system standards. At the end of fiscal year 2000, FAS<sub>4</sub>T was operating in 19 districts and one circuit court. Twenty installations are anticipated for fiscal year 2001.

**Jury Management System.** By the end of fiscal year 2000, 44 courts were using the Jury Management System. Nationwide implementation of the system is expected by December 2001. The automated software system performs jury management and control functions, including maintenance of databases necessary for the random selection of prospective jurors for service, daily administration of the jury process, and production of data and statistical reports.

**Anti-Virus Software.** A new two-year license agreement provides for software upgrades and technical support for the Norton AntiVirus products for desktops, gateways, firewalls, and file servers running the Novell and Microsoft operating systems. The contract, negotiated by Administrative Office staff, will produce savings in software acquisition costs and reduce the technical complexity of maintaining anti-virus protection. Distribution to the courts was completed in December.

**Civil/Criminal Accounting Module.** The Administrative Office is developing a civil/criminal accounting module that integrates with the Financial Accounting System

for Tomorrow (FAS<sub>4</sub>T). The module will provide for the effective financial management of civil, criminal, and cash receipting activities in federal courts.

**Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel Attorney Payment System.** The CJA Panel Attorney Payment System replaces the antiquated system for payment of CJA panel attorneys and related service providers. All courts began using the new system in fiscal year 2000.

**Statistical File Transfer Protocol.** Administrative Office staff improved the automatic transfer of monthly statistical data from the courts. Existing automated systems were enhanced to incorporate the File Transfer Protocol feature, which enables the courts to transfer monthly statistical data from their Unix machines to the Administrative Office mainframe computer. In addition, a new mechanism for returning monthly statistical reports to the courts was put into effect. Courts now have the capability to receive automated responses immediately via e-mail.

**Civil Justice Reform Act Reporting.** The Civil Justice Reform Act of 1990 (CJRA) provides that data on various civil matters pending before district judges and magistrate judges must be reported to Congress. In 2000, data on Social Security appeal cases pending more than six months were added to the CJRA reports, which previously had presented data only on motions, bench trials, three-year-old cases, and bankruptcy appeals. Of the 94 U.S. district courts, 90 courts now use either the Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) or some other automated means to submit their CJRA data to the Administrative

Office. All 12 circuit executives' offices now have access to the CJRA reporting system through the Web/CHASER CJRA software program.

**Computer Assisted Legal Research.** The Administrative Office awarded a contract extension for computer assisted legal research services to West Group for the full range of research services (legal research, newspapers and journals, and public records) and a similar extension to Lexis-Nexis for the limited contract in place for newspapers and journals services, for another four years, through September 30, 2004. Pricing arrangements under the new contract are more favorable than in the past. As a result, CALR expenditures over the next four years will be significantly less than they would if the current pricing arrangements had been extended.

#### Statistical File Transfer



Administrative Office staff improved the automatic transfer of monthly statistical data from the courts. Existing automated systems were enhanced to incorporate the File Transfer Protocol feature, which enables the courts to transfer monthly statistical data from their Unix machines to the Administrative Office's mainframe computer.

# IN PROFILE: The Administrative Office

## ***The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts***

### **Statutory Authority**

28 U.S.C. §§ 601-612. Congress established the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts in 1939 to provide administrative support to federal courts.

### **Supervision**

The Director of the Administrative Office carries out statutory responsibilities and other duties under the supervision and direction of the principal policy-making body of the Judiciary, the Judicial Conference of the United States, and its Executive Committee. In addition, the Conference Committee on the Administrative Office oversees generally the agency's operations.

### **Responsibilities**

- All responsibility for the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts is vested in the Director, who is the chief administrative officer for the federal courts. Under his direction, the agency carries out the following functions:
- Implements the policies of the Judicial Conference of the United States and supports its network of 24 committees (including advisory and special committees) by providing staff to plan meetings; develop agendas; prepare reports; and provide substantive analytical support to the development of issues, projects, and recommendations.
- Supports about 2,000 judicial officers—active and senior appellate and district court judges, bankruptcy judges, and magistrate judges.
- Advises court administrators regarding procedural and administrative matters.
- Provides program leadership and support for circuit executives, clerks of court, staff attorneys, probation and pretrial services officers, federal defenders, circuit librarians, conference attorneys/circuit mediators, bankruptcy administrators, and other court employees.
- Provides centralized core administrative functions such as payroll, personnel, and accounting services.
- Administers the Judiciary's unique personnel systems and monitors its equal employment opportunity program.
- Develops and executes the budget and provides guidance to courts for local budget execution.

- Defines resource requirements through forecasts of caseloads, work-measurement analyses, assessment of program changes, and reviews of individual court requirements.
- Provides legislative counsel and services to the Judiciary; acts as liaison with the legislative and executive branches.
- Prepares manuals and a variety of other publications.
- Collects and analyzes detailed statistics on the workload of the courts.
- Monitors and reviews the performance of programs and use of resources.
- Conducts education and training programs.
- Audits the courts' financial operations.
- Handles public affairs for the Judiciary, responding to numerous inquiries from Congress, the media, and the public.
- Develops new ways for handling court business, and provides assistance to court employees to help them implement programs and improve operations.
- Develops and supports automated systems and technologies used throughout the courts.
- Coordinates with the General Services Administration the construction and management of the Judiciary's space and facilities.
- Monitors the U.S. Marshals Service's implementation of the Judicial Facilities Security Program, including court security officers, and executes security policy for the Judiciary.

## Organization

### Director

**Leonidas Ralph Mecham**

*273-3000*

Serves as the chief executive of the Administrative Office, Secretary to the Judicial Conference, and ex officio member of the Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference and member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Judicial Center.

### Associate Director, Management and Operations

**Clarence A. Lee, Jr.**

*273-3015*

Chief advisor to the Director on management, strategic, and tactical planning and operational matters; ensures that activities of all agency elements are functioning in support of the Director's goals; oversees audit and review activities.

### Associate Director and General Counsel

**William R. Burchill, Jr.**

*502-1100*

Provides legal counsel and services to the Director and staff of the Administrative Office and to the Judicial Conference; responds to legal inquiries from judges and other court officials regarding court operations; represents agency in bid protests and other administrative litigation.

### Judicial Conference Executive Secretariat

**Karen K. Siegel, Assistant Director**

*502-2400*

Coordinates the agency's performance of the staff functions required by the Judicial Conference and its committees; maintains the official files of the Judicial Conference; and responds to judges and other court personnel regarding Conference activities.

**Legislative Affairs****Michael W. Blommer, Assistant Director***502-1700*

Provides legislative counsel and services to the Judiciary; maintains liaison with the legislative branch; manages the coordination of matters affecting the Judiciary with the states, legal entities, and other organizations; develops and produces judicial impact statements.

**Public Affairs****David A. Sellers, Assistant Director***502-2600*

Carries out public-information, community outreach, and communications programs for the federal Judiciary; handles media inquiries and relations; manages publications efforts for the Administrative Office.

**Court Programs****Noel J. Augustyn, Assistant Director***502-1500*

Provides support to the courts for federal defenders, probation and pretrial services officers, clerks of court, circuit executives, staff attorneys, conference attorneys, court reporters, interpreters, and bankruptcy administrators including the development of budgets, allocation of resources, and management of national programs.

**Facilities and Security****Ross Eisenman, Assistant Director***502-1200*

Manages services provided to the courts in the areas of court security and space and facilities, and serves as the primary contact on real property administration matters with the General Services Administration.

**Finance and Budget****George H. Schafer, Assistant Director***502-2000*

Manages the budget, accounting, and financial systems of the Judiciary; prepares financial analyses on Judiciary programs; manages relocation and travel services for the courts; and serves as the Judiciary's point of contact for Congress on budget matters.

**Human Resources and Statistics****Alton C. Ressler, Assistant Director***502-1170*

Manages services provided to the courts in the areas of statistics, personnel, payroll, health and retirement benefits, workforce development, and dispute resolution.

**Information Technology****Melvin J. Bryson, Acting Assistant Director***502-2300*

Administers the information technology program of the Judiciary: its planning, technology, and resource allocations; applications development, maintenance, and support; testing and research.

**Internal Services****Laura C. Minor, Assistant Director***502-4200*

Manages the Judiciary's procurement function; provides administrative support and services to the Administrative Office in areas such as budget, facilities, personnel, information technology and information management; and administers the Administrative Office's Equal Employment Opportunity programs.

**Judges Programs****Peter G. McCabe, Assistant Director***502-1800*

Oversees the formulation and promulgation of federal rules of practice and procedure; delivers legal and administrative services to judicial officers including Article III judges, bankruptcy judges and magistrate judges.